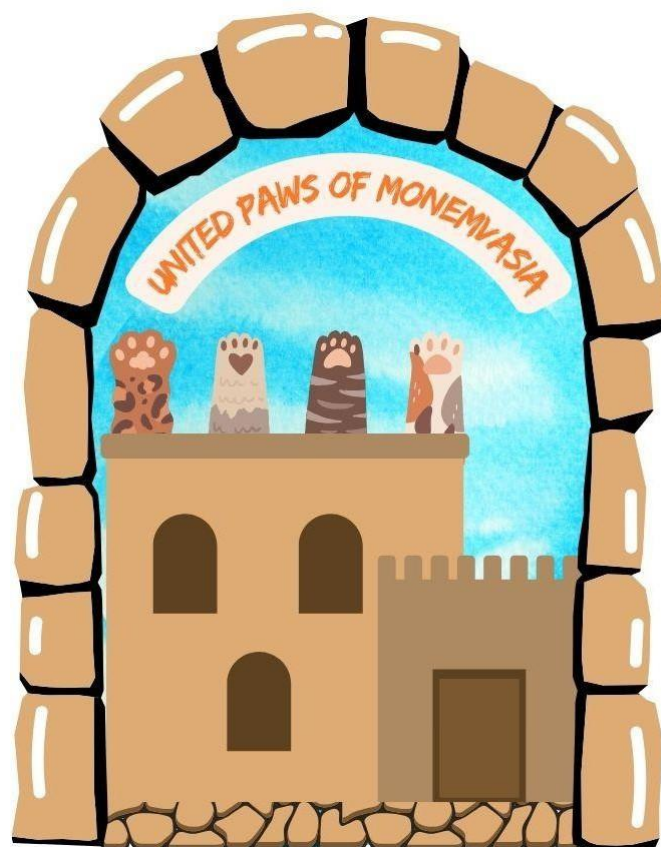




UNITED PAWS OF MONEMVASIA CARE AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION GUIDE





1. The origin of the project

The situation of stray animals in Monemvasia has been the subject of increasing interest in recent years, both from citizens and from the municipal authorities. The appearance of large numbers of dogs and cats in public places, combined with the lack of organised support, has created tensions and deep concern. On the one hand, residents observed instances of animal abandonment, starvation or even abuse. On the other hand, the absence of appropriate structures, actions and policies had allowed the problem to develop out of control.

This project started as a holistic intervention, designed not only to address the problem but mainly for long-term prevention and mindset change in the community. Its design was based on successful examples from Greece and Europe, but also on consultation with local stakeholders who are familiar with the temperament and specific needs of the area.

The starting point was the assumption that the protection of stray animals is not only the responsibility of animal welfare organisations. It is a social, public, educational and environmental matter. Citizens, volunteers, students, professionals and authorities had to become stakeholders - not mere observers.

2. THE OBJECTIVES

The project was launched with five main objectives:

1. **Reducing the stray animal population in a humane way:** through neutering, vaccination and adoption awareness.
2. **Creating safe AND clean feeding areas:** in strategic locations in the city, so that animals can be fed safely and with dignity.
3. **Educating AND informing the community:** about animal needs, living rules and citizens' rights.
4. **Cultivating a culture of responsibility:** fostering a sense of "belonging" to the solution and not to the problem.
5. **Promotion of Monemvasia as a model of a sensitive city:** aiming at promoting tourism and strengthening social cohesion.

These objectives were translated into concrete actions, timetables were organised and measurable indicators of success were defined for each phase.



The main objective of the project was to reduce the number of stray animals in a sustainable and humane way, through a series of multidimensional actions combining prevention (sterilisation), support (feeding), education (workshops and awareness campaigns), organisation (infrastructure and networking), and evaluation (monitoring and adaptation). Maintaining a healthy stray population, free of outbreaks or abuse, was the cornerstone of this effort.

3. Needs of the Community

Prior to the planning, an informal survey of the existing conditions was carried out: a large number of unvaccinated and unsterile animals, insufficient feeding stations, insufficient information for the residents, almost non-existent organization for the management of waste related to the feeding of stray animals, and the absence of a network of partnerships.

The need for coordination between public and private actors (municipality, local veterinarians, schools, animal welfare organisations, businesses) was also highlighted. At the same time, many residents had a positive attitude towards animals, but did not know how to help practically. In other words, a structured framework for citizen involvement was missing.

