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THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROMOTING
ANIMAL WELFARE

**ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FOR NEW YORK CITY
MADDIE'S FUND COMMUNITY PROGRAM**

**FY2005
Summary Report**

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ANALYSIS OF RESULTS FOR NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Introduction

In its first program year (FY2005) New York City made significant progress in its key program areas (Figure 1). The overall animal death rate per 1,000 people in the community dropped 28 percent. The death rate of animals that are either healthy or with treatable conditions per 1,000 people dropped 37 percent. Animal adoptions per 1,000 people increased 83 percent. The live animal release rate, a measure of the portion of shelter animals that are adopted or redeemed, was up 52 percent. In the baseline period the live animal release rate was 35 percent, while in the first program year the live animal release rate was 53 percent.

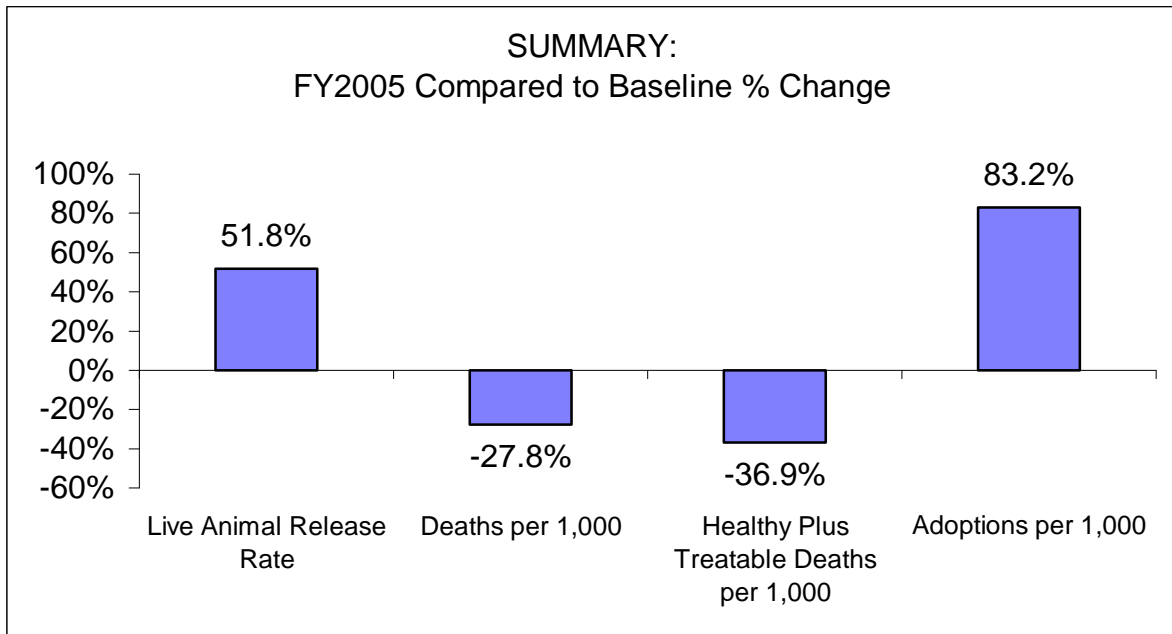


Figure 1

Total Death Rate

The first program year for New York City included the four quarters of the 2005 calendar year. The baseline period was the calendar year of 2003. In the first program year, total deaths of animals in New York City dropped 26.4 percent compared to the baseline period (see Figure 2). When the size of the human population is taken into account, animal deaths dropped 27.8 percent from 3.9 to 2.8 deaths per 1,000 people. The level of deaths in New York City is very low relative to the country at large, with New York City's baseline death rate of roughly four animals per thousand people being

between one-third and one-quarter the average for the country. In fact, for many communities around the country, achieving the baseline death rate would imply eliminating all healthy and treatable animal deaths. While some of this low death rate may be attributable to effective preexisting programs in New York City, much is simply due to demographics, with far fewer people able to keep animals in New York's high density and low rate of ownership housing market. However, the most important point remains that New York City made very strong progress in the first program year towards reducing the overall animal death rate.

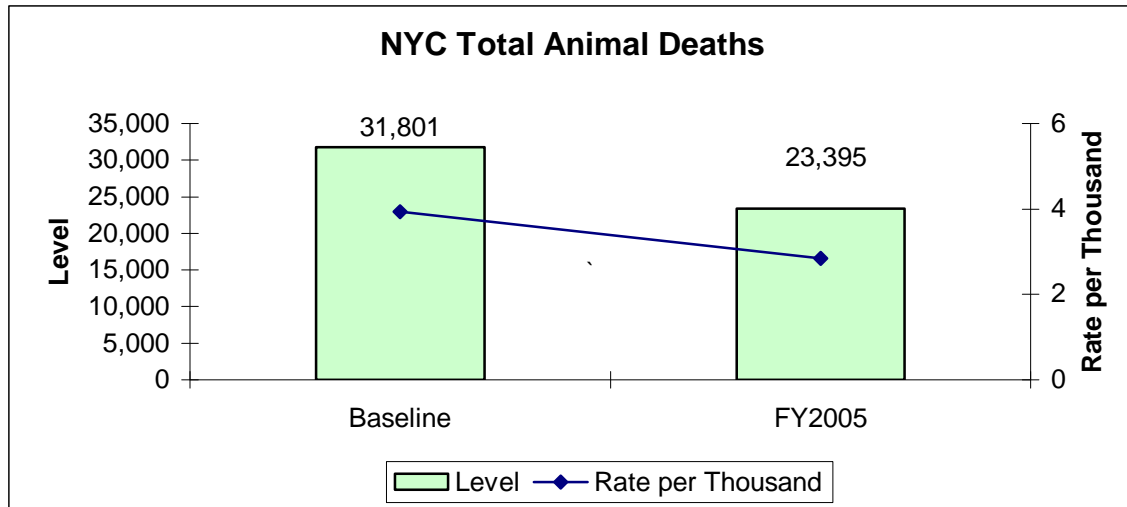


Figure 2

The quarterly death rate is shown in Figure 3. Deaths appear to peak in the third quarter and reach their lowest point in the first quarter. Every quarter had a lower death rate in the first program year than in the corresponding quarter from the baseline period. The greatest percentage drop in death rate was in the second quarter, while the largest drop in terms of absolute level of deaths was in the fourth quarter, which is also the most recent quarter.

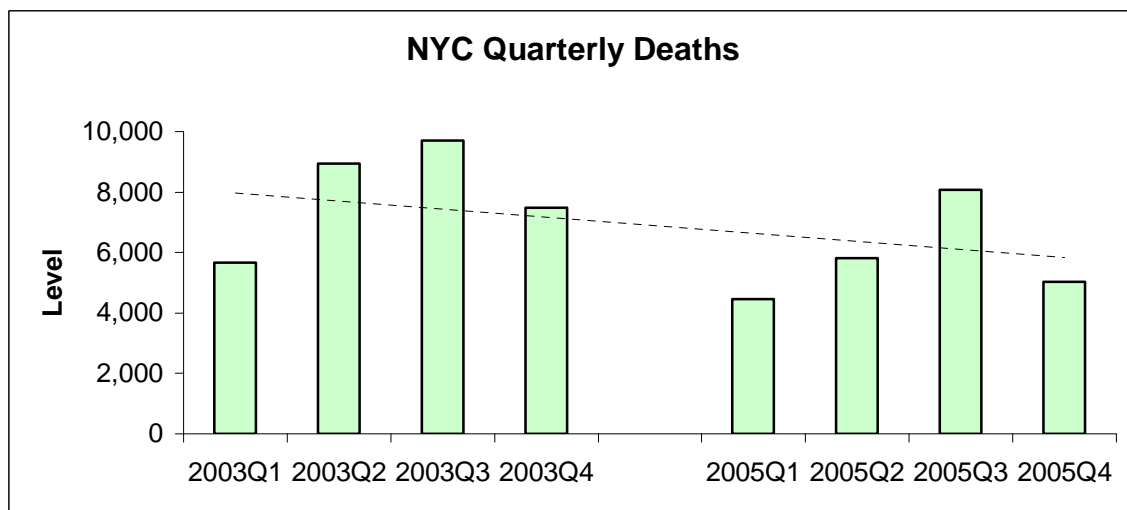


Figure 3

The decline in the death rate in the first program year was triple the program’s goal (see Figure 4). Even if New York City’s death rate does not decline any further in the second or third program year, both years’ total death goals would be met.

