



### **Issue:**

Resort hotels commonly experience overpopulation of cats on premises, which is annoying for employees, guests, and sometimes evokes health concerns.

### **Benefit of Cats at Resort Hotels:**

Based on international experience, it is to a hotel's benefit to have cats on the grounds. And, it is a fact, that where there is a food supply, there will always be animals breeding. If it is not the feral cats, there will be rodents.

By humanely managing the cat population, a hotel can effectively eliminate rodent infestation at the same time.

A humane solution has been developed to address this issue, and hotel participation creates a pro-active & positive image.

### **Current Method of Cat Population Control: Poisoning**

Most hotels, not knowing what to do, allow their staff to poison the feral cat population.

This is undesirable for many reasons, besides the obvious humane reason (poison is cruel and is a prolonged agonizing death).

#### ***Additionally poison does the following:***

- It fails to address the root problem: the issue is one of open food areas where animals breed - poisoning will not alter this, the poisoning of the feral population merely opens a niche, for other animals to replace the ones that were there and poisoned. Where there is food, animals will come to feed, and will return.

Poisoned dead animals will attract other animal species and they will be poisoned also. This includes birds, and desirable wildlife - entire food chains will be poisoned. And this opens the possibility of guests becoming contaminated as well - which is a serious health hazard with financial implications.

### **Controlled Humane Solution - The Cat Café:**

To humanely address this issue, WSPA (World Society for the Protection of Animals) has developed a concept, which CANDi, through the support of tourism, would like to put into practice with resorts and tour operators throughout Mexico, South America and Costa Rica.

The program is named "the Cat Café". It requires some simple set up, & coordination with a local veterinarian.

## Cat Café Concept:

To provide a feeding area on hotel grounds away from the kitchen and food areas

- To provide a constant food source at programmed times, so the cats will learn where and when to get food. A constant food source must be nutritional for the cats. (The food course must be a constant activity in high and low seasons.)
- To allow guests to take part in feeding times: bringing specified food from their individual meals. We suggest that suitable food items be printed in the regular menus, so that they are items guests can order with left-overs in mind. These left-overs can be packaged to-go, by the waiter, and are expressly for the cat café participation and place in a refrigerated box for you at the feeding area. Please remember that food spoils.
- If you initiate the restaurant left-over food policy - which is an excellent way to involve your guests in your humane animal protection policy - please ensure that the food\*, which has been set aside in your restaurant, can be retrieved during the specific cats feeding times. Or formulate a policy which meets the spirit of the participation, while keeping a feeding schedule - for example, an outside ice chest for this purpose. The package should have the guest's name, and the kitchen may prepare some additional packages for the cats' feeding times for the guests as well. (This is also a good use of appropriate left-overs.)
- To post a sign on site at the Cat Café, indicating where guests can make a donation.
- The money collected will be used to keep the animals healthy, spayed, and neutered.
- In conjunction with the veterinarian program: to trap cat café cats so they can be spayed and neutered, vaccinated, de-parasited, and returned to hotel grounds. In other words, create a strong, healthy, and non-reproductive cat population.
- If there is a large feral population, to find homes for the adoptable animals (working with the local veterinarian and community).
- To keep on the grounds a cat population which is strong, healthy, and non-reproductive (at a manageable number for the premises: for the present and the future.)

Our goal with this program for CANDi is to have in place a group of veterinarians and volunteers in their community. This group will work out of their office that can facilitate FREE spay and neuter for the resort cats, AS WELL AS the local community animals on the streets for cats and dogs and for families who have pets. The funds raised from the cat café will support the veterinarian, medical costs and medication.

## Hotel Guest Participation and Funding:

Many hotel guests today are affluent and care about animal welfare and the environment.

To implement a hotel policy which not only solves a problem for the hotel, but is innovative and humane, will increase your hotel stature both locally and internationally.

## How the will the funds get into the right hands:

Each resort will have a bag that will be located in the lobby reception.

This bag will be kept in a safe. The cheques donated by the guests will be put into that bag and each week the bag will be picked up by a CANDi representative. The money will then be deposited into a CANDi account in that location. The money will then be distributed and accounted for by CANDi. This money will be used to help the animals in the resort and the local community. As the donations grow, we can continue to add locations and offering other programs such as fostering and adoptions of unwanted animals, and other medical attention. In other words, creating a support system for the local dogs and cats of that community.

*Tourists are very turned off by starving street animals, so as well as being good for the feral cats and dogs in your community; it is good for your local tourism.*

- A small shelter should be built which is inexpensive and simple. It should protect the animals from sun and rain, functional for the cats while being aesthetically pleasing to hotel visitors: the ratio of 3 square feet per cat would equal 36 square feet for 12 cats, which is approximately a space of 6 feet by 6 feet etc. Please see photo (on brochure) which is at the end of this document.

- Build small shelter, provide daily food, purchase cat traps\*\* and provide initial veterinarian care costs. Within a short amount of time, this program should be paying for itself and earning more money which will go toward local spay neuter programs. The groundskeepers and maintenance staff can find a part of the hotel grounds, which is an adequate distance away from food areas, and start to leave food in this designated sanitary place, 2 times daily - this will begin the process of drawing away the cats from food areas

### **Tips to start:**

- It is recommended that anchovies and sardines are left to begin with, due to their strong odour. This will attract cats to the new feeding place. Fresh water should be left twice daily
- Remove all the food that was not previously eaten with the next feeding
- A sandbox for the area so that cats will eliminate here and not on hotel grounds where guests may be

It has been proven in several resort hotels, including a large one in Rio de Janeiro, that the cat population will be stabilized, and guest donations will not only make your program self sustaining, but will earn money to go into the community spay neuter programs surrounding your hotel and increasing tourist appeal.

### ***Thus by building the Cat Café, you are:***

- Preventing rodent populations
- Reducing health-risks to your employees and guests
- Positively involving your guests
- Leading & supporting your local community in same - which is good for you hotel and your hotel chain.
- Humanely solving a cat over population problem
- Establishing your hotel as a local leader for the tourist trade to draw from, in pro-active & humane overpopulation solutions for street and abandoned animals - an issue which greatly disturbs tourists and affects tourism.

### ***Specific diet and feeding suggestions:***

As soon as the cat population is identified within a 3 day period, the anchovies and sardines used to attract the cats should be slowly changed to a more stable diet. This diet should be using regular feeding times with foods that are within your normal supplies. The following is a list of suggested foods:

- diced up meat
- diced up chicken - no bones
- diced up fish - no bones or smoked fish
- eggs

Mix or blend meat, fish, eggs, and cheese together in bowls so meals are more nutritionally balanced.

### ***Foods to avoid:***

- spices or spicy foods - such as sausages
- vegetables
- potatoes
- breads
- pasta or rice
- desserts

The ratio of bowls to cats is 1 bowl to every 3 cats, and filling it to feed approximately one cup per cat, per feeding (which the kitchen staff can set up). The feeding area should be kept clean to protect the health of the cats, the staff, and the hotel guests.

Therefore, for 12 cats, there would be a minimum of 4 bowls holding 3 cups of food per bowl - increase size proportionally to meet your needs.

We do not suggest a minimum or maximum number of cats per hotel, as it is based on the size of your facility. As you control your population, based on this program, you will find that this cat population will actually help your hotel by providing not only a positive image internationally and locally, but will protect you against many other negative side effects caused from a rodent population.

