CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for containing an animal in a vehicle, comprising:

a docking station configured to be received in a cargo area of a vehicle; and

an animal containment unit selectively mountable to the docking station.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the docking station includes at least one anchor point for securing the docking station to at least one anchor point of the vehicle.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the docking station or the animal containment unit includes at least one rigid support structure for engaging a non-horizontal surface of the vehicle, the at least one rigid support structure configured to restrict relative movement of the docking station or the animal containment unit relative to the non-horizontal surface.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein the docking station includes a plurality of rigid support structures, each rigid support structure adapted to engage a different non-horizontal surface of the vehicle.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein at least two of the plurality of rigid support structures extend from opposite sides of the docking station.

6. The system of claim 3, wherein the at least one rigid support structure is movable between a stowed position and a deployed position.

7. The system of claim 3, wherein the at least one rigid support structure is adjustable in length.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the docking station includes a latch configured to selectively secure the animal containment unit to the docking station.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the animal containment unit further comprises a rotatable and extendable handle.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the handle is rotatable to a horizontal orientation and extendable to engage a non-horizontal surface of the vehicle to secure the animal containment unit when the animal containment unit is attached to the docking station.

11. The system of claim 2, wherein the docking station includes a base having brackets fixed to side surfaces of the base, the brackets comprising the at least one anchor point and further including tensionable flexible members extending from the brackets for attachment to the at least one anchor point of the vehicle.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the tensionable flexible members include tethers.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the docking station includes a ramp extending from a rear portion of the base.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the ramp is telescoping and includes extensions storable within a cavity in the base.

15. The system of claim 3, wherein the docking station includes a base, and wherein the at least one rigid support structure is U-shaped including first members slidable within side surfaces of the base so that the first members can be slid into a cavity in the base or slid out from the cavity to adjust a length of the at least one rigid support structure.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the rigid support structure include a second member configured to engage an interior surface of the vehicle.

17. The system of claim 3, wherein the docking station includes a base, and wherein the docking station further includes a vertical rigid support member having first members extending from side surfaces of the base and curving vertically and a second member including sliding members slidable within the first members to adjust a length of the vertical rigid support member.

18. The system of claim 1, wherein the animal containment unit includes wheels on a bottom surface.

19. The system of claim 1, wherein the docking station includes two spaced-apart rails adapted to support the animal containment unit.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein each rail includes a protrusion adapted to be received in a corresponding recess of the animal containment unit to secure the animal containment unit to the docking station.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the protrusion includes an L bracket, and wherein the corresponding recess includes a slot.

22. The system of claim 19, wherein each rail includes an end face having at least one of a recess or protrusion and wherein the animal containment unit includes a corresponding mating recess or protrusion adapted to secure the animal containment unit to the docking station.

23. The system of claim 1, wherein the docking station includes a load leg configured to engage a seatback of a vehicle.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the load leg includes an adjustable engagement member, the adjustable engagement member being adjustable to match an angle of the seatback of a vehicle.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the adjustable engagement member is biased towards a vertical orientation.

26. The system of claim 1, further comprising an organizer mountable to the docking station.