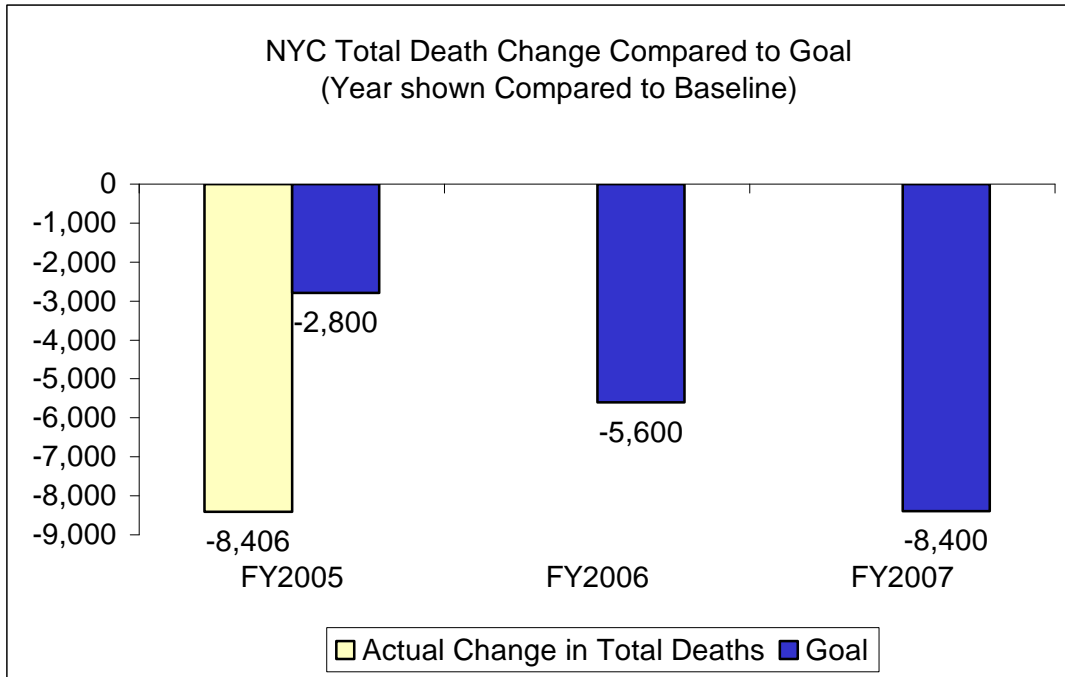


Figure 4

Healthy Animal Deaths

Healthy animal deaths declined 39.4 percent in the first program year, declining to a total of 8,490 deaths, down from 14,000 deaths (see Figure 5). When population size is taken into consideration, healthy animal deaths declined 40.5 percent, to 1.0 deaths per thousand people in FY2005.

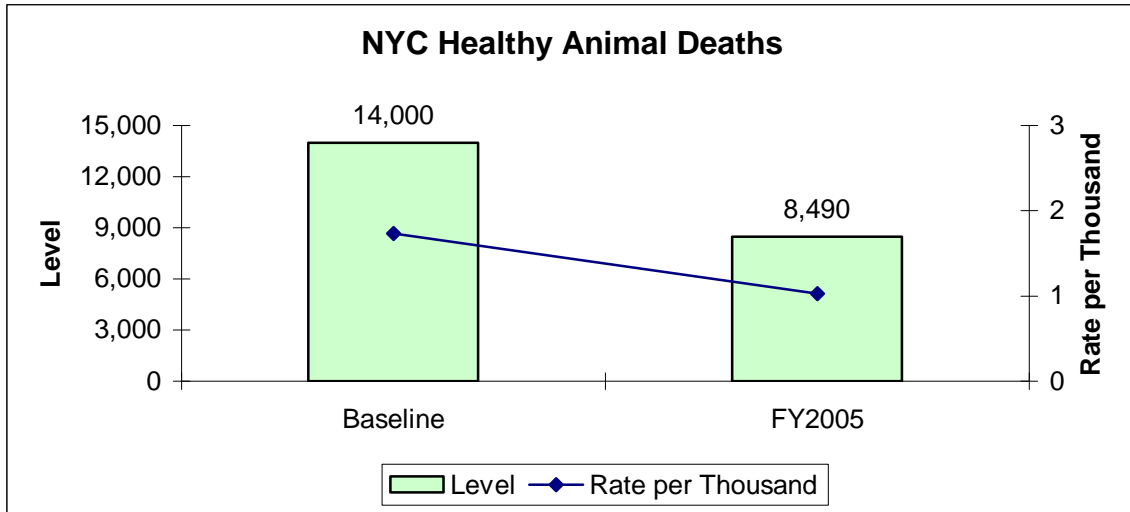


Figure 5

On a quarterly basis, healthy animal deaths show the same seasonal pattern as total deaths, with a peak in the third quarter, and the lowest value in the first quarter (see Figure 6). As with total deaths, healthy animal deaths are down in every quarter compared to the corresponding quarter of the baseline period. The largest percentage decline was 47.8 percent in the fourth quarter, the last quarter for which data is available. The largest decline in level was in the second quarter.

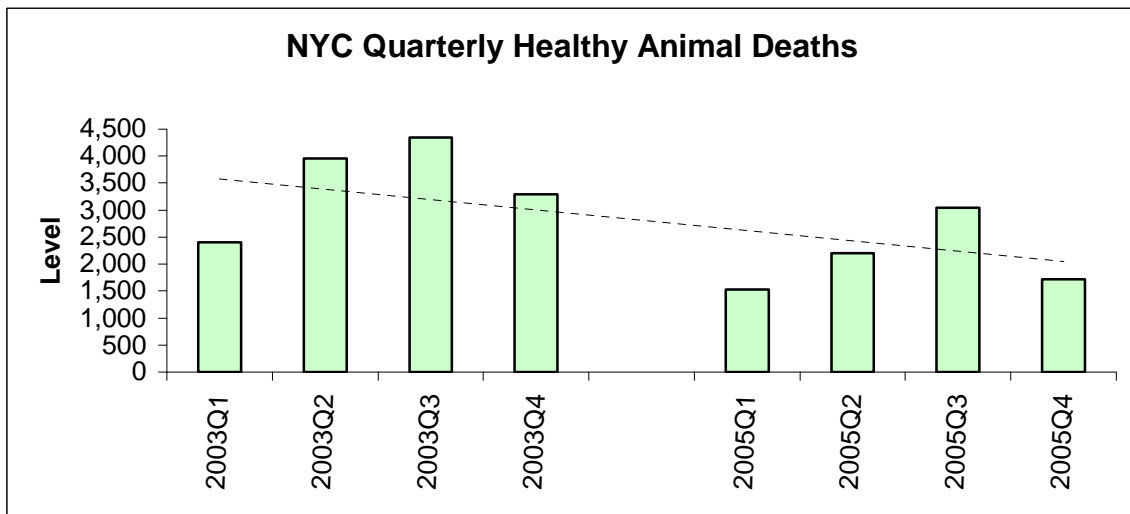


Figure 6

The reduction in healthy animal deaths was nearly double the Maddie’s Fund program goal for the first program year (see Figure 7). After declining by 5,510 in the first program year, healthy animal deaths only need to decline by 90 more to reach the second year’s goal.

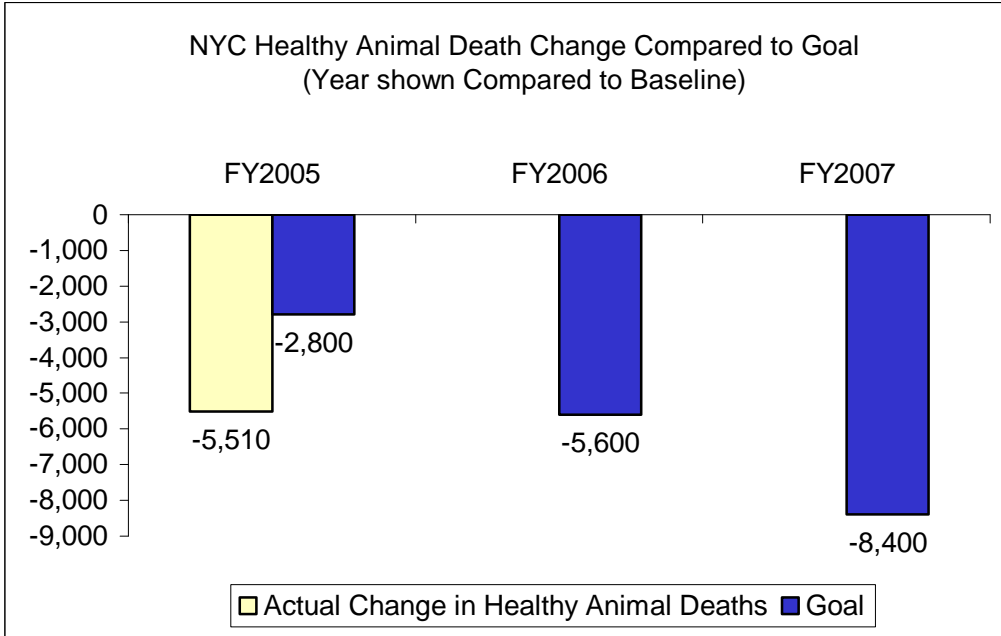


Figure 7

In FY2005, the New York City community program was more than a third of the way towards reaching its five-year goal of reducing all healthy animal deaths (see Figure 8). At the current rate, the New York City program would be able to eliminate all healthy animal deaths long before the end of five years. While it is quite possible that the rate of improvement in the death rate will diminish, if it continued at the current rate in future program years, healthy animal deaths would be eliminated in the third program year.

