



LAV Press Release

“GREEN HILL” FOUND GUILTY: COURT OF BRESCIA CONVICTS RONDOT (EXECUTIVE MANAGER), BRAVI (DIRECTOR) AND GRAZIOSI (VETERINARIAN) FOR ANIMAL ABUSE AND ILLEGAL KILLING OF ANIMALS, OCCURRED IN THE ITALIAN BEAGLE BREEDING FACILITY INTENDED FOR ANIMAL TESTING. ALL THE 3,000 BEAGLES ARE DEFINITELY CONFISCATED AND WILL REMAIN WITH THEIR FAMILIES!

LAV¹, ITALIAN ANIMAL RIGHTS ASSOCIATION: “AN EXTRAORDINARY RESULT IS ACHIEVED! THE JUDGMENT IS A CONDEMNATION FOR THE ENTIRE SYSTEM OF ANIMAL EXPLOITATION. THE BEAGLES WILL NOT BE RETURNED TO MARSHALL AND GREEN HILL BREEDING FACILITY WILL NOT REOPEN. WITH THE FUNDS RESULTING FROM DAMAGES COMPENSATION, WE WILL SET UP A RESEARCH FUND FOR ALTERNATIVES TO ANIMAL TESTING”

January 23rd 2015 - The first instance judgment on the “Green Hill case”, was finally issued by the Court of Brescia, sentencing the condemnation of Rondot, Executive Manager (1 year and 6 months), Bravi, Director of “Green Hill 2001”(1 year and compensation expense) and Graziosi, in-house Veterinarian (1 year and 6 months) for cruelty to animals, animal abuse and killing of animals, occurred through several years in the Green Hill beagle breeding facility for animal testing purposes, an Italian branch of the Marshall multinational company. The other Executive Manager, Bernad Gotti, was acquitted for not having committed the crime.

A major victory and an exemplary sentence, which represents a milestone for the legal protection of animal rights, even in those fields, such as breeding for animal testing or butchery, where - unfortunately - animals are still exploited for human purposes.

“Green Hill”, is a beagle breeding facility for animal testing purposes, located in Montichiari, Brescia (Italy). Until 2012 this factory farm had provided test-labs all over Europe with beagles specifically bred for testing purposes. After years of demonstrations and protests to demand its closure, in July 2012 the turning point: the Public Prosecutor of Brescia entrusted the judicial custody of all the beagles of the Green Hill breeding facility to LAV and Legambiente. This action initiated a process that subsequently led to the judicial trial on some of the people responsible for the Green Hill facility, accused of cruelty on animals, animal abuse and unnecessary killing of animals. Today, the first instance condemnation of “Green Hill”, was finally issued by the Court of Brescia.

The outcome of the “Green Hill case” - closely followed by the media and the public since its beginning in 2012 - is a triple defeat for Green Hill, both from a judicial and from a legal point of view.

1. Ghislane Rondot, Executive Manager at “Green Hill 2001”, Roberto Bravi and Renzo Graziosi, respectively Director and in-house Veterinarian at the beagle breeding facility, have been condemned by the Court of Brescia for animal abuse and killing of animals: Rondot (1 year and 6 months), Bravi (1 year and compensation expense) and Graziosi (1 year and 6 months). The judge has also sentenced the convicted to a 2-year suspension of their professional activities. **A landmark decision that will create a precedent and that reveals the truth of the sufferings inflicted on the animals bred for testing purposes by the Italian branch of the Marshall multinational company.**

2. The beagles, that were initially seized (July 2012), have definitively been confiscated by the judge and permanently assigned to their families. **An unprecedented victory, in Italy and in Europe, for the number of “laboratory” animals rescued (approximately 3,000) and for the legal implications that it**

entailed: *“the principles of rule of law and respect for animal welfare are binding by law, even when it comes to questionable activities, such as animal testing”*, LAV has commented.

3. By law, Green Hill breeding facility will not reopen: the Italian Legislative Decree 26/2014, that LAV succeeded to have approved a few months ago (March 2014), definitively bans the breeding of dogs, cats and primates for animal testing and vivisection purposes.

Today’s convictions would not have been possible without **Law 189 of 2004, establishing the crime of unnecessary animal killing, whose adoption was strongly supported by LAV.** Symbolically, the judgment also represents **the victory of David against Goliath:** on the one hand, LAV, animal activists, citizens, and other groups opposing animal testing and vivisection, on the other hand, the Institutions and the academic world, represented by the technical consultants deployed by the defense of Green Hill, and a powerful multinational company, such as Marshall.

The evidence produced in the courtroom by **Public Prosecutor, Ambrogio Cassiani**, was very consistent and succeeded to unveil the **“Green Hill system”, that is the company practice to kill dogs when affected by a disease, in order to contain costs** and also because they would have not been suitable anymore for testing purposes. (E.g. puppies killed because affected by dermatitis, a problem that can be solved by proper care and proper nutrition, but that jeopardizes the use of animals as tests subjects).

At Green Hill the beagles exhibited very high mortality rates: between 2008 and 2012, 6.023 deaths were recorded, an overwhelming number, if compared to only 98 deaths recorded in the period following the seizure of the facility, a number that includes 50 deaths (out of 98) that occurred when the dogs were still in the facility, awaiting to be transferred outside. At Green Hill, letting the dogs reproduce continuously and replacing the "faulty ones" with newborns, was “business as usual” as it was considered a more convenient practice than providing adequate health care.

Carla Campanaro, the lawyer representing LAV as Civil Party in the trial, has described all the deliberate faults of Green Hill, as **“a system based on specific company policies focused on profit maximization, at the expense of the health and life of animals that were left to die instead of being cared for, due to the lack of adequate health facilities (only one Veterinarian for about 3.000 dogs) and also because the treatments, besides being expensive, could compromise the subsequent sale of animals”**.

*“Green Hill condemnation is an important recognition given to all those people who, through the years, took part in many demonstrations in Montichiari and in many other parts of Italy and the world, who have fasted, signed petitions, made journalistic investigations, filed complaints, climbed over ideological and physical barriers, defending what once appeared to be indefensible - **Gianluca Felicetti, LAV President, affirmed** – As well as those people, we are fully aware that "beyond the barbed wire of Green Hill", vivisection still exists and that it kills nearly 3.000 animals per day, every day (in Italy only), without providing any positive result for our health. For these reasons, our battle continues and must not stop.”*

As a further demonstration of the willingness to take positive actions in response to the failings of vivisection, **LAV will devolve the compensation for damages, that has been recognized to the Association as Civil Party in the Trial, to a research fund for alternatives to animal testing**, which will be guaranteed by the presence of scientific personalities in the board and will be shared with the other Associations acknowledged in the trial.

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1 LAV (Antivivisection League) is the major antivivisection and pro-animal association in Italy and one of the most important in Europe. Founded in 1977, LAV campaigns to abolish vivisection and animal testing, protect animals and their rights, defend biodiversity and the environment, and fight animal exploitation by criminal organizations.