

Purina Invests More Than \$30 Million in Supporting Pets, People and the Planet

*Company's 2023 grants and pet food donations promoted the human animal bond and supported youth mental health*

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 28, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Nestlé Purina PetCare Company's belief that pets and people are better together was demonstrated throughout 2023 with investments of more than \$30 million to support programs that aim to bring and keep people and pets together and forge partnerships that help communities and the environment thrive. In addition to providing funding, collaboration, and Purina pet food and cat litter donations, the company's 10,000 associates took an active role in their communities by volunteering nearly 5,000 hours in support of nonprofits last year.

Purina's charitable giving focused on several key areas, including connecting pets with youth to support mental health, and funding programs designed to keep people and pets together in times of crisis. To learn more about causes Purina supports, visit [www.purina.com/partnerships](http://www.purina.com/partnerships).

### ***Powering Pet Adoption***

While the pet population in US-based pet shelters grew by nearly a quarter-million animals in 2023,<sup>1</sup> Petfinder powered by Purina hosts the world's largest database of adoptable pets, offering the technology to more than 14,000 shelters and rescues at no cost. In 2023, Petfinder leveraged data and insights to help match an estimated 1.5 million pets with new families.

To support shelters and rescues, Purina donated over \$10 million in nutritious pet food and cat litter to dozens of pet welfare partners throughout the country that are caring for adoptable pets and also supporting pet owners who are struggling to make ends meet. Purina also collaborated with Greater Good Charities to transport adoptable pets from overcrowded southern shelters to Pacific Northwest shelters, which offer more space and a better chance at adoption.

### ***Supporting Youth Mental Health***

With reports that seven out of 10 teens in the U.S. are struggling with mental health<sup>2</sup>, Purina is harnessing the healing power of pets to match more therapy dogs with youth to help reduce stress, anxiety, depression, lower blood pressure and increase self-confidence.

To help meet the increasing demand for therapy dogs, Purina is helping place more trained service and therapy dogs in schools and pediatric hospitals. In addition, the company launched a new 16-week pet therapy certification course with Duo Dogs, a nonprofit that trains dogs and connects them to people with specific mental, emotional, or physical needs. More than 30 Purina associates graduated from the program last year and have since completed over 10,000 pet therapy sessions and volunteered hundreds of hours with their dogs in schools, hospitals, and youth organizations. In addition, 10 Purina employees volunteered as puppy raisers for Duo Dogs, opening their homes to train and socialize a litter of Labrador Retriever puppies who will soon return to Duo Dogs for advanced training and placement for service.

"At Purina, we see every day how pets can have a significant impact on our mental health," said Dr. Julie Spears, a Purina scientist who completed the Duo Touch Therapy certification program with her dog. "When we visit children and teens in schools or hospitals, we get to play an active role in making pet therapy more accessible for area youth."

### ***Creating Space for Survivors and Pets to Heal Together***

Statistics show an estimated one in three women and one in four men experience some form of domestic abuse in their lifetimes, and more than 70 percent of domestic violence survivors report that their abuser threatened or harmed their pets as a means of control. However very few domestic violence shelters accept pets. Since 2019, Purina has invested over \$2 million through its Purple Leash Project and partnership with nonprofit RedRover to help domestic violence shelters make the changes needed to accept pets.

When Purina and RedRover began this work only 4 percent of shelters accepted pets. However, through the Purple Leash Project, and over \$500,000 in grants awarded last year alone, 18 percent of domestic violence shelters are now pet-friendly. But there's more work to be done. Purina's goal to help ensure at least 25% of domestic violence shelters become pet-friendly by 2025.

### ***Connecting Veterans with Service Dogs***

More than 3 million military veterans struggle with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Service dogs are beneficial for reducing the severity of PTSD symptoms and suicidal behaviors, but the demand for these life-saving dogs far exceeds supply. That's why Purina has invested more than \$1 million through its Dog Chow Service Dog Salute program to support the care and training of more service dogs for veterans with PTSD at no cost to the veterans.

### ***Supporting Pets and People in the Wake of Disaster***

When natural disaster strikes, Purina has a history of supporting impacted communities so that people can get to safety with their pets and begin to rebuild together. Following the devastating Hawaii wildfires last August, Purina worked with global nonprofit Greater Good Charities to aid both immediate and long-term recovery efforts through grants and pet food donations to the people, pets, and nonprofits across the islands.

### ***Caring for Our Communities and the Planet***

As a company with factories in 24 cities across the U.S., Purina partners with local nonprofits to make the community a better place to live and work for pets and people alike. Each May, associates are encouraged to take time away from work to volunteer in their communities for Purina Cares Day. In 2023, associates logged thousands of volunteer hours and service projects ranging from planting community gardens and distributing food to people and pets in need, to making improvements to local dog parks and pet shelters. Purina also made more than 20 grants surpassing \$1 million to support capital and capacity building projects for local nonprofits in its communities.

In addition to Purina's commitment to pet health and nutrition, the company is focused on helping to create a healthier planet for generations to come. Purina helps to restore the natural environment pets love and the planet we call home by supporting farmers as they transition to regenerative agriculture practices, powering its facilities with renewable electricity, designing recyclable packaging, and more. As part of this work, the company supports nonprofit organizations that are helping to make a positive impact in these areas.

### **About Nestlé Purina PetCare**

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations.

has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering extraordinary, science-backed nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Friskies and Tidy Cats. Our more than 10,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products, and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://www.purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

<sup>1</sup> According to the Shelter Animals Count

<sup>2</sup> National 4-H Council 2020 Survey, conducted by the Harris Poll

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