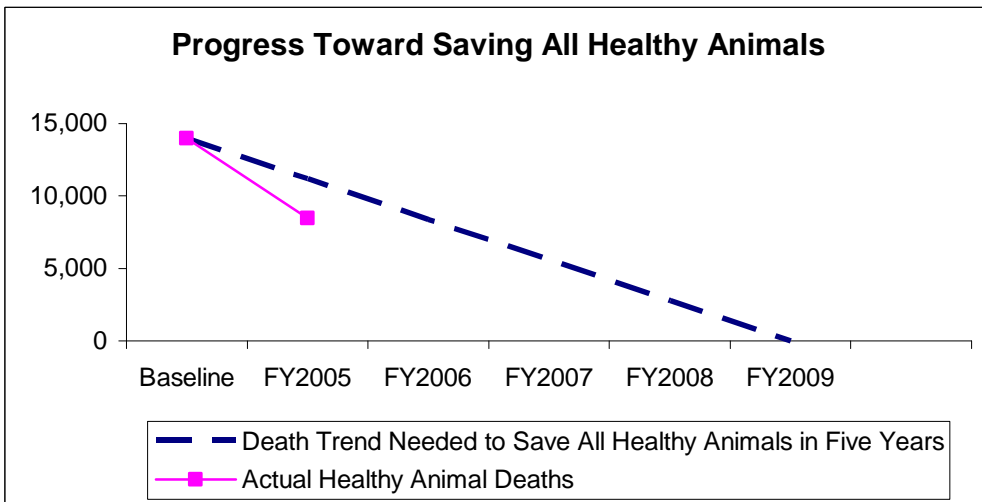


Figure 8

The decline in healthy animal deaths was about two-thirds of the decline in total animal deaths in the first program year (see Figure 9). This was due to declines in death rates across all three major categories of animals.

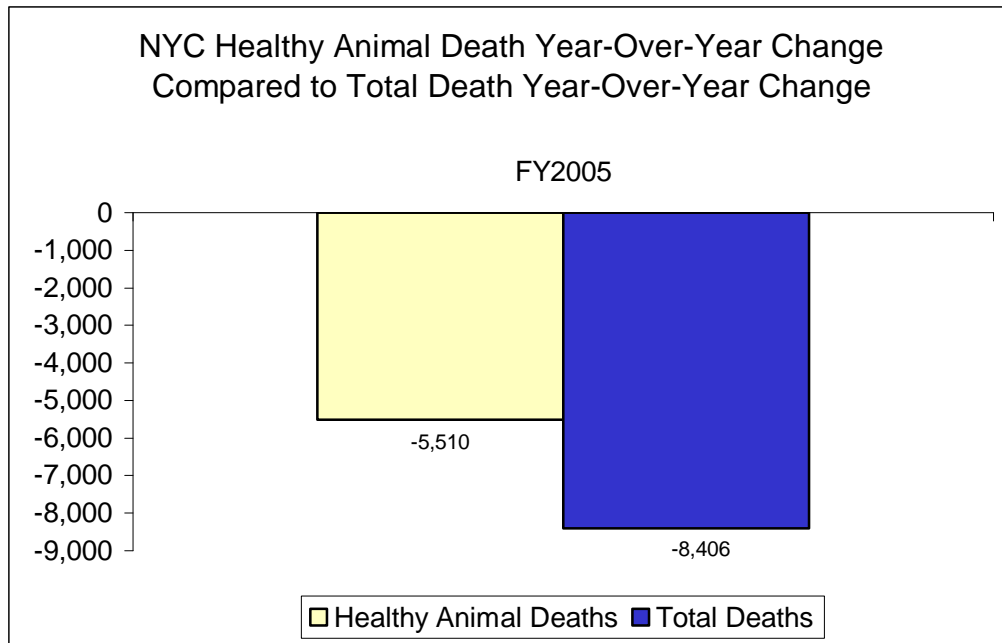


Figure 9

Healthy and Treatable Animal Deaths

Healthy and treatable animals deaths combined declined 35.7 percent from 20,000 deaths to 12,852 deaths between the first program year and the baseline period (see Figure 10). After accounting for the size of the human population, the deaths of healthy and treatable animals combined declined 36.9 percent to 1.6 deaths per 1,000 people.

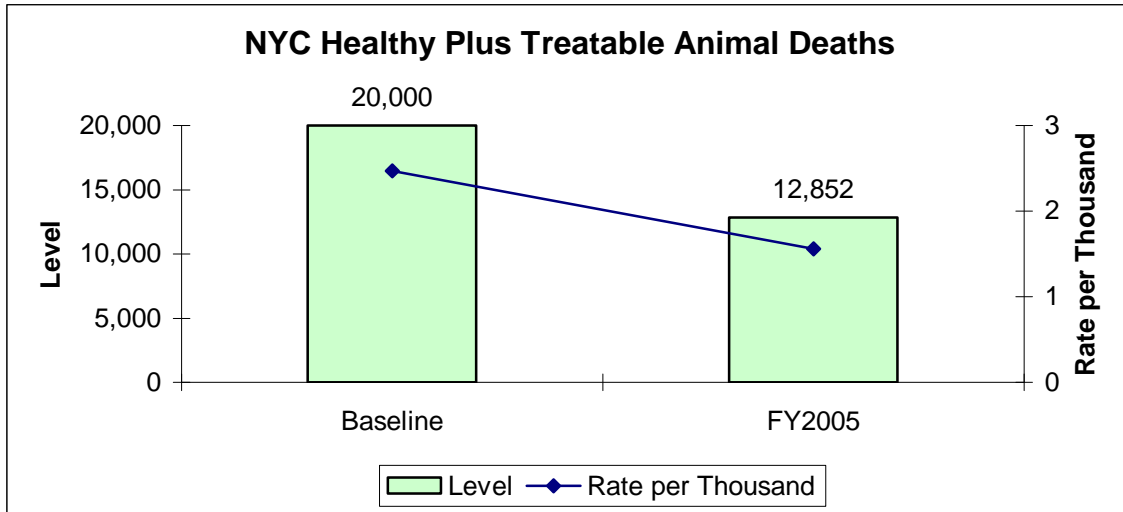


Figure 10

At the current rate of reduction in healthy and treatable animal deaths, these deaths would be eliminated within three years, well within the ten year goal period (see Figure 11). It is important to note that treatable animals by definition present more difficult issues than healthy animals. Therefore, the assumption used here that healthy plus treatable deaths could continue to be reduced at the current rate after all healthy animals are being saved (without additional resources devoted to treating those animals) may be unrealistic. However, treatable deaths alone went down by 27.3 percent, while the primary goal at this point in the program was to reduce healthy animal deaths. Therefore, even if treatable deaths are more difficult to reduce, this may not be an issue in reaching the ten-year goal. Even if the rate of decline in treatable deaths did not accelerate after all healthy deaths were eliminated, all healthy and treatable animal deaths could be eliminated within four years at the current rate of decline.

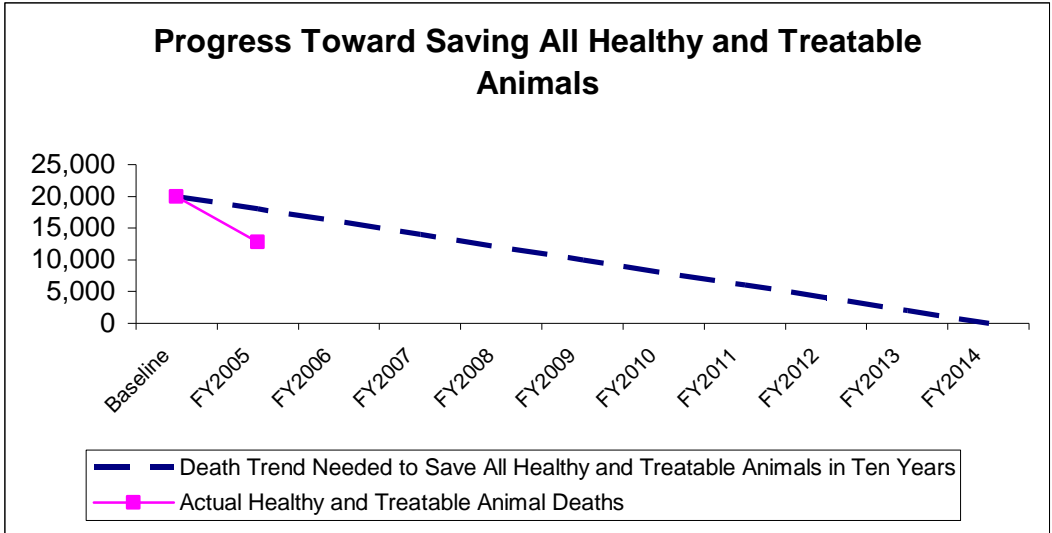


Figure 11

Deaths declined for unhealthy & untreatable animals in the first program year as well as for healthy animals and for treatable animals (see Figure 12). The largest decline both in level and percentage terms was for healthy animals. The decline in unhealthy & untreatable animal deaths can partially be explained by lower intake. However, the full decline in this category cannot be explained based on intake alone.

