

「神戸アニマルケア国際会議 2012」によせて

On the Occasion of the 2nd International Conference on Animal Care in Kobe 2012

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「第2回神戸アニマルケア国際会議」が盛大に開催されます。心からお喜びするとともに、世界各地から兵庫・神戸にお越しいただいた皆様を歓迎します。

21世紀は共生の時代。すべての命が尊重される社会でこそ、私たちも安全で安心して暮らすことができます。身近な動物とふれあい、よりよい関係を築いていくことが、その第一歩ではないでしょうか。

17年前の阪神・淡路大震災では、多くの動物たちも被災しました。発災4日後には、県及び獣医師会、日本動物福祉協会が中心となって動物救援本部を立ち上げ、全国から駆けつけた多数のボランティアの支援を得て救護活動にあたりました。保護された犬や猫は1500頭を超え、その大部分が元の飼い主や新たな飼い主に引き取られました。そして、復旧復興に向かう人々の心を癒し、元気を与えてくれました。

こうした経験をもつ兵庫だからこそ、昨年3月に発生した東日本大震災でも動物救護活動を積極的に支援しました。動物愛護専門職員を延べ200人以上派遣し、福島

原発周辺の警戒区域から避難されている方々の一時帰宅に合わせてペットの保護に協力するとともに、区域内をさまよう動物たちの救護にあたりました。

また、動物愛護の拠点として、動物愛護センターと支所を県内4カ所に設置し、飼い主のいない犬、猫の引き取りだけでなく、新たな飼い主探しやしつけ方教室、動物とのふれあい教室などに取り組んでいます。さらに、豊岡盆地を中心に地域を挙げてコウノトリの野生復帰の取り組みを進めるなど、人と自然が共生できる地域づくりにも力を注いでいます。

それだけに、今回、各国から獣医師を中心とした専門家が集い、様々な角度からアニマルケアに関する議論が行われることは、本当に心強いことです。人と動物、そして自然が共生する社会をめざし、ともに取り組む人々の輪が広がっていくことを願っています。

大会のご成功と、ご参集の皆様のご健勝での今後ますますのご活躍を心からお祈りします。

The 2nd Live Love Animals International Conference on Animal Care in Kobe 2012 is being held on an impressive scale. While extending my heartfelt congratulations on the hosting of this event, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Hyogo and Kobe to all the participants who have gathered here from across Japan and around the world.

The 21st century will prove to be an age of coexistence. People can live lives that are safer and more secure if their society is one in which every living thing is valued. I believe that interacting and building better relationships with the animals that are close to us is the first step towards achieving this goal.

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake that devastated this region 17 years ago also claimed a great many animal victims. Four days after the earthquake struck, an Animal Rescue Headquarters was started up centered on the Veterinary Associations of Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City, and the Japan Animal Welfare Society (JAWS). They carried out rescue activities with the support of a large number of volunteers gathered from all over the country. As a result, over 1,500 dogs and cats were given shelter and protection, and the great majority of these animals were later returned to their original owners or adopted by new owners. These animals brought emotional and psychological relief to many people, giving them encouragement and helping them move on with the tasks of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Based on experience gained from that time, Hyogo has provided active support to the animal rescue activities conducted in Tohoku following the Great East Japan

Earthquake of March last year. We sent out a total of over 200 animal welfare specialists to provide help taking care of pets while their owners, who had been forced to move from the evacuation zone surrounding the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, made brief visits home. They also helped in the work to rescue animals wandering inside the zone.

Moreover, as a basis for securing animal welfare, they established an Animal Rescue Center with branches in four locations around Fukushima Prefecture. Their task was not only to look after dogs and cats without owners, but also to search for new owners for these animals, run training classes and 'interaction with animals' classes, etc. In addition, Hyogo is placing a strong emphasis on building regions where people and nature can coexist in harmony. For example, our Prefecture is proceeding with an overall regional effort to reintroduce storks into the wild, an effort centered on the Toyooka Basin.

In this regard it is extremely encouraging that, at this conference here today, so much expertise centered on veterinarians has been gathered from countries all over the world. This will enable discussions to be held that relate to animal care from a wide variety of angles. It is my hope that we can help widen the circle of people who are aiming to create a society in which people can coexist with animals and nature and that we can work together for its realization.

I would like to end by extending my sincere hopes that this conference will be successful. I also wish all the participants continued good health and further success in their various activities.