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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **At Easter, Choose the Chocolate Bunny**

**Roseville, CA** – Peter Cottontail doesn't make a great gift. For those considering an Easter present of a baby rabbit or chick, the Placer SPCA asks them to reconsider.

“Rabbit ownership is great for those who know what they are getting into,” said Placer SPCA CEO Leilani Vierra, “but bunnies aren't toys.” Rabbits can live for up to 10 years and require regular veterinary care, including spaying and neutering, Fuzzy baby chicks grow into gangly, less-cute chickens.

“We want to discourage people from thinking of pets of any kind as disposable,” said Vierra. “We don't want to see an increase in the number of unwanted rabbits or chickens after the spring holiday.”

The Placer SPCA received a record number of rabbits in 2009, at one point housing 28 bunnies at their center and in foster homes. Seven bunnies born at the center last spring, now adults, are still waiting for forever homes.

If you are seriously considering a pet rabbit for your family, don't buy on impulse and keep in mind the following:

- Rabbits are not low-maintenance. Their cages or pens need to be cleaned daily, and they need fresh hay, vegetables, and water on a daily basis. They also need to be monitored for health issues.
- Rabbits can easily suffer serious injury if handled roughly or dropped by a small child.
- Rabbits need social contact and do not do well when penned outside by themselves.
- Many rabbits do not like to be picked up or carried, and can scratch or bite.
- Rabbits are active animals with powerful legs for jumping. They need enough space to move freely, and a small cage purchased as a carrier is not large enough for a permanent home.

If you think a pet rabbit is right for you, please wait until after the holiday and check with your local shelters and rabbit rescue groups.

For more information, please contact the Placer SPCA, your local animal welfare experts, at (916) 782-7722 or (530) 885-7387, extension 100 or email [customercare@placerspca.org](mailto:customercare@placerspca.org).

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