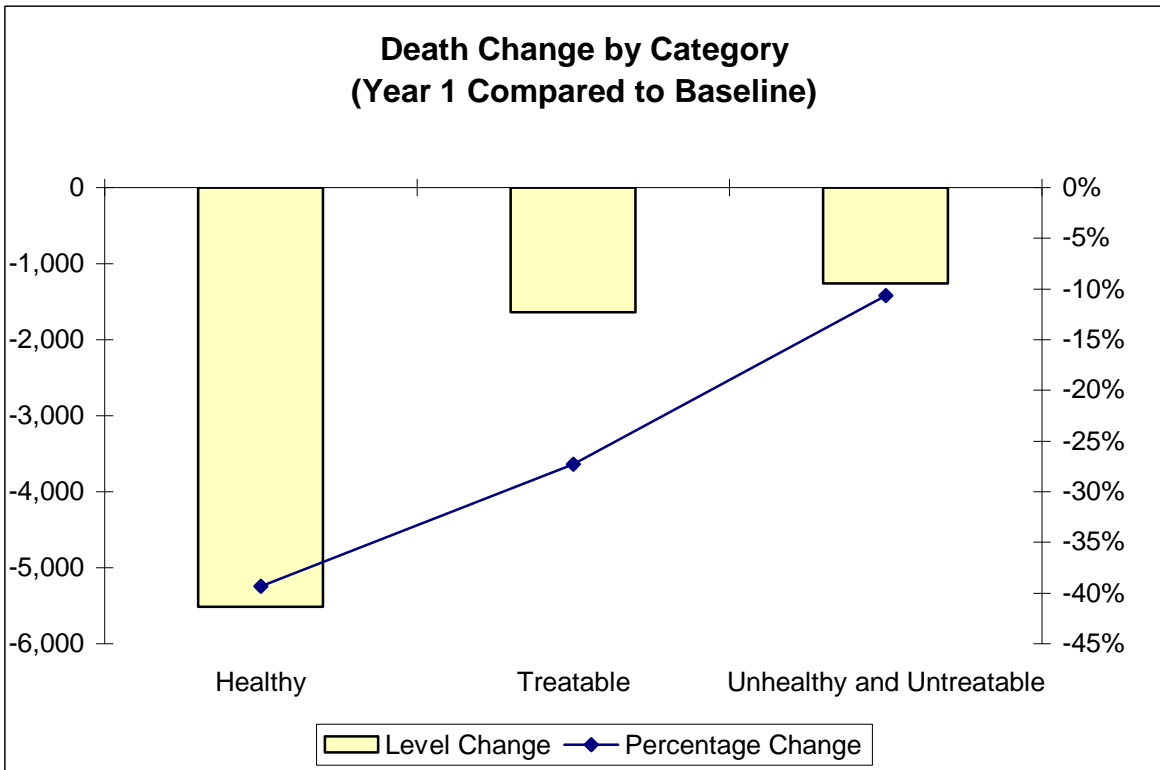


Figure 12

The decline in healthy animal deaths was similar for dogs and cats. The decline in unhealthy & untreatable animal deaths was shared by both dogs and cats, though cat deaths declined at less than half the rate of dogs. For treatable animals, dogs deaths declined sharply, while cat deaths increased moderately (see Figure 13)

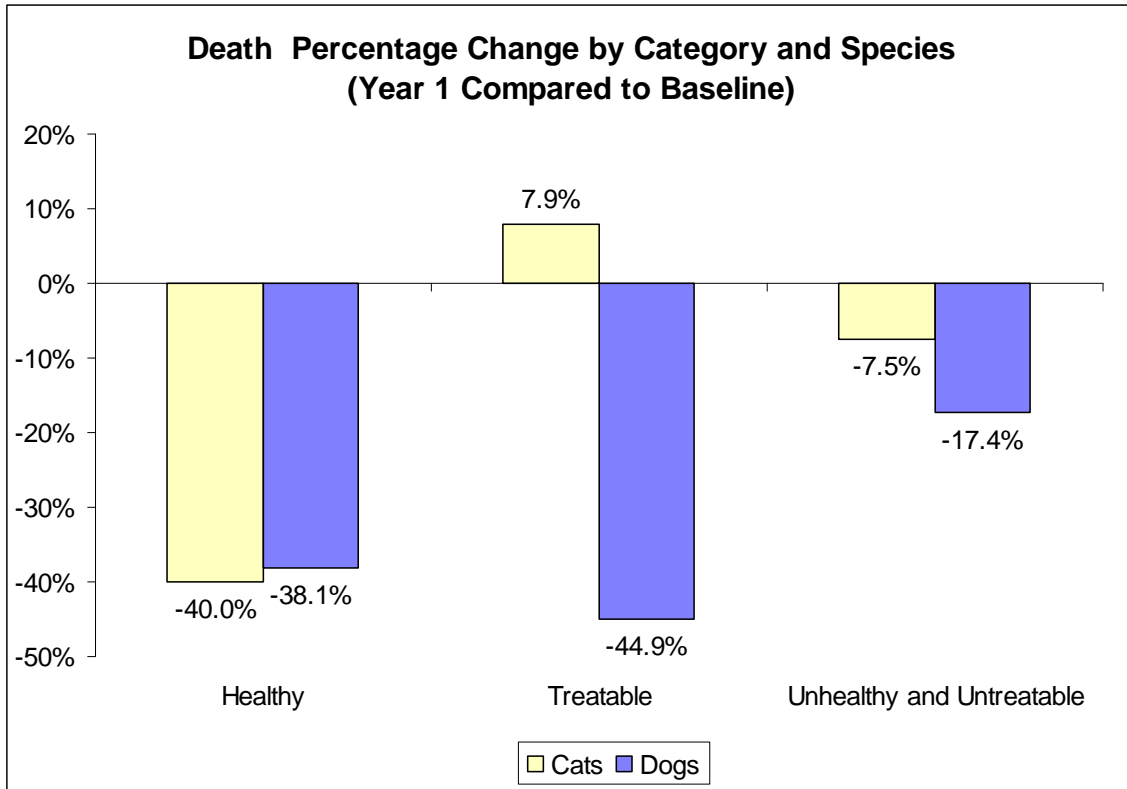


Figure 13

Adoptions

Adoptions nearly doubled, increasing by 86.7 percent from 11,499 to 21,464 between the baseline period and the first program year (see Figure 14). After adjusting for the size of the human population, adoptions increased 83.2 percent, from 1.4 animals adopted per 1,000 people, to 2.6 animals adopted per 1,000 people.

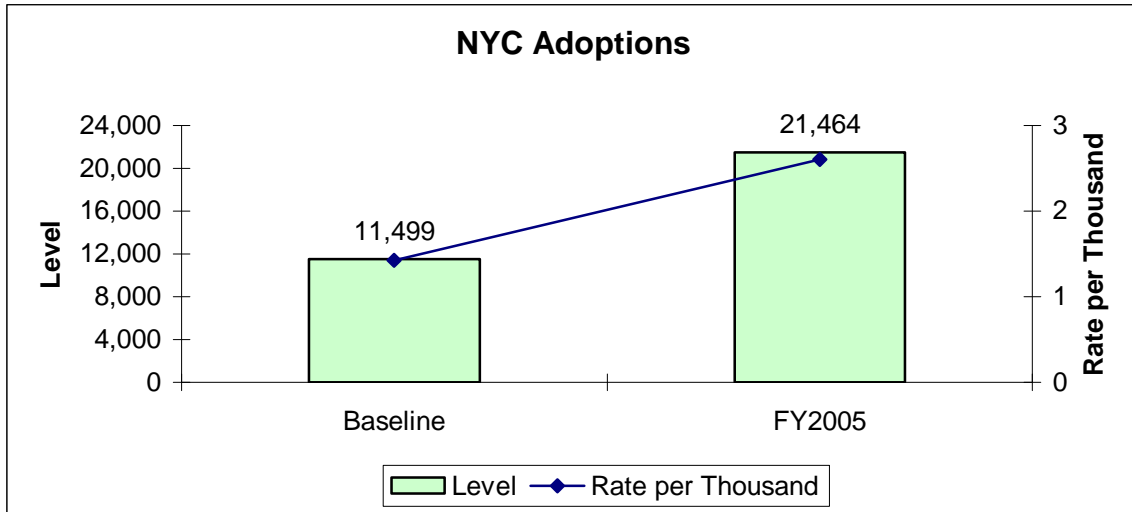


Figure 14

Using quarterly data, adoptions increased in every quarter compared to the same quarter in the baseline period (see Figure 15). Although there were some seasonal differences, no strong, consistent seasonal pattern is evident for adoptions.

