



It is heartbreaking to watch dogs cruelly mistreated in Korea. Cruelties inflicted upon dogs by Korean dog meat producers are notorious worldwide. In addition, dogs are also being abused in puppy mills and in municipal-run shelters for stray animals. Dogs are not treated as living creatures in Korea. Instead, they are seen as lucrative sources of income for dog farmers, breeders and government-assigned shelter directors.

Hence, it is not very shocking to find even Korean Government officers actively participating in cruelty to animals. The following two cases show how the Korean Government regards and treats dogs.

CASE 1

The “owner” of these dogs is a typical dog meat vendor, having run a dog farm at Changsoo-Dong, Incheon, Korea for over 10 years even while having no property rights to the farm site. When officials from Incheon’s local government visited the farm to begin land reclamation proceedings, they found five to six dogs were crammed in each cage, measuring 70x60x70cm³, where they could barely move their limbs. Piles of feces measuring over one meter in height littered the property, and the bodies of dead dogs were stacked in freezers. Many of them were young puppies who died from disease. Unfortunately, these miserable conditions are commonplace at “dog farms” across Korea.

In May 2005, the dogs were relocated by the government officers. Unfortunately, the conditions at the new location were even more horrific. Locked up in small pens, the dogs were left on asphalt and exposed to rain and snow. The officers did not install shelter from the wind nor roofs, because to them dogs are more like canned products stacked on shelves than living creatures. The dogs had to endure the harsh elements of last winter in this horrible environment, and many of them did not survive.

When animal protection groups visited the site in March 2006, they noticed a number of injured dogs. Due to fights among them, which is not uncommon on dog farms, some dogs had no ears or missing tails, and some were limping. Living on asphalt without drainage, it is little wonder that decayed food and even their own feces was caked on their fur. Infected with scabies and other skin diseases, their skin was rotting with pus all over their bodies. The only food available, if it can be called food, was decomposing food waste. Cannibalism was occurring here and there, and new-born puppies were being eaten by starving dogs.





Dogs suffered scabies and other skin diseases and many were also injured.



The dogs had to survive on decomposing food waste.



Dead dogs stuffed in a freezer



Dead puppies

CASE 2

In November 2005, officials from the local government of Incheon demolished a dog farm in Sankok-dong, by an administrative order, and relocated the dogs in order to build a park on the farm site. According to the farm owner, some 100 dogs were killed during the process, in which heavy equipment was used to destroy their original cages. Officers forced the dogs into cages, where they could hardly breathe, with their necks and backs bent over. Some dogs were locked up in wooden boxes with no sunshine or ventilation.

Incredibly, they suffered in these horrible conditions for five long months. When the boxes were finally uncovered, none of the dogs tried to get out: because they were kept in the boxes since they were very young, they did not know how. Newborn puppies were also confined in the boxes.

It was apparent that some dogs suffered from hernias, as they were not able to move their limbs in cold temperatures. The day after animal protection groups visited the scene, the dog owner pushed the hernias back into the dogs' stomachs and sewed them up using no anesthesia.

These cruelties to animals are very common in Korea, but there are currently no legal protections for abused animals. The maximum penalty against animal abuse is only \$200. It is impossible to take temporary custody of abused animals to ensure their safety without the owner's permission, no matter what kind of abuse the animals have suffered. The Korean government has consistently refused to prescribe giving refuge to abused animals

In 2004, the Korean government announced that the Animal Protection Law would be revised, and since then has issued several revised bills. However, each time a bill is released, it goes from bad to worse under the constant pressure of interest groups. Rather than protecting animals, the latest bill would protect the right of special interest groups to continue exploiting animals without restraint.









These puppies died of hunger and cold.



Some dogs are leashed to trees, exposed to rain and snow all year round.









Dogs kept in boxes



These puppies had been locked in the box since birth.







Many of the dogs suffered hernias



Confined and chained