



International Aid for Korean Animals

Summer/Fall 2011 Newsletter



Dear IACA Members,

The tectonic plates continue to shift in South Korea's animal protection landscape. Resounding outcry against South Korea's animal rights has prompted a third revision of the country's animal protection laws for the better. But despite this heartening change, the slaughter and sale of dog and cat meat for consumption is still legal.

IACA and KAPES are working without pause until South Korea no longer permits this inhumane practice. We're appalled our country's laws still permit the consumption of companion animals, and we're ashamed that even China may soon surpass us in restricting the dog meat industry. So, we continue our work of educating youth for a better tomorrow, collaborating with government officials on improving animal welfare, and offering needed veterinarian and pet adoption services.

In the fall and summer seasons, KAPES shared some shining moments—glimpses of hope for a brighter future. A Sungnam city official facilitated an enlightening conversation between KAPES Director Haesun Park and Moran Market's Dog Meat Trade Association President. Their discussion shed light on the motivations behind joining the dog meat trade, and helped Haesun better understand what it would take to dissuade dog meat traders from staying in the profession.


KAPES reached out to South Koreans of all ages to educate them about animal welfare and the horrors of the companion animal meat industry. The organization participated in Imsil County's Osu Loyal Dog Festival for its second year in a row, connecting with hundreds of dog lovers and animal organizations. The Adoption and Education Center staff also hosted 20 kindergarteners, teaching them kindness to animals and basic pet care.

And KAPES continued to offer veterinarian services at no cost to limited-capacity shelters, low-income pet owners, and strays on the street. Through all of these activities, KAPES' staff has met amazing people, who are just as passionate about animals as we are. We're always so moved to hear that we're not alone in our passion and purpose. We hope you find the compassion in these stories inspiring for your own efforts!

Wishing you summer fun with your furry friends,
Kyanan Kum

P.S.: Check out our website for new ways to support IACA. We're selling beautiful greeting cards, and we've signed up for Easyfundraising!

Osul Loyal Dog Festival 2011

 For the second year in a row, KAPES participated in the annual Osul Loyal Dog Festival in Imsil County of Chonnam Province. The three-day festival takes its name from the fable of Osul—a loyal dog who sacrificed himself to save his owner—and promotes the humane treatment of all dogs. The spring event—co-hosted by Imsil County, the Loyal Dog Association, and the Osul Youth Group—celebrated its 27th successful year, attracting hundreds of dog owners, animal lovers, and related organizations. Once again, KAPES pitched its tent on the festival grounds, showcasing material about animal protection law, spaying and neutering, and the cruelties of the dog meat industry.



Haesun talks to a group of young girls at the Osul Festival.

Stronger Animal Protection Law Ratified



After international outrage over the country's recent live burial of diseased pigs and two highly publicized animal abuse cases, South Korea has finally taken action to improve conditions for the country's animals. On June 29th, the South Korean National Assembly ratified new national animal protection regulations proposed by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MIFAFF) that will take effect in 2012.

"The revised law reflects the people's increasing concerns over the ill treatment of animals," the ministry stated. These new regulations have far-reaching implications, radically changing the country's treatment of pets, livestock, and lab animals.



A Korean dog market scene.

The law begins with the five freedoms, a Bill of Rights for animals modeled after Great Britain's 1993 animal welfare legislation. These freedoms—freedom from thirst and hunger, discomfort, pain, injury, and disease, fear and distress, and freedom to express normal behavior—mark a drastic shift in the country's consciousness of the humane treatment of animals.

The new law then sets forth a number of concrete goals, programs, restrictions, and punitive measures. It provides that the central government will initiate a national animal welfare plan, which it will reassess every five years; locally appointed animal protection committees will oversee the operations of larger animal shelters; humane methods must be used in the transportation, slaughtering, and euthanasia of animals; and ethics committees must approve any animal testing. The law goes on to assert that MIFAFF will develop an animal welfare accreditation system for animal farms, and rais-

es the maximum punishment for animal abuse to one year in prison or a fine of up to 10 million won (\$9,400 – twice the amount of the former fine). Its provisions also work to curb pet abandonment by requiring dog owners to register their pets with local governments by 2013.

One of new law's major shortfalls is its failure to outlaw the dog and cat meat industries. Though the new amendments are said to be inspired, in part, by animal rights protests against the dog meat industry, the MIFAFF still omitted the criminalization of companion animal farming



KAPES is teaching the next generation to respect and love their animal friends.

from the conversation. This glaring omission is especially embarrassing in the face of China's newly proposed law against the consumption of dog meat. Like South Korea, China recently began a process of revising its legislation against animal abuse. But China's policies against the dog meat trade might soon outstrip those of South Korea. The first draft of China's revised animal protection law included a jail sentence of up to 15 days for people caught eating dog meat. This progressive legislation is even more surprising considering China's long history of eating dog meat. Dog meat has been a source of food in some areas of China from 500 BC and possibly even earlier.

While the revisions to South Korea's animal protection laws represent a vast improvement, they're still not enough. Our organization is hopeful, though, that the MIFAFF's new commitment to survey animal welfare conditions annually and audit its animal protection plan every five years will lead to the criminalization of the companion animal meat trade in the near future.

A Big Heart and Empty Pockets

In the middle of monsoon season, KAPES' Korean Animal Medical Center received a visit from an old man and his little, black dog. He told the staff his story tentatively and with great care: he was a poor man, scraping by with the money he made collecting and selling recyclable material. With his paltry income, he could barely afford to feed his pet dog, let alone pay to have her spayed. Because she hadn't been fixed, she'd already had two litters, and he'd done what he could to find her pups homes. But the expense and effort of handling a third litter would be too much for him, so he'd come to KAPES to ask if they'd spay his dog for free. The staff was so impressed by his large-heartedness that they agreed. On top of spaying the pup, KAMC gave her a full check-up and medication for free. The man was so grateful for KAPES' services that he pledged a \$5 monthly donation despite his small income.