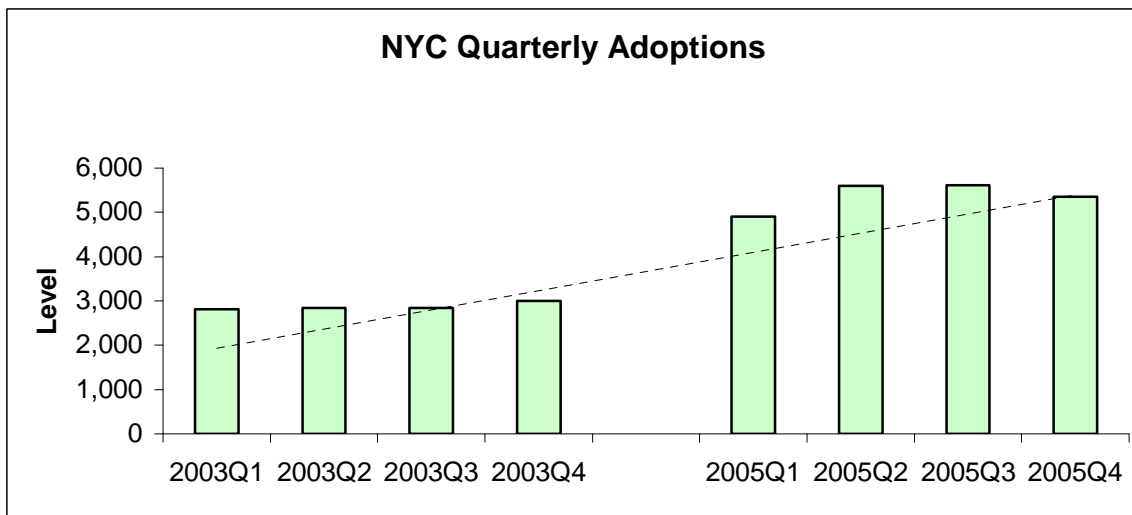


Figure 15

In the first program year, the total adoption change was more than triple the adoption goal (see Figure 16). If New York City maintains their current adoption level in the next two years, they will have achieved their Year 3 adoption goal and be halfway towards achieving their Year 4 goal.

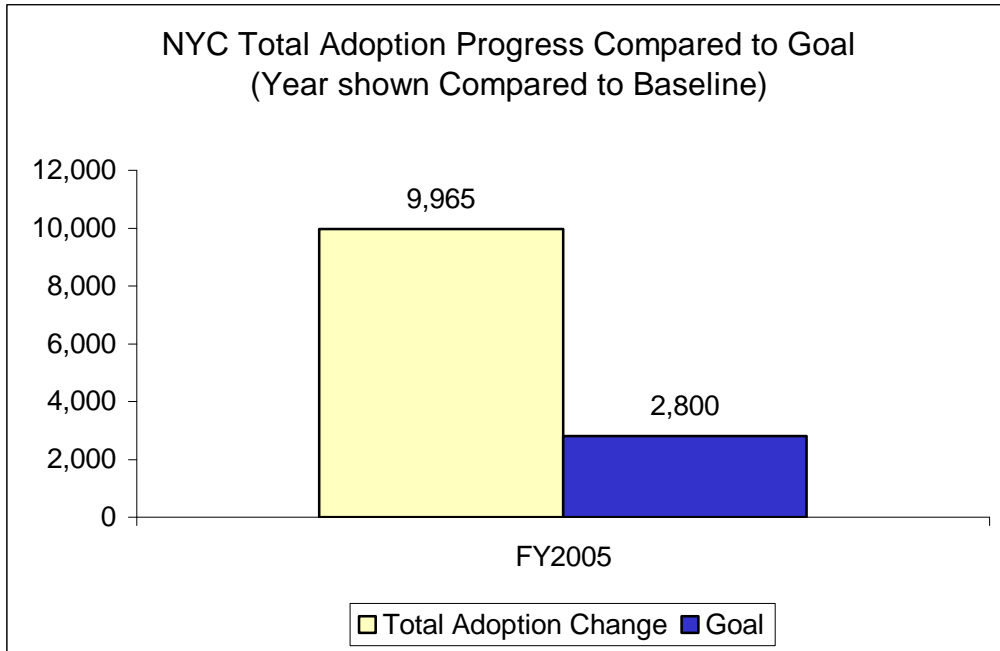


Figure 16

Adoption guarantee organizations achieved their first year adoption goal (see Figure 17). With 4,027 adoptions achieved in the first year, adoption guarantee organizations have a good head-start on achieving their second year goal of 5,600 adoptions.

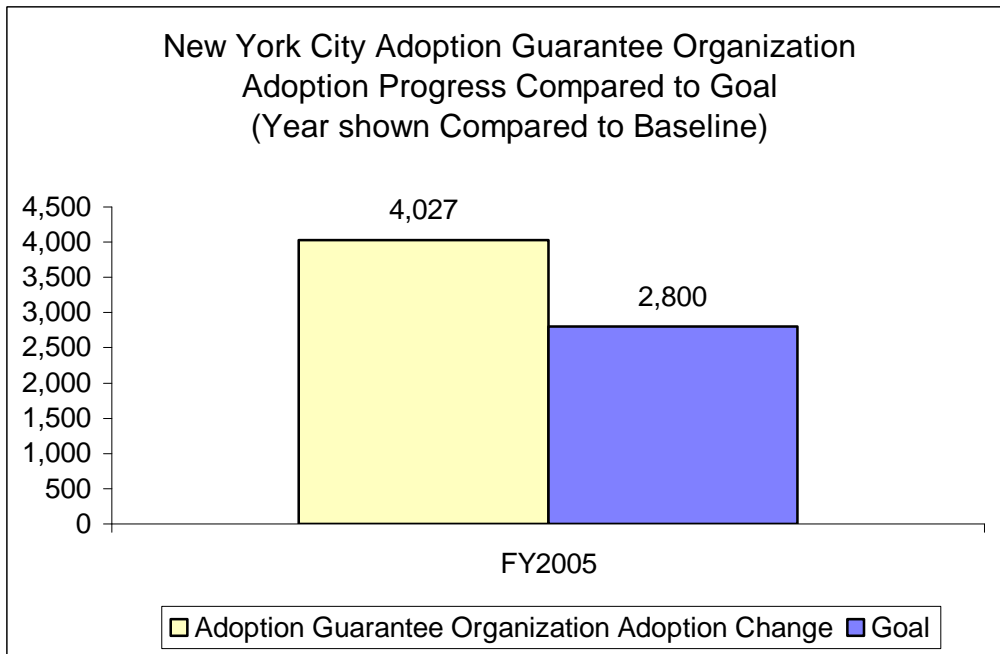


Figure 17

While adoption guarantee organization adoptions improved substantially in the first program year, animal control adoptions increased even more compared to the baseline period (see Figure 18). Animal control adoptions more than doubled in the first program year. Interestingly, in most Maddie’s Fund community programs, animal control conducts the majority of adoptions in the baseline period and this changes over the course of the funded period such that adoption guarantee agencies often end up doing the majority of the adoptions. In New York City, the opposite trend was seen in the first year. In the baseline period, most adoptions came from adoption guarantee organizations, while in the first program year, animal control had the majority of the adoptions.

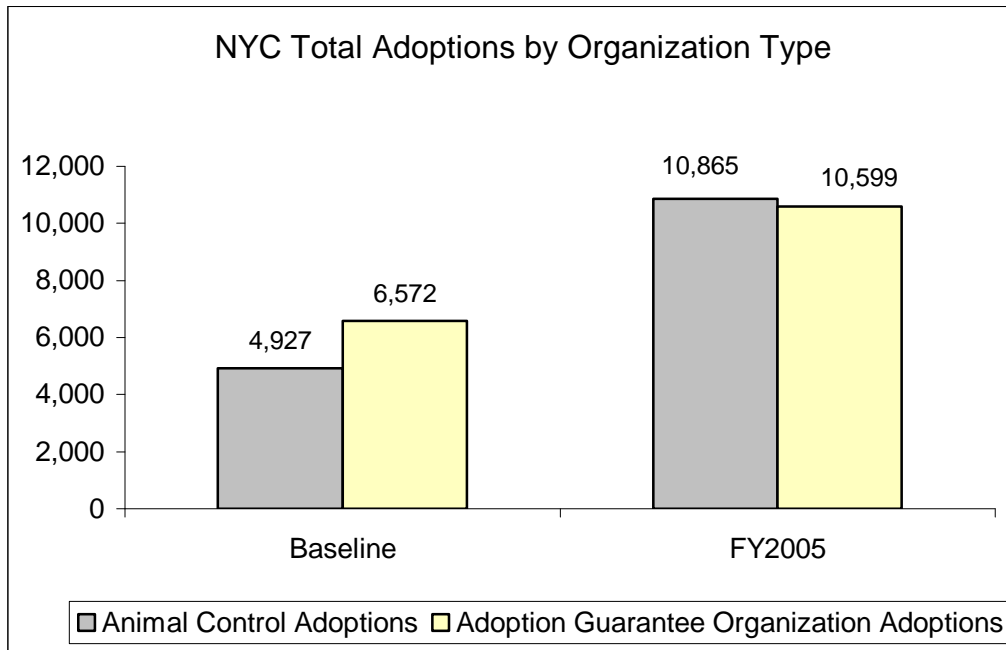


Figure 18

New York City has far more adoption guarantee organizations than the typical Maddie’s Fund program. Most of the change in total adoption guarantee organization adoptions came from only a few organizations. Figure 19 shows a curve of cumulative adoption change vs. the cumulative number of organizations. If adoptions are completely evenly distributed across organizations, the curve will take the shape of the straight dotted line. The more the cumulative adoption curve is away from this line, the more unevenly distributed adoptions are. In the case of New York City, the top 5 percent of organizations had 32 percent of adoptions, while the top 10 percent had over half, or 54 percent of the total adoptions. These nine organizations in the top 10 percent that made up most of the adoption gains included Kitty Kind, the ASPCA, Bobbi and the Strays, BARC, Earth Angels, Adopt a Dog, Long Beach Humane Society, City Critters, and Nutmeg Golden Rescue.

