

Over View of Veterinary Medicine in Japan

Japan Veterinary Medical Association, 2011

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1. Educational System for Veterinary Medicine in Japan

The general education system in Japan consists of 6 years education in elementary school, 3 years in junior high school and 3 years in high school.

After graduation from high school, they may have 4-6 years education in college. The curriculum for veterinary medicine is 6 years (same as medical doctors and dentists). After completing 6-year education, it is necessary to pass a national examination administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to get a license for veterinarian. Completion of the 6-year curriculum and passing the national exam confers a master's degree. Further studies at a graduate school are required to obtain a Ph.D.

There are total of 16 universities/colleges offering curriculum for veterinary medicine in Japan: 10 national universities (Hokkaido University, Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary, Iwate University, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, University of Tokyo, Gifu University, Tottori University, Yamaguchi University, Miyazaki University, Kagoshima University); 1 prefectural university (University of Osaka Prefecture); and 5 private universities (Rakuno Gakuen University, Kitasato University, Nippon Veterinary and Life Science University, Nihon University, Azabu University).

About 30 students are admitted to each national or public university one year, and about 120 to each private university (at present half of the students are female).

2. Number of Veterinarians in Japan

Currently, there are 35,028 active veterinarians in Japan in 2008.

Each year, about 1,000 graduates become newly certified veterinarians by passing the national examination. The number of the veterinarians has been increasing year by year.

3. Active Fields for Veterinarians in Japan

Veterinarians in Japan are involved in professional fields as follows:

Public officials: 9,055

National government: 451 (agriculture and forestry field- 275, public health field- 141, education and other fields- 35)

Prefecture government: 6,920 (agriculture and forestry field- 3,181, public health field- 3,615, education and other fields- 124)

Municipal Government: 1,684 (agriculture and forestry field- 173, public health fields- 1,311, education and other fields- 200)

Private organizations and corporations: 6,403

Private practice: 14,992 (farm animals - 1,965, small animals - 12,913, other animals-114)

Others: 4,578

TOTAL: 35,028

Almost 10,000 veterinarians are working as public officials and their duties are as follows.

Agriculture and forestry field-

Veterinary medicine jurisprudence,

Livestock infectious diseases control and regulatory affairs for animal health,

Pharmaceutical affairs (Inspection and Guidance) in animal drugs

Research and development of farm animal veterinary science

Animal health inspection for livestock,

Animal Quarantine

Public health field-

Zoonosis control

Food safety (meat inspection, food sanitary inspection)

Quality control of animal products (milk, meat, eggs)

Animal welfare, etc

Recently, due to the increasing import of livestock products to Japan, we have problems such as stagnant domestic production, substantial decrease of livestock and livestock farmers and aging and decreasing numbers of veterinary practitioners for farm animals.

On the other hand, a stabilized economy and improved quality of life have enabled people to afford more leisure and develop an awareness of coexistence between humans and animals. As a result, the number of companion animals such as dogs and cats has been increased and veterinary practice for companion animals as an occupation has been become popular. At the same time, complaints and troubles regarding companion animal practices have been increasing. Thus, there is a necessity for post-graduate clinical training and continuing education of veterinarians. Japan veterinary Medical Association has been carried out continuing education program for the member veterinarians since 2000.

Furthermore, veterinarians need to cooperate with humane organizations and extend their activities to solving problems in the field of animal welfare, including pets in collective housing, consulting on animal training and maintenance, and saving wild animals.

4. Number of livestock in Japan (as of 2008)

Cattle: 4,423,000

Dairy 1,533,000

Beef 2,890,000

Equine: 92,886(2005)

Swine: 9,745,000

Layer: 184,773,000

Broiler: 102,987,000

Estimated data:

Canine: 11,861,000(2010)

Feline: 9,612,000(2010)

5. Activities of Japan Veterinary Medical Association

The Japan Veterinary Medical Association (JVMA) is a national organization of veterinarians approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The organization has 55 local association offices throughout Japan and about 27,700 veterinarians as members. The association is funded by membership fees and other business income in support of its activities.

1) Activities

Leadership and governance:

Discussion on veterinary affairs issues at technical committees and other meetings to identify and anticipate the needs for veterinary profession

Public relations:

Public relations on veterinarians and other veterinary affairs for Livestock farmers, pet owners and other people

Academic activities:

Annual Congress in 3 fields (companion animals, farm animals, public health)

Annual Congress 2010 was held at Gifu City, Chubu District in February 2011.

Annual Congress 2011 will be held at Sapporo City, Hokkaido District in February 2012.

District meeting in 3 fields at 9 districts (Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kanto, Tokyo, Chubu, Kinki, Chugoku, Shikoku, Kyushu)

Administrative training courses, lectures, seminars (companion animals, industrial animals, public health)

Continuing education program

Publication

”Japan Veterinary Medical Association(JVMA) Journal” (Monthly)

Forms of documents used in veterinary practice

Other Publication regarding veterinary affairs

International communication activities:

National Member of WVA and FAVA.

WVA /WASVA/FAVA Congress in Yokohama in 1995.

2) Member Services

Academic meetings and lectures are held for about 27,500 individual member veterinarians for the presentation of research studies.

Information about veterinary affairs (Research and Development in Veterinary science, changes on laws and regulations regarding veterinarian, etc.) is provided through the JVMA Journal or JVMA web site (URL: <http://nichiju.go.jp/>, email: info@nichiju.lin.go.jp). Academic information is also made available to members through literature, books, a video library, etc.

Continuing education system for veterinarians has been established since 2000. JVMA offers the education programs and accredits with the achievement of veterinarians in the system.

Officers of the JVMA, 2011-2013 (An official's term is 2 years.)

President	Dr. Yoshihisa Yamane
Vice Presidents	Dr. Isao Kurauchi
	Dr. Nobuo Kondo
Representative Director	Dr. Tadao Yagasaki

9 District Representative Officers

6 Field Representative Officers

Education and Research	Dr. Takeo Sakai
Industrial Animals:	Dr. Akira Aso
Small Animals:	Dr. Taisei Hosoido
Agriculture Mutual Association	Dr. Akira Yoko.
Animal Health	Dr. Masachika Umezawa
Public Health:	Dr. Kunio Morita
Animal Welfare :	Dr. Yoshiyuki Kimura