

IVEP

Hokkaido University-Kasetsart University
International Vet Exchange Program 2025
Achieving Global Standards of Excellence in Veterinary Education



Student Report from
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Project Managers
Kasetsart University
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Ayano TOISHI, 5th year

My two-month stay at Kasetsart University was an incredibly enriching and inspiring experience. Not only did I improve my English skills, but I also deepened my understanding of veterinary medicine and gained valuable insights by adapting to a culture and lifestyle different from Japan.

The program consisted of six main units, and in every unit, the instructors taught a wide range of topics—from basic techniques such as animal handling to more advanced practices like clinical examinations and farm consultations—all in English. In the Aquatic Unit and Exotic Unit, we learned about fish and shrimp management as well as the physical examination and treatment of raptors and turtles. Because such topics are rarely covered in Japan, we initially had very limited knowledge. Despite this, the instructors explained everything patiently until we fully understood, and they were always willing to answer our questions without hesitation. Their kindness and dedication left a strong impression on me.

Among all the units, the Bovine Unit—where I spent two weeks—provided the most profound learning experience. We accompanied veterinarians on daily farm visits, performed reproductive examinations, and observed surgeries. During visits, we were even allowed to conduct physical examinations ourselves and occasionally make decisions regarding treatment plans or antibiotic choices. This allowed me to apply everything I had learned in Japan and work with full commitment. In addition, because of the warm climate in Thailand, we encountered cases of anaplasmosis and piroplasmiasis—diseases that no longer occur in Japan. Observing blood smears of these infections was particularly exciting.



Fig 1 : Me drawing blood from a goat

Before the training, I had set a personal goal: to learn about dairy and beef cattle management in Thai farms. Through the busy and fulfilling two weeks in the Bovine Unit, I was able to accomplish this goal. Unlike Japan, Thailand is largely composed of small-scale farms. Every farm we visited had only about 10 to 20 cattle. The high year-round temperatures also make it difficult to raise Holsteins or Jerseys (*Bos taurus*). As a result, Thai farmers keep *Bos indicus* cattle—commonly known as zebu or humped cattle—or crossbreeds between *Bos indicus* and Holsteins. These cattle are smaller and produce less milk than Holsteins.