4. Engagement Strategy AND Methodology

The approach was based on the principle of **participatory action**. From the first month of the project, open meetings were organised with residents, business people and volunteers, where the objectives were presented and a call for ideas and support was made. At the same time, working groups were set up by theme (food, environment, education, waste).

The methodology included:

- **Setting priorities** based on available resources and the needs of the region
- **Ongoing communication** with partners and the public through social media and newsletters
- **Real-time evaluation**, with weekly status reports and flexibility in planning

5. Partnerships



The project could not have been achieved without networking and partnerships. The most important partners were:

- **The Municipality of Monemvasia**, which provided permits, technical support and funding
- **Local VETERINARIANS**, who participated in the sterilizations on a pro bono or reduced fee basis
- **RESIDENT volunteers** who helped in the construction and maintenance of the stations
- **Environmental CONSULTANTS**, who contributed to the sustainable placement of infrastructure
- **Schools**, which embraced the educational dimension of the project
- **Enterprises**, which provided materials or space for the actions

6. Actions in detail

The project was implemented in 12 phases (monthly), with each month delivering specific results:

- **Months 1-2:** Organisation, preparation, networking
- **Months 3-6:** Implementation of information campaign, installation of stations, 1st round of sterilisation
- **Months 7-8:** Evaluation, feedback, next phase planning
- **Months 9-10:** 2nd round of sterilisation, extension of actions in schools and tourism sector
- **Months 11-12:** Final evaluation, report, presentation to the community

7. Project innovations

Some innovative elements:

- The installation of **feeding/refuse stations** with friendly design and durable materials
- The creation of a **digital stray animal feeding guide** for public use
- **Interactive communication with the community** through storytelling in social media
- The inclusion of **children as awareness-raising agents**, not just recipients

7. Challenges & Lessons

No implementation is without challenges. The project faced:

- Reactions from some citizens who were afraid of animals or thought that "they should be removed"
- Delays in the receipt of materials
- Lack of sufficient staff during the summer months
- Need for ongoing maintenance of stations

The main lessons learned:



- **Systematic communication** is the key to acceptance by the community
- **Continuous evaluation AND adaptation** make the project resilient
- **The involvement of children AND young people** has a multiplier effect
- **Local partnerships** are more effective than external impositions

Foods that are recommended

Proper feeding of stray animals is fundamental to their health, longevity and normal behaviour. Nutrition affects their physical condition, their immune system, their ability to cope with stressful situations, and the likelihood of aggressive or depressive behaviour. For strays living in conditions of intense environmental and social stress, adequate food is not a luxury - it is survival.

Below are the main categories of food that may be given to dogs and cats in street or semi-permanent feeding stations.

1.1 Dry Food (Croquettes)

The most practical and widespread option. Croquettes are efficient, have a long shelf life, are easy to store and are nutritionally balanced. For stray animals, dry food offers significant advantages:

- Contains essential fatty acids, proteins and carbohydrates
- Not easily altered in outdoor temperatures
- Does not attract insects or microbes directly
- There is a wide range of variation by age, size and physiological condition of the animal

TYPES of dry food:

- For puppies/kittens (puppy/kitten)
- For adult
- For animals with allergies (grain-free)
- Hypoallergenic / low fat for obese animals
- With joint support for the elderly

†_n - *Tip:* Always use dry food labelled **complete** and not just "complementary".

1.2 Fresh Water



Necessary and often more difficult than eating. Water must be replenished daily, provided in clean bowls (ideally metallic or ceramics) and protected from the sun or frost. Dehydration is the number one danger to strays in the summer.

- Change the water daily
- Clean the bowl with water and vinegar every 2-3 days
- Avoid plastic bowls that grow bacteria
- Place the water in a slightly shaded area to avoid evaporation

Useful: Add ice in summer or insulated containers in winter to maintain temperature.

1.3 Cooked RICE with Lean Chicken

An excellent alternative when there is no access to dry food. Rice and chicken are a source of easily digestible carbohydrates and protein, without putting a strain on the stomach. They are an ideal meal for animals with digestive problems or recovering from illness.