The poor man and his beloved pup.

KAPES Director Meets Dog Meat Trade Association Head for Talks



KAPES believes that in order to put an end to South Korea's dog meat trade, the organization must understand its root causes. For that reason, KAPES Director Haesun Park was interested in meeting with the Dog Meat Trade Association President of Moran Market to ask him his reasons for joining the profession.



One of Haesun's pictures of the Moran Dog Meat Market.

In South Korea, the dog meat profession is considered demeaning, low-level work—the Korean word for dog butcher is even used as an epithet. So, Haesun was interested in what might motivate someone to work in that field despite strong social criticism.

One of KAPES' Sunnam government partners contacted the Dog Meat Trade Association President of Moran Market on Haesun's behalf, and, surprisingly, DMTA's president had no hesitations about meeting. As Haesun interviewed the dog meat trader,

she was again surprised by what she heard. He began by saying that he, in fact, cared for animals, but he'd had to join the dog meat profession out of necessity. He never had access to a good education, and by the time he was working age, the dog meat trade was one of the few fields for which he was qualified. He simply needed to make a living.

From her conversation with the DMTA head, Haesun began to understand that one of the reasons this odious trade goes on is the financial necessity of its employees. Dog traders have no recourse if the government puts a stop to the trade—they are typically uneducated, unskilled, and simply unqualified for other work. Haesun realized that a major piece in eradicating the trade would have to be job support for dog meat workers. They would need professional training and assistance finding placements. Quite possibly, they would need temporary unemployment income. But since South Korea's social support system is far behind those of wealthy Western nations, it's unlikely any of these programs would be available soon.

Toward the end of the interview, Haesun asked the DMTA head whether she could photograph his stall at Moran Market. Again, without hesitation, he obliged. Afterwards, she



The sickly puppies that didn't make it despite KAMC's care.

inspected a few of the other vendors with the DMTA head at her side. She passed one vendor who was selling very young puppies—too young to be taken from their mother. They were sick and dehydrated, and clearly near the end of their lives. Haesun offered to buy the puppies from the vendor, but the head of the Dog Meat Trade Association interceded and asked the vendor to give the puppies to Haesun for free.

Unfortunately, the puppies couldn't be nursed back to help even with the expert care of KAPES' head vet. They were all infected with parvovirus—a disease that's near impossible for a young puppy to survive. Though the loss of those poor pups was saddening, the DMTA head's cooperation gave Haesun a glimmer of hope. His honest answers were truly enlightening, offering keen insights for next steps in stopping the dog meat trade.

Yangpa: Saved from Slaughter

Little Yangpa was on the way to the butcher's block for dog soup when KAPES' friend and Daejeon Rescue Shelter worker Jungsun Park bought him. Though Yangpa made a close escape, he still faced trouble ahead. His health began to fail, and eventually one of his legs became paralyzed. With meager resources, Jungsun was unable to diagnose Yangpa's illness, let alone treat it, so she contacted the KAPES clinic for

help. At the KAMC, Yangpa bravely underwent a series of tests. Finally, one test yielded a diagnosis: Yangpa



Yangpa recovering after surgery at KAPES' clinic.

had hydroencephalitis. KAPES' head vet immediately sent the pup to the ICU, and after several days of treatment, Yangpa was able to eat and sit up. Soon, he'll be able to walk and play again.

Yangpa came to the KAPES clinic with a group of 19 dogs from the Daejeon Rescue Shelter. Like Yangpa, these dogs received medical care at KAMC and now eagerly await adoption!

KAPES Teaches Youth Kindness to Animals



This July, KAPES' Adoption and Education Center hosted a very special outreach event for 20 local kindergarten students. The day-long "Pets: Our Precious Family" event was designed to teach the next generation the importance of treating cats and dogs with tenderness and care. Haesun Park and Korean Animal

Medical Center's head vet led talks on proper pet diets, grooming, exercise, and handling, encouraging the young children to consider pets to be friends and family members. Afterwards, the children were given the opportunity to play and interact with dogs and cats in adoption center.

The next day at school, the children showed their appreciation to KAPES by holding a mini-fundraiser; they made dog puppets and sold them to raise funds for the Adoption and Education Center. We're thrilled the event made such an impact on those young students!



Visiting kindergarteners ham it up for the camera.

One highlight of the event was a humanizing lesson by KAMC's head vet: he offered his stethoscope to the children to listen to rescues' heartbeats, then asked the students to make a comparison with their own. Each child who listened was intrigued by the similarities in the heartbeats. This simple exercise was a powerful lesson in sympathy and compassion.



The next generation of animal protection activists!

The Security Guard and the Kitten

Last month, KAPES received a worried call from a parking lot guard, asking for help with a sick kitten he'd found on the job. KAPES Director Haesun Park moved quickly to transfer the kitten to KAPES' Korean Animal Medical Center (KAMC). Once there, KAMC's veterinarian took x-rays and discovered a chicken's skull and bones in the kitten's stomach. The vet determined the cat had eaten a rotten chicken carcass out of starvation, and the toxins from the rotten meat threatened to kill the kitten. The vet performed surgery to clean out the kitten's stomach, and, thankfully, the kitten recovered after only a few days of rest. The security guard called each day to ask after the kitten's health, and promised to visit after the surgery. His involvement inspired the KAPES staff to send him a supply of cat food for other parking lot strays. Now, he's a guard to both cars and cats!



Kitty sleeping soundly after a tough day of treatment.

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