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○ Prof. Yoshikawa

Hello. I'm Yasuhiro Yoshikawa and I will be serving as the chair of this workshop. Currently, I mainly lecture about infectious disease control in classes at Kitasato University on zoonotic infections (referred to animal-derived infectious diseases by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare). In my lectures, I talk on themes that veterinary students need to know about, such as food poisoning - including from livestock products - and foodborne infectious diseases. These themes are related to the subjects that our three speakers will be talking about later today.

When I am invited to lecture by the Cabinet Secretariat I often talk about food safety issues. Obviously, where there is no food available, then food safety questions are meaningless. Today, I heard on a TV news report that there is a famine raging in Africa which has left tens of millions of people begging for international food aid. Japan's food self-sufficiency ratio is currently about 40%, which means that, as a nation, we import 60% of the food we eat. We should be grateful that in our current times we are able to eat our fill due to imports. However, this situation is not guaranteed to continue indefinitely.

Highly pathogenic infections such as avian influenza and foot-and-mouth disease - topics which may come up during today's talks - are not related to the issue of whether specific foods are safe to eat or not. They are related to the more essential international veterinary issue of whether a sufficient amount of food can be safely secured or not. In Japan, we have tried to clear up this issue by simply saying that it is a matter of whether food is safe to eat or not. But on a global basis

the problem of securing food is bigger than that. I am sure that, during today's talks, we will hear that the risk-control side is desperately grappling with livestock diseases on the front lines, including at farms, in an effort to secure worldwide food supplies. This is one of the most essential roles played by veterinarians today.

Likewise, the BSE and radiation problems that have emerged from the food safety department are the definitive food safety issues. Almost ten years have passed since the Food Safety Commission was established, and almost half of the commission personnel are veterinarians. They have taken on a new 'risk evaluation' role and showing their capabilities in a new field. As well as food safety, there is also the less familiar issue of food security. Food security cannot be achieved unless a food safety system is set up. Food management controls are needed so that problems, such as the deliberate contamination of frozen Chinese jiaozi with small amounts of agricultural chemicals, can be prevented. But we don't need food management systems to be based on a paranoid view of human nature as something fundamentally depraved with evil individuals attempting to destroy established systems through biological or agricultural terrorism. In Japan, we haven't had the opportunity to come right out and discuss such issues yet, but there are three major factors regarding food issues. They are not all on the same level, but rather, we could say that these factors are on the first, second and third floors, respectively.

At the time when I was writing these thoughts down as part of my written introduction, I didn't realize that we have deeply embraced a myth concerning safety, and that we repeatedly get into a panic whenever that myth

collapses. In order to break this cycle, I feel that the time is approaching for consumers, the risk control side and the evaluating side to take an equal measure of responsibility for the situation. So we will be discussing this issue later, after the three speakers have finished their presentations.

In today's workshop, three individuals will address the theme of food safety from the respective viewpoints of upstream, downstream, and an organization that objectively evaluates food safety.

So now, please let me introduce our first speaker, Mr. Junichi Sakai of NOSAI Yamagata, who is going to talk about "An Approach to Ensuring Safety at Livestock Raising Sites."

