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Date of Release: 23 October 2026

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Government and National Universities Launch Public Veterinary Care Partnership for Service Animals, Abandoned Animals and More

Sejong, 23 October 2026 — The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) signed a memorandum of understanding with four institutions—Kangwon, Chungbuk, Chungnam, and Chonnam National Universities—to operate public veterinary care hubs. The signing took place on 2 October during an event in Seongsu-dong, Seoul, marking Korea's second annual Animal Protection Day.

The partnership aims to establish public veterinary care services for animals that have served the country, abandoned and lost animals, and companion animals belonging to vulnerable members of society. The initiative will draw on the public-service role and specialised medical infrastructure of university veterinary hospitals.

The MOU calls for the MAFRA and the four universities to designate their veterinary hospitals as public veterinary care hubs. They will cooperate in (1) providing veterinary care for national service animals; (2) coordinating appropriate treatment for abandoned and lost animals; (3) providing basic veterinary care for companion animals owned by vulnerable members of society or residents of areas with limited access to veterinary services; and (4) providing veterinary education and training and developing veterinary professionals.*

* For example, expanding opportunities for veterinary students to provide clinical care for educational purposes under the supervision of veterinary school faculty

This arrangement is significant because it formalises the public veterinary care role that university veterinary hospitals have previously performed through community service activities. Initially, each hospital will operate the programme according to its own circumstances, building on existing activities, including partnerships to provide veterinary care for service animals. The participating institutions will coordinate their respective roles within the areas of cooperation. Each university will develop a detailed action plan by the end of the year and publish information through its veterinary hospital website and other channels.

Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Song Miryung said, “I deeply appreciate the commitment of the four universities to fulfilling their public responsibilities in veterinary care despite challenging conditions for both clinical practice and education. This MOU marks the start of a pilot programme through which we will assess needs in the field, evaluate the programme’s

effectiveness, and identify areas requiring additional attention. We will also actively address difficulties that arise as we work to establish a sustainable foundation for public veterinary care.”