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Date of Release: 23 October 2026

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S. Korea Nears End of Dog Meat Consumption as 87% of Farms Shut Down

Sejong, 23 October 2026 — On 11 October, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced that 1,339 of the country's 1,537 facilities raising dogs for meat (87%) had ceased operations as of September 21, when Phase 5 of the closure programme ended.*

* To expedite closures, the phaseout is being conducted over six consecutive periods, with higher financial incentives offered to farms that wind up their businesses sooner.

This figure exceeds the original cumulative target of 1,030 farms by 30%. The MAFRA attributes the faster-than-expected progress to the phased incentive programme and special inspections conducted during the summer months.

The number of dogs being raised for meat has also declined sharply as farms have closed. Farmers reported approximately 468,000 dogs in total when they

submitted their closure implementation plans in August 2024. Only about 7,600 animals remained across all locations at the end of Phase 5.

The Ministry plans to step up on-site inspections in cooperation with local governments to maintain this momentum through 7 February, 2027, when the nationwide ban on raising dogs for meat takes effect. Special winter inspections will be conducted at all current and former dog meat farms from November through December this year. Inspectors will check whether shuttered facilities have resumed raising dogs and whether those still operating are adhering to their closure plans.

Farms that fail to manage their dogs properly, including those that increase the number of animals or fail to separate males and females, will be informed in advance that they may face corrective or closure orders under the Special Act on the Termination of Breeding, Slaughter, and Distribution of Dogs for Consumption and other relevant laws. These measures are intended to encourage prompt closures.

A system will also be established to protect and care for dogs still alive when farms cease operations, including those relinquished by their owners. To enable local governments to respond promptly, the Ministry will develop arrangements tailored to each animal's breed, size, age, and sociability, with details to be finalised in consultation with relevant agencies and other stakeholders.

The Special Act stipulates that raising, breeding, slaughtering, distributing, and selling dogs for human consumption will be completely prohibited as of 7 February, 2027. The MAFRA will continue public information campaigns to ensure that people understand when the ban takes effect and what

activities are prohibited under the law, to ensure a smooth and lasting transition away from the practice of eating dog meat.