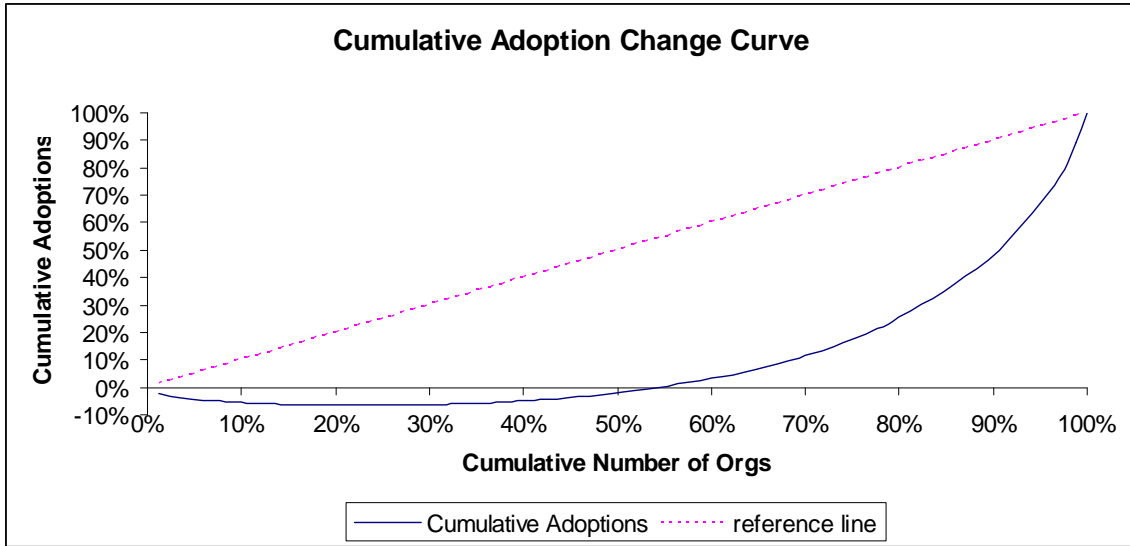


Figure 19

Total Intake

Total shelter intake decreased 1.7 percent in the first program year. When adjusted for population growth, intake declined 3.6 percent in the first program year, from 6.4 to 6.2 animals per thousand people (see Figure 20).

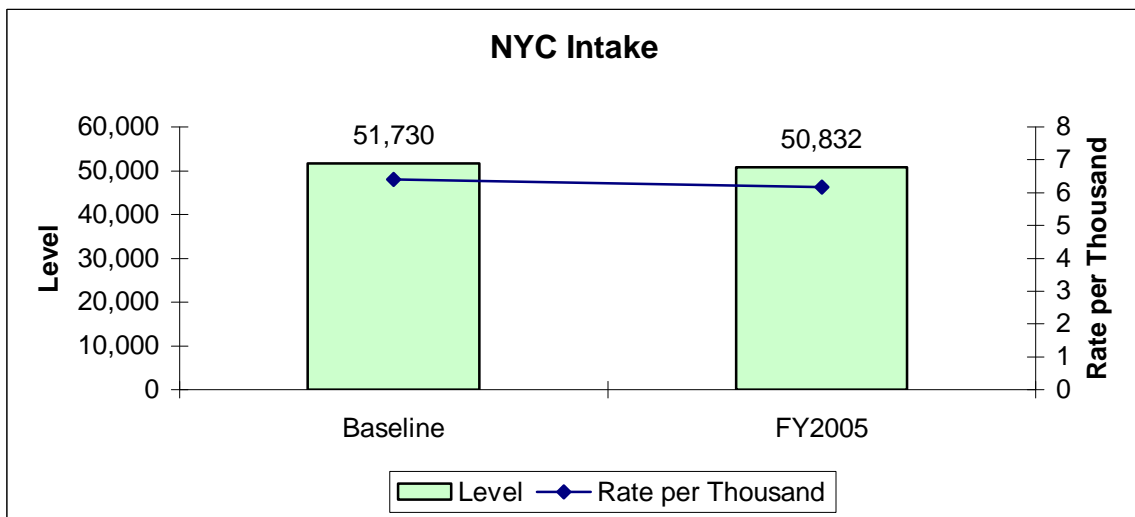


Figure 20

Quarterly data shows that the progress in intake was inconsistent over time (see Figure 21). Intake was slightly higher in two quarters and lower in two quarters of FY2005,

compared to the same quarters of the baseline period. The most recent quarter (the fourth quarter of 2005), showed a decline of 2.3 percent in intake, while the second quarter showed the largest decline. There is also a clear seasonal pattern, with the highest intake in the third quarter and the lowest intake in the first quarter.

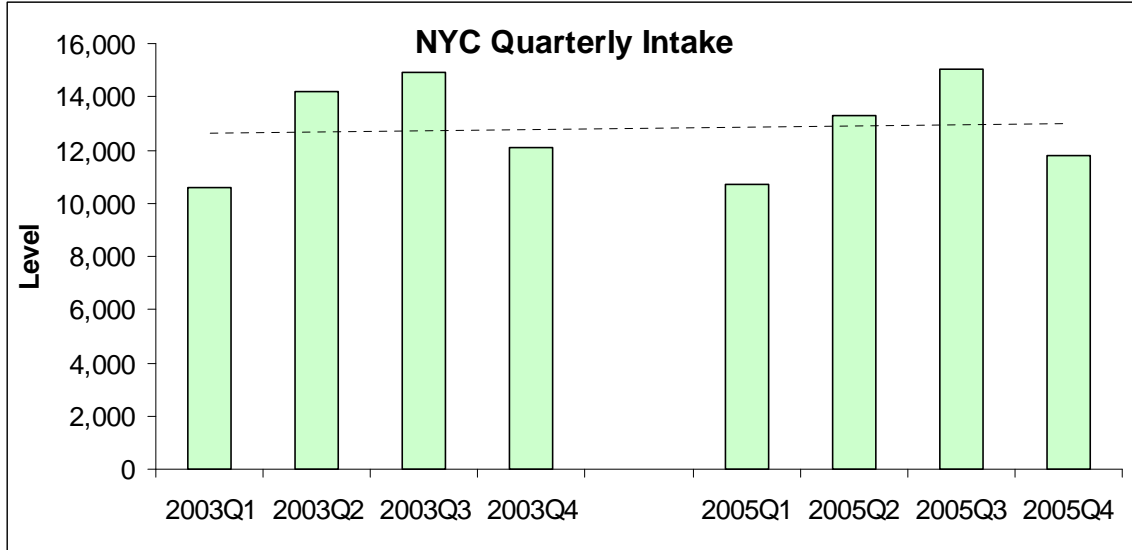


Figure 21

Estimated healthy animal intake (as a portion of total intake) increased from 57.7 percent to 64.7 percent (see Figure 22). This is consistent with the deaths of unhealthy and untreatable animals declining more than can be explained by the decline in total intake. It is also a relatively high portion of total intake in both years compared to other communities. It is important to note that animal categories are not recorded at the time of intake, so the categorization of animals is estimated based on outcomes. More specifically, healthy animal intake is estimated as: healthy animal deaths + redemptions + adoptions. However, animals at the shelter can change in their health status over time and adopted/redeemed animals may not always be healthy. To the extent that these two situations occur, the estimate of healthy animal intake may be inaccurate. For example, if due to shelter improvements fewer animals deteriorate in health conditions at the time of euthanasia, this will cause healthy animal intake to appear to increase, even if the condition of the animals at the time of intake has not changed.

