

Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#)
2. Print
3. Pdf
4. Node
5. Entity Print

USDA and DOJ Secure Surrender of Close to 150 Animals from Michigan Animal Dealer

[Print](#)

Contact:

APHISPress@usda.gov

WASHINGTON, August 28, 2023— The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice and USDA’s Office of the General Counsel, has entered into a settlement agreement with Zachery Keeler, owner of Even Keel Exotics in Temperance, Michigan.

As part of this agreement, a Consent Decision & Order was entered on August 16, 2023, permanently revoking Mr. Keeler’s Animal Welfare Act (AWA) license. Mr. Keeler will surrender close to 150 animals, including red fox, serval, kinkajou, and a fishing cat, as well as ring-tailed lemurs that are protected under the Endangered Species Act.

“APHIS is committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for animals protected under the Animal Welfare Act,” said Deputy Administrator for APHIS’ Animal Care Program, Dr. Roxanne Mullaney. “This includes undertaking aggressive enforcement action against repeat, egregious violators of the law and working closely with APHIS partners to ensure AWA compliance.”

APHIS has secured placement at private facilities that are equipped to handle the animals. All of the animals were placed with AWA-licensed facilities in good standing.

Each year, APHIS protects millions of animals nationwide that are covered by the AWA. The Act, and accompanying regulations developed by APHIS, set Federal standards of care for certain animals that are bred at the wholesale level, used in research, transported commercially, or exhibited to the public. Under the law, APHIS has the ability to enforce the AWA through both administrative and federal litigation. In this instance, APHIS utilized both administrative and federal litigation to achieve prompt revocation of Mr. Keeler's AWA license and the best possible outcome for this licensee's animals. Inspection reports for this facility, and all facilities licensed under the AWA, are available on [APHIS' website](#).

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.