Preparation instructions:

- Boil 1 cup of rice and 1 unseasoned chicken breast
- Cut the chicken into small pieces
- Stir and allow to cool completely
- Keep in the fridge for 2-3 days

Attention:

- Never seasonings, salt or oil
- Remove all bones (dangerous choking or puncture)

1.4 Boiled Vegetables

Vegetables are an excellent source of fibre, vitamins and moisture. They provide antioxidants and aid digestion.

Suitable VEGETABLES:

- Carrot (boiled or steamed)
- Pumpkin (plain, not with sugar)
- Broccoli (in small quantities)
- Zucchini
- Peas



Avoid:

- Sprouted potatoes (toxic)
- Onion, garlic (toxic to dogs and cats)

How you offer them:

- In small pieces, boiled or steamed
 - As an addition to rice/chicken
 - Never raw in large quantities (risk of bloating)
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1.5 Specialised Foods

For animals with special needs (elderly, allergic, postpartum females), special formulas may be required. In such cases:

- Consult a veterinarian
 - Prefer veterinary shops rather than supermarkets
 - If you don't have access, go for light dry food or lamb-based food (less allergic reactions)
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1.6 Healthy Snacks (OPTIONAL)

Although not necessary, snacks can be used to train or socialise animals (e.g. to trust volunteers). Indicative:

- Dried chicken fillets
- Snack with sweet potato
- Small biscuits without salt

CAUTION: Snacks = treats, not main food.

Foods that are **FORBIDDEN**

Good intentions are not enough when feeding stray animals. Many citizens, without intending to harm, offer animals food that is toxic, inappropriate or extremely indigestible. Most of these foods are everyday products of the human diet, but the dog's and cat's body functions quite differently from the human body.

Here is an extensive list of foods that should **never** be offered stray animals, with explanations and examples.

2.1 Chocolate

Chocolate is one of the most well-known toxic foods for animals because of substance **theobromine**, which causes neurological and cardiac disorders in dogs and cats.

Symptoms of poisoning:

- Tachypnea, tremor
- Vomiting, diarrhoea
- Irregularities
- In large quantities, it can cause death

Any type of chocolate is PROHIBITED: dark, milk, white (to a lesser extent), cocoa powder.

2.2 ONION & Onion Garlic

Both contain **thiosulfates**, which destroy red blood cells and cause **HAEMOLYTIC anaemia**.

EVEN small amounts of onion or garlic in food (e.g. meat in sauce) are dangerous.

They challenge:

- Weakness, drowsiness
- Tachypnea
- Drop in hematocrit
- In advanced stages: coma or death

2.3 Grapes & Raisins

The exact mechanism is still unknown, but we know for sure that they cause **acute kidney failure** in dogs, even in small amounts.

EXAMPLE: 5-6 raisins can be fatal to a small dog.

Avoid:

- Fresh grapes
- Raisins in sweets
- Cereal bars with raisins

2.4 Alcohol

Alcohol is highly toxic and can cause nervous system depression, liver and digestive system problems.

It can CAUSE:

- Difficulty in breathing
- Spasms
- Coma
- Death

Even eating a small amount of dessert or pastry with alcohol is dangerous.

2.5 Milk & Dairy

Most adult dogs and cats are **lactose intolerant**. Their digestive system does not produce enough lactase, the enzyme needed break down lactose.

Results:

- Diarrhoea, gas, bloating
- Vomiting
- Dehydration in vulnerable animals

†_n- *Myth:* The image of the cat drinking milk does not correspond to reality. Milk is not a natural food for adult cats.

2.6 Salted & Fried

Excessive consumption of salt (sodium) causes **dehydration, blood pressure, AND HEART problems**. Fat from fried foods increases the risk of **pancreatitis**.

They are prohibited:

- French fries
- Sausages
- Spices
- Ready meals by delivery
- Cookies and snack people

2.7 Dough (YEAST)

Rising dough, especially in raw form (e.g. bread before baking or puff pastry), can expand in the animal's stomach and cause **distension AND intestinal obstruction**.

At the same time, the yeast creates alcohol during decomposition, causing symptoms of **ALCOHOL toxicity**.