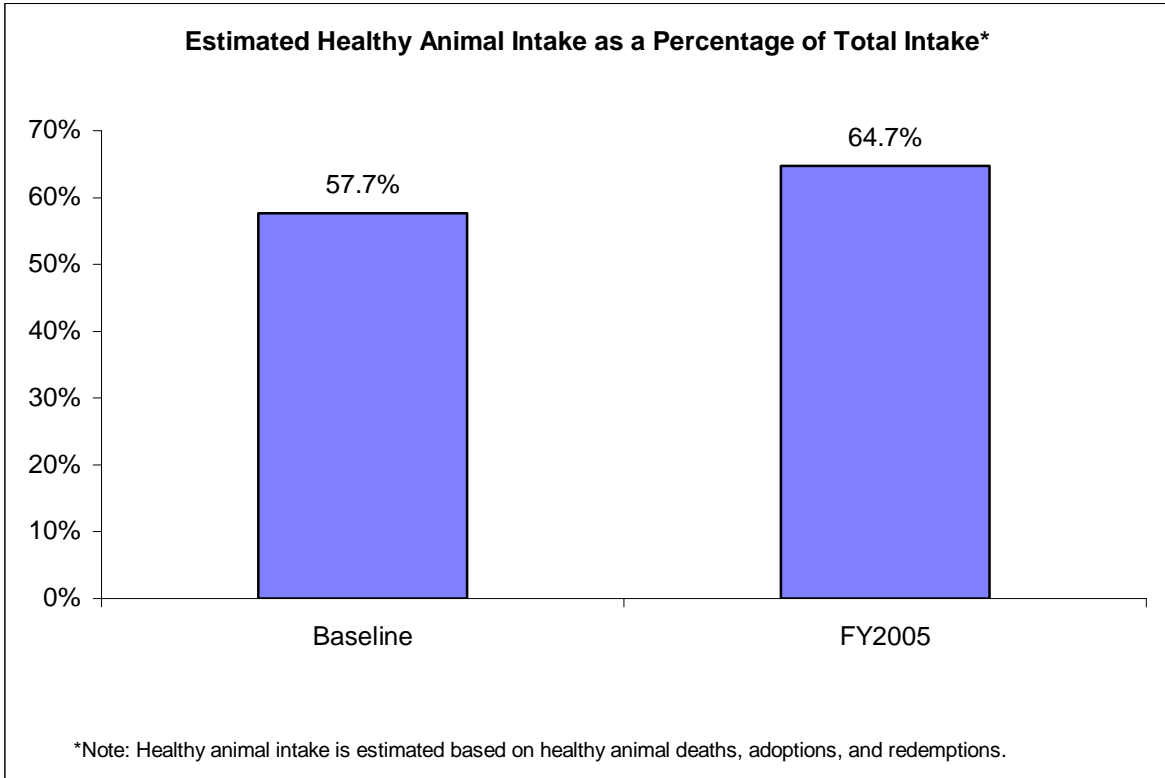


Figure 22

Adoptions and deaths improved for both cats and dogs, while intake improved for dogs and not cats (see Figure 23). Cat adoptions improved more rapidly than dog adoptions. However, intake improved for dogs only, and total deaths declined more rapidly for dogs than cats.

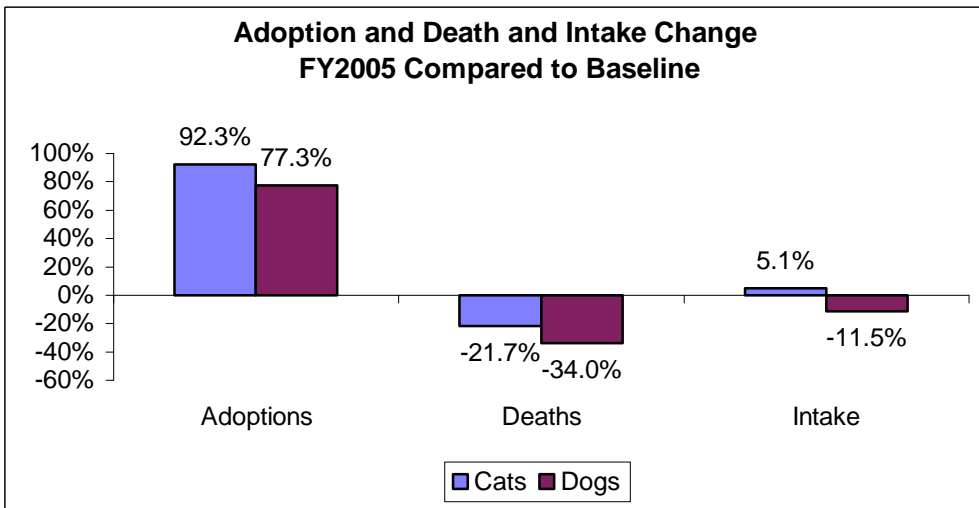


Figure 23

Sources of Change

The decrease in death over the total program period was driven primarily by the growth in adoptions (see Figure 24). In fact, the increase in adoptions was larger than the decline in deaths. Animal redemptions did not explain any of the death reduction since redemptions declined slightly. Declining intake could explain some of the death reduction; however, the magnitude of the intake decline was less than a tenth of the adoption increase. When all factors are combined, deaths would have been expected to decline by 2,412 more than they actually did based on the change in adoptions, redemptions, and intake.

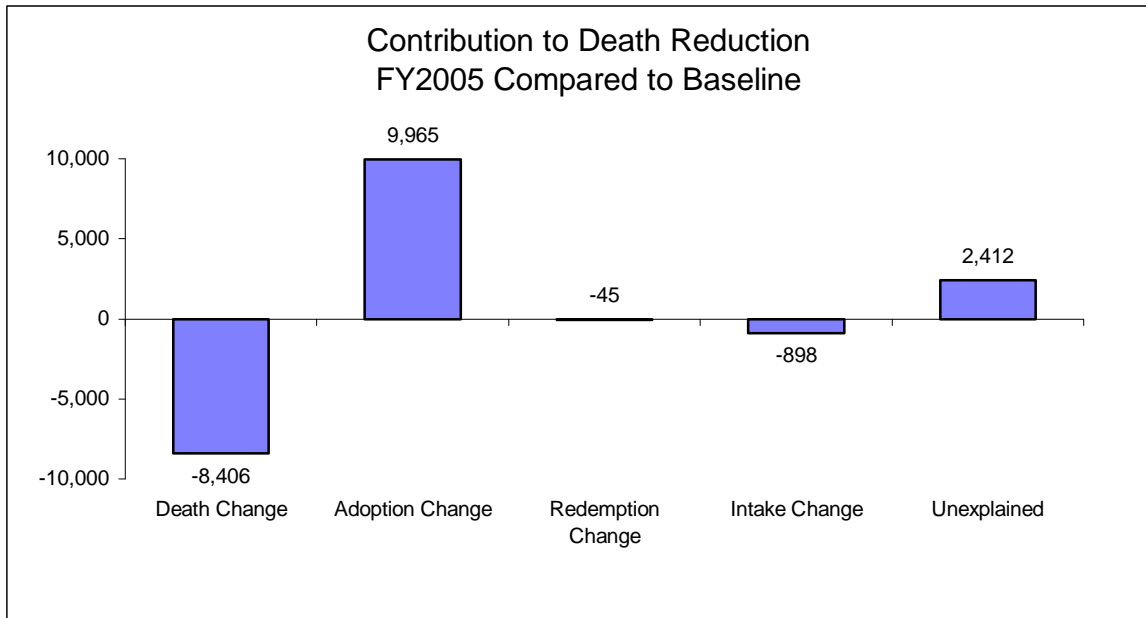


Figure 24

The statistical discrepancy between animals coming into shelters and animals exiting regional program shelters can be seen in Figure 25. Initially, the inflow of animals exceeds the outflow by 3.7 percent. However, this declined in the first program year, with the inflow of animals becoming 0.6 percent larger than the outflow. This is not necessarily an error. For example, rising levels of fostered animals could cause an increase of animal “inventory”. The difference is large enough to justify most of the “unexplained” lack of a decline in deaths shown in Figure 24.

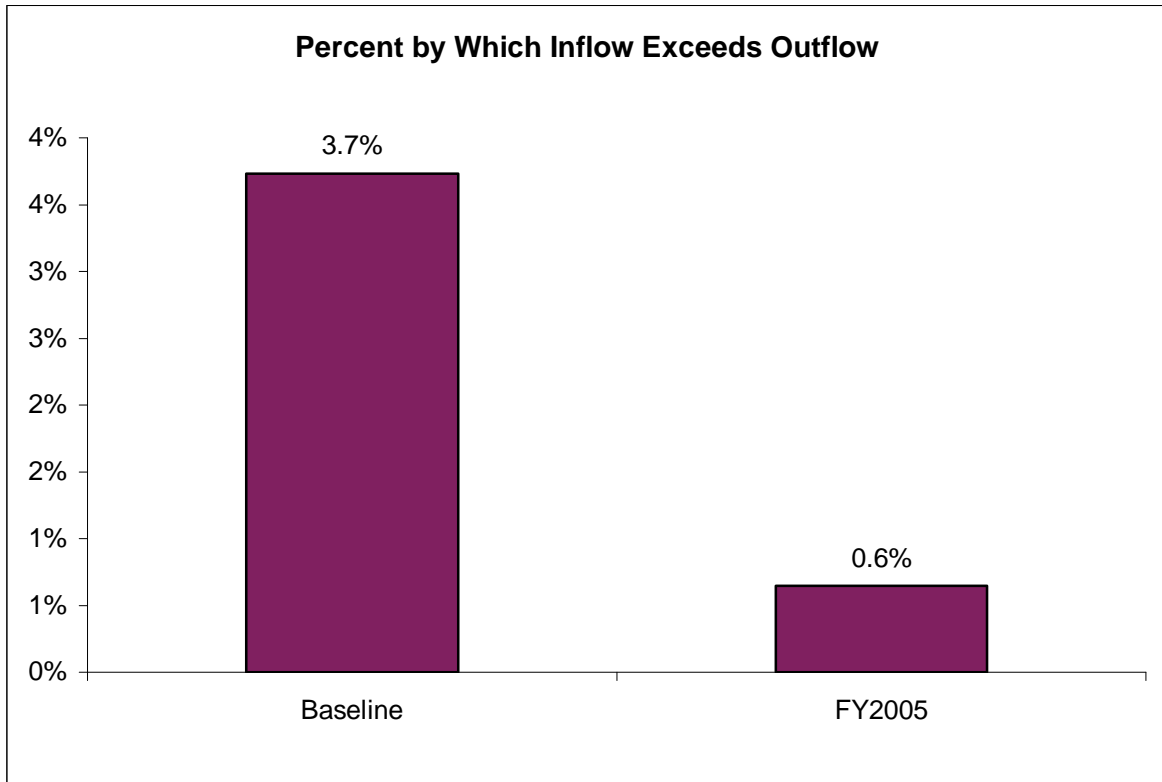


Figure 25

The live animal release rate indicates that the portion of shelter animals that end up with positive outcomes (normally adopted or redeemed) as opposed to negative outcomes (i.e. killed at the shelter). The live animal release rate has grown dramatically. In the baseline period, 34.8 percent of animals were adopted or redeemed (see Figure 26). In FY2005, the live animal release rate was 52.8 percent, an increase of 51.8 percent. Most animals going into New York City shelters now end up with positive outcomes

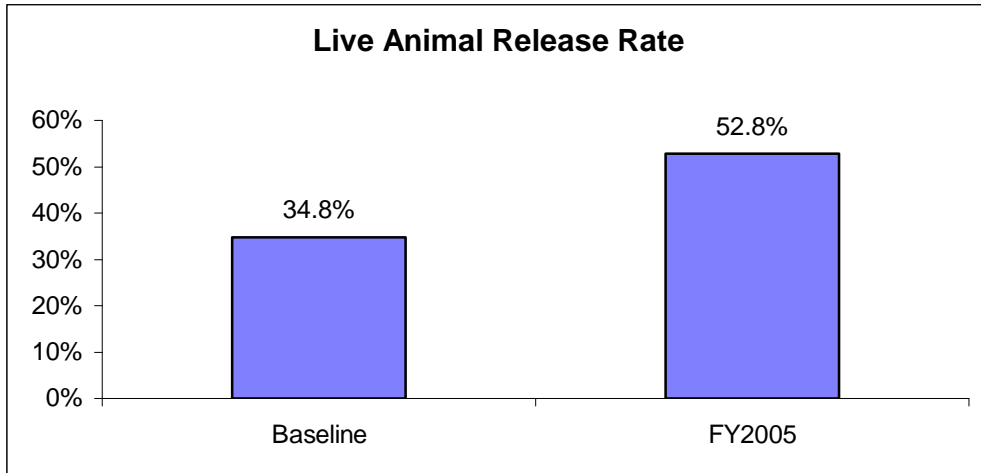


Figure 26

Conclusions

The results indicate that New York City exceeded its goals in all categories. The strongest gains were in the total adoption rate, while both the healthy animal death rate and the total death rate also showed very strong declines.

New York City appears to be well-positioned both to achieve its five-year goal of eliminating all healthy animal deaths and to reach a ten-year goal of eliminating all treatable animal deaths. These goals, of course, depend on what happens in future program years.

It is important to recognize when evaluating New York City's progress that it is different in some significant ways from other communities throughout the country. New York City is perhaps the most densely populated region of the country, and has a high portion of renters relative to homeowners. Housing, even when individually owned, is typically in multiple-unit structures. This impacts the number of pets kept as well as the type of pets. Education levels, income, and values, also vary from the norm. These differences are reflected in the shelter statistics for the region. Figure 27 shows that adoptions, intake, and deaths are all far lower per 1,000 people in New York City than in any other Maddie's Fund program during the baseline period. These lower levels in New York City may in part reflect what people choose to do and where they get their animals. However, it most likely primarily reflects the number of people with animals in New York city relative to other communities.

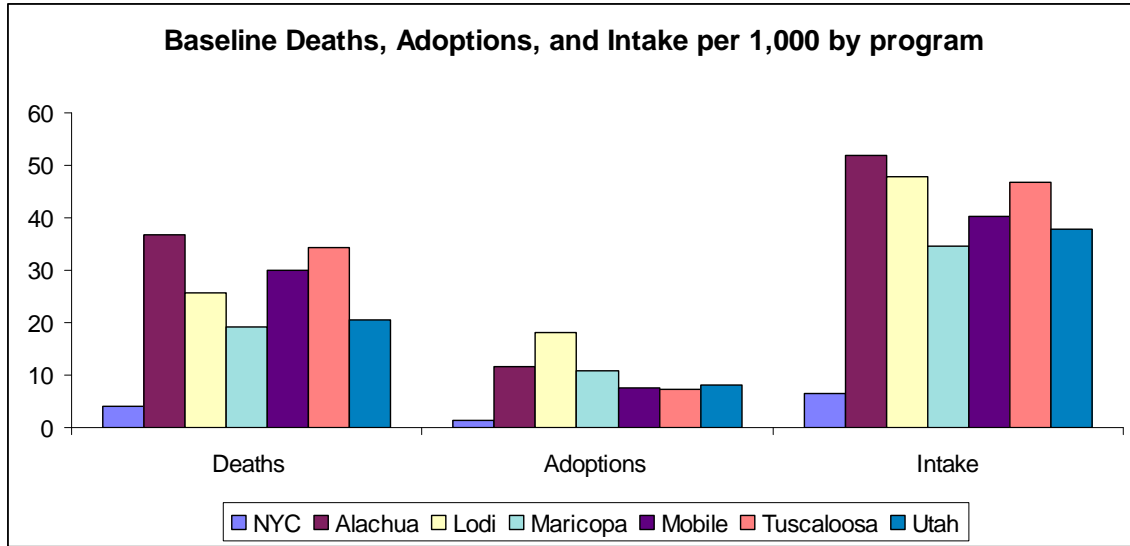


Figure 27

As shown in Figure 28, New York City also has a relatively high portion of their deaths that are from healthy animals. However, it is not the highest portion across communities. For some reason, New York City does have the lowest portion of deaths that are from treatable animals.

These differences between New York City and other communities emphasize the importance of focusing on community progress rather than just looking at the levels of key variables. While New York City looks great in terms of death rate, when judged based solely on the level of adoptions, New York City would look very weak. When judged on progress, New York City has made impressive strides in all areas during its first program year.

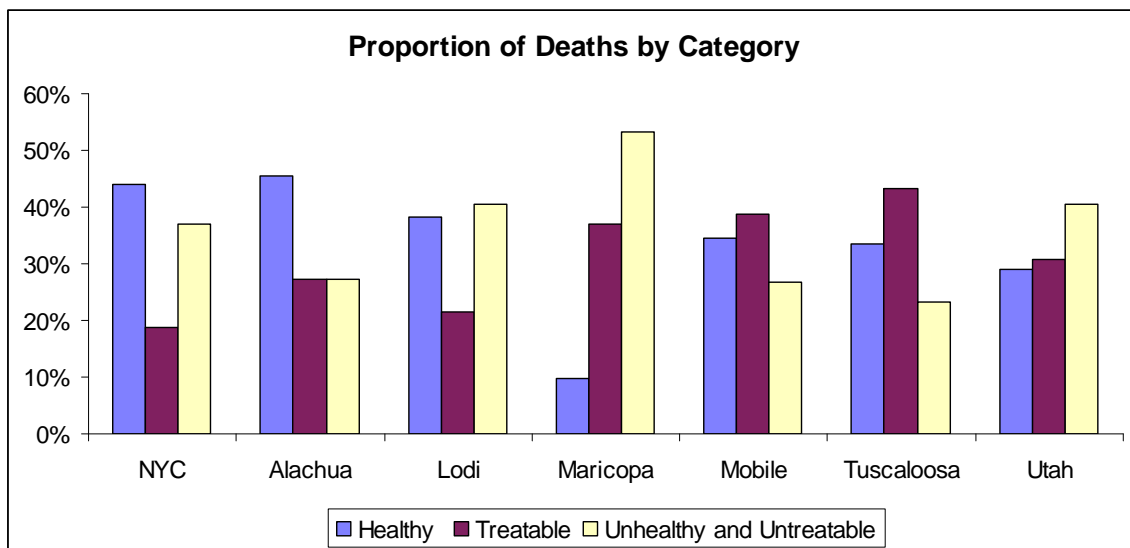


Figure 28