

Osaka to stop selling pets for tests

OSAKA — Osaka Prefectural Government will stop selling abandoned pets to animal testing facilities, officials said Friday.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, such practices have already been stopped by the Tokyo Metropolitan and Fukui Prefectural governments as well as by Kobe.

Officials at Osaka's environmental public health department said it received or caught about 12,000 dogs and 10,000 cats last fiscal year.

The animals were sent to the prefectural pound, and 1,428 dogs and 285 cats were then sold to universities and public hospitals at ¥510 each for use in tests, officials said. Others were destroyed.

Animal rights groups have protested, saying the prefecture's practice runs against the will of those who brought their pets to the local government for euthanasia.

In response to the protests, the prefecture moved to quit the practice before April, considering the spirit of the law concerning animal protection.

It has also mapped out a plan to create a 20,000 sq. meter animal protection center to replace the current pound.

The new facility will include an operating room for spading or castrating animals, a classroom to teach children how to keep pets, a guide dog training center and a euthanasia facility.

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