2.8 Sweets & Artificial Sweeteners

Sugar in large quantities is not allowed. However, the biggest problems are caused by artificial sweeteners such as **xylitol**, which causes:

- Sudden drop in blood sugar (hypoglycaemia)
- Spasms
- Liver failure

Contained in:

- Chewing gum
- Toothpastes
- Light sweets
- Protein bars

2.9 Raw Bones & Chicken



Raw bones can break into sharp pieces and cause:

- Drowning
- Perforation of the stomach or intestines
- Inflammations

In addition, raw chicken can contain **salmonella or campylobacter**, which are dangerous for both animals and humans.

2.10 Mould & Garbage

Garbage contains toxins from fungi (mycotoxins), food waste has fermented or rotted and is a source of bacterial infection.

The most common effects:

- Food poisoning
 - Vomiting, diarrhoea
 - Neurological episodes from toxins
-

Additional Dangerous Foods (short list)

Food	Impact
Avocados	Poisoning due to persine poisoning
Coffee / Tea	Neurological disorders from caffeine
Mushrooms	Toxicity, especially wild
Nuts (especially macaques)	Spasms, muscle weakness
Tomato unripe / leaves	Toxic substance solanine

Education of the Public

Providing the community with the right information is the most important tool for prevention. Many cases of poisoning or malnutrition are not caused by negligence, but by ignorance.

 We recommend:

- Posters at the feeding stations
- Distribution of leaflets with the "Yes/No" list
- Integration of the guide in school workshops
- Posts with images on social media

Health Directives

Hygiene is just as important as food quality when it comes to caring for stray animals. Providing even the most suitable food can be dangerous if basic rules of cleanliness and safety are not followed. Feeding stations, bowls, litter, food storage and caregiver's personal hygiene are inextricably linked to public health and the prevention of zoonotic diseases (diseases transmitted between animals and humans).

4.1 Cleaning of feeding stations

Feeding stations are the main points of contact between animals and the food and water on offer. If they are not cleaned frequently and properly, they become hotbeds of microbes, fungi and odour, causing more harm than good.

CLEANING instructions:

- We clean the water containers **daily**.
- Clean food containers at least **every 2 days** or residue or mould is observed.
- Use **SOAP AND lukewarm water**, avoiding strong chemicals.
- Alternatively, a **1:3 vinegar solution** (1 part vinegar, 3 parts water) acts as a natural disinfectant.
- Dry the containers completely before repositioning them.

† *Practical tip:* Use two alternating sets of containers in order to clean without delays.

4.2 Food storage

Food must be kept fresh and free of insects, mould or moisture. Dry food in particular can deteriorate and lose if left exposed to light or air.

Suggested PRACTICES:

- We use **airtight bins** for dry food storage.
- Store the food **in a cool AND dark place**, preferably below 20°C.
- We check expiry dates on packages.



- We do not mix new and old food in the same bin.
 - Canned food: once opened, they are kept in the refrigerator and consumed within 48 hours.
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4.3 Protection from Pests

The presence of food residues attracts:

- Flies
- Cockroaches
- Rodents
- Other stray animals or wild animals

This can lead to the transmission of parasites, amoebas and bacteria.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Do not leave food residues on the ground.
- Place the stations in **shady AND protected places**.
- If increased insect disturbances are observed, check for mould or lesions.

- If you use containers with lids, make sure they open easily for animals but close after access.

4.4 Carers' hygiene

Interaction with strays and food management can also expose people to risks. It is important that volunteers know basic personal protection measures.

Personal HYGIENE:

- Wash hands thoroughly after any contact with animals, food or containers.
 - We use **disposable gloves** for cleaning stations.
 - Avoid touching the face/mouth during feeding.
 - If there is an injury to the skin (e.g. an open wound), **protect it with a bandage**.
-

4.5 Common Diseases from Improper Hygiene

To the animals:



- Gastroenteritis
- Parasites (worms, fleas, mites) Food
- poisoning
- Skin infections

To the man:

- Toxoplasmosis (from faeces)
- Salmonellosis
- Lymphocytic choriomeningitis (in extreme cases from mice)
- Dermatophytes

nt - Many diseases are completely avoided by **simple HAND WASHING AND CLEANING of equipment**.

4.6 Cleanliness of the premises

In addition to the feeding stations, attention needs to be paid to their environment:

- Remove food debris after each feeding.
 - We are checking for manure around the station - working with the municipality for cleanup.
 - If the station is located in a communal area, we ensure that it does not cause odour or pollution.
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4.7 Instructions for Handling Suspect Food

If you notice food:

- With a strong smell
- Altered colour
- Suspicious contents (e.g. residues with dust, grains or objects)

Do not touch her.

