

## Issue: Responsible Pet Ownership

"Pet ownership in the U.S. has more than tripled from the 1970s, when approximately 67 million households had pets, to 2012, when there were 164 million owned pets. In other words, in 2012, 62 percent of American households included at least one pet" (humanesociety.org.2014). No matter the species, (dog, cat, horse, or bird) there are several things to keep in mind when owning a pet. When selecting your pet make sure to choose one that suits your lifestyle and budget. Committing to being a responsible pet owner also means that you are having to invest your time and money into tending to your animals. Taking time to socialize, train, exercise, and care for your pets health will provide you will all the qualities of being a responsible owner. All animals deserve to be loved, and in turn they will love you, so by making sure your pet has a quality life style and plenty of attention is important.



Picture Courtesy of Eva Madrid (Dona Ana County 4-H)

## **"KNOW" How To Be A Responsible Pet Owner:**

**K**ee in mind that you should only have the number of pets in which you can provide appropriate food, water, space, shelter, and companionship for.

**N**oticing all the responsibilities of what it takes to be a pet owner will help you in deciding which pet is right for you and your family.

**O**bey all local ordinances such as: licensing or tags, leash requirements, noise control, and a healthy safe environment.

**W**hen recognizing a decline in your pets health, it is important to contact a veterinarian and remember to make yearly checkups for your animal. Monthly preventative steps such as vaccines, parasite control etc. are also good ideas to keep your pet at its best health.