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NATIONAL



THESE CAGES, which are being withdrawn, were distributed by the Kagawa Prefectural Government for unwanted dogs. KYODO PHOTO

Kagawa withdraws stray-dog cages

TAKAMATSU, Kagawa Pref. (Kyodo) The Kagawa Prefectural Government is retrieving its cages for unwanted dogs following protests from animal lovers' organizations.

The groups called the move a "step forward," but urged local governments to provide subsidies for pet owners to have their dogs sterilized.

However, the prefectural government said it had no intention of taking further action, saying the problem is chiefly attributable to pet

owners' irresponsibility.

The local government says that since 1982 it placed cages at about 160 sites and that about 100 were left until recently. It asked residents to leave unwanted dogs in the cages with the aim of preventing the dogs from going wild.

Somewhere between 3,000 to 4,000 dogs are taken in by the prefectural government every year.

About 16,000 are said to have been killed or used in animal experiments.

Kagawa Dog-Cat Network claimed that the prefecture has the country's highest rate of "mercy killings" of dogs and that the prefectural government spends ¥50 million a year on sterilization operations.

The group pressed the local government to remove the cages, and said that the administrative authorities, veterinarian societies and citizens must work together to eliminate the problem of unwanted dogs.