

June 12, 2026

Dear Clayton County Animal Control, Georgia Department of Agriculture,
Forest Park Police Department and Atlanta State Farmers Market Administration,

We are deeply concerned and disappointed by the decision to remove and relocate the community cats residing at the Atlanta State Farmers Market and by the determination that these cats will not be eligible for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).

We strongly urge the continuation of a TNR program as the only humane and effective approach to community cats.

Alley Cat Allies is the leader of the global movement to protect cats and kittens. Through our innovative programs and fearless advocacy, we champion the humane treatment of all cats. We work toward a world where every cat is valued and protected, and every community has policies and programs to defend them.

Founded in 1990, Alley Cat Allies launched TNR into the mainstream in the United States. We regularly work with lawmakers, animal shelters, and the public to change attitudes and advance laws and policies that best serve the interests of cats and the communities they live in.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Is the Only Humane, Effective Approach

Through TNR, community cats are humanely trapped; brought to a veterinary clinic to be spayed or neutered, eartipped (the universal sign that a cat has been spayed or neutered through a TNR program), and vaccinated; and then returned to their original outdoor homes.

TNR is proven to stabilize community cat populations by stopping the cycle of reproduction; improve the cats' health through vaccinations; and benefits animal control agencies and shelters by reducing cat intake and calls of concern. Residents in Clayton County already benefit from TNR, and the County recognizes that methods where the cats are removed from their original locations fail to [address the community's needs](#).

Here is why keeping cats in their original location is vital to a TNR program's success:

- **The “Vacuum Effect”:** Removing cats from their established territories creates a temporary void. Unvaccinated and unsterilized cats or rodents from surrounding areas will inevitably move in to utilize the available food and shelter, causing the population to rebound. Returning sterilized, vaccinated cats to their original location prevents this influx. For a deeper scientific look at this phenomenon, please see our educational materials: [All About The Vacuum Effect | Alley Cat Allies](#).
- **Territory Familiarity:** Relocating community cats is almost never in the cats' best interest. Relocation should only be considered as an absolute last resort, when cats' lives are in danger unless you act. Cats are territorial and form strong bonds with their outdoor homes, so relocation is extremely stressful and risky for the cats AND for you. Even if our relocation protocols below are followed to the letter, the relocation may not “stick” for the cats. It is always better to take every step possible to resolve the threats forcing cats out of their original outdoor homes. In the rare event that relocation is truly unavoidable, strict safety protocols must be followed. Learn more in our [Relocation: The Last Resort information](#).

- **Stabilization:** Once TNR is in place, the cats will no longer reproduce. The population will stabilize and live out their natural lives while ensuring new cats do not move into their territory.

We urge the Department of Agriculture, the Atlanta State Farmers Market, and Clayton County Animal Control to reconsider this decision and engage with local rescue organizations, community stakeholders, and recognized experts in community cat management to explore humane alternatives grounded in science and best practices.

Alley Cat Allies offers support in policies that humanely and effectively address problems or concerns you have. We are happy to provide any other information that would be helpful and hope to hear from you soon.