- Call the municipality or animal welfare organisation immediately.
 - Let other caregivers in the area know.
 - Take photos for documentation.
 - Remove it with gloves and dispose of it in a tightly closed bag.
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4.8 Summer & Winter Conditions

SUMMER:



- Increased risk of bacterial growth Place water in
- cool places, under shade Dry food only in the
- morning and evening

WINTER:

- We use insulating materials under containers (e.g. Styrofoam)
 - Avoid liquid foods that freeze
 - Smaller quantities, but more often
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4.9 Equipment Maintenance

- We check the status of the stations every week.
 - We replace broken or rusty containers.
 - We ask the Municipality for technical support if needed.
 - Record the problems (photographic or written).
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4.10 Cooperation with the Municipality

The Municipality :

- Provides waste collection points around stations
 - Equips volunteers with basic hygiene tools
 - Ensures the disinfection of public places frequently used for feeding
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Conclusion

The hygiene and care of the stations is not just a formal obligation - it is an act of respect for the animals, the people and the project itself. Through adherence to basic practices we can prevent more diseases than we can cure. Every feeding station is a small hospital of responsibility.

Social Responsibility & Legal

FRAMEWORK

Caring for stray animals is not just a matter of moral or emotional sensitivity. It is also a legal obligation, a social responsibility and a sign of culture. Greece, as a member of the European Union, has developed a legal framework for the protection of animals, which obliges not only the authorities, but also the citizens, to actively contribute to their welfare.

In this section we explain:

- What social responsibility means in practice
 - What the law provides for the protection of stray animals
 - Who has the right to feed and where
 - What are the responsibilities of the Municipality
 - What are the fines and penalties in case of infringement
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6.1 Ethical Dimension & Culture

A society's attitude towards its animals reflects humanity. Strays did not choose to live on the street; they are the result of neglect, abandonment, indifference or ignorance. Looking the other way or thinking that 'it is not our responsibility' perpetuates the vicious circle.

Social responsibility requires:

- Conscious attitude towards life and vulnerability
- Participation in solutions, not silence
- Educating children with values of respect for animals
- Creating local networks of carers

Every citizen can be part of the solution, either by feeding properly cleaning a station, or simply protecting animals from abuse.

6.2 Who IS ALLOWED to FEED

According to **Law 4830/2021**, the feeding of stray animals **IS ALLOWED all citizens**, provided that:

- It is done at designated or unobstructed points
- Does not pose a problem cleanliness or public health
- Does not obstruct the passage of pedestrians/vehicles
- Made with feed suitable for animals



The law recognizes the act of feeding as **socially positive**, not a nuisance, as was previously thought.

6.3 Obligations OF Citizens

Citizens wishing to care for strays:

- They must keep the feeding point **clean**
- **Do not leave** food **residues**, containers or litter
- **COOPERATE** with local authorities when requested
- Report injured or sick animals

Animal care must **be SYSTEMATIC, discreet AND responsible**.

6.4 Role of the Municipality

The Municipality has a legal obligation to:

- Manages stray animals on the basis of a care programme (shelters, sterilisation, vaccinations)
- Places feeding and waste stations
- Cooperates with animal welfare associations
- Promotes adoption
- Implement local awareness plans
- Supports citizens and volunteers

💡 *The indifference of local authorities is a violation of European animal welfare legislation.*

6.5 Abuse & mistreatment Complaints

The law clearly states that:

- **Passive abuse** (negligence, food/water deprivation) is punishable by law
- **Active abuse** (violence, poisoning, abandonment) is a **felony** and is punishable by up to 10 years in prison and fines of up to

€100,000 Citizens can make a complaint:

- To the **police**
- In the **municipality**
- To the **prosecutor**



- Through **animal welfare associations**

The anonymity of complaints is guaranteed.

FRAMEWORK of Laws (Greece - EU)

Basic Greek legislation:

- Law **4830/2021**: Animal protection and welfare
- Law **4039/2012** (in force subsidiarily)
- CPR on labelling and registration

European authorities:

- **Lisbon Treaty (Article 13)**: animals are recognised as sentient beings
- **European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals**