
PRESS RELEASE

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association responds to the decision to ban the dog meat industry in South Korea

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association ([WSAVA](https://www.wsava.org)) welcomes the decision by South Korea to ban the dog meat trade. Currently up to one million dogs a year are factory farmed and killed for human consumption in the country. The ban, which comes into force in six months' time with a three-year phase out, will make the breeding, slaughter and sale of dogs and dog meat for human consumption illegal from 2027.

While the WSAVA is sensitive to cultural variances, it strongly discourages the consumption of dog and cat meat. It does this both from an animal welfare perspective as the trade typically operates in an inhumane and dangerous way, but also because of evidence documenting the human health risk it poses. This includes perpetuating the transmission of diseases, such as rabies and cholera, and undermining dog vaccination programs.

According to Humane Society International, the decision is the result of considerable public and political momentum. With more than six million pet dogs now living in Korean homes, demand for dog meat is at an all-time low. A 2023 Nielsen Korea [opinion poll](#) shows that 86% of South Koreans won't eat dog meat in the future and 57% support a ban.

Commenting, WSAVA President Dr Ellen van Nierop said: "As an association focused on ensuring the health and welfare of companion animals and on highlighting the benefits of their bond with humans, we're delighted that South Korea has joined a growing list of countries in banning the dog meat trade. We congratulate all those who have campaigned for a ban to be introduced."

Note to editors:**About the WSAVA**

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 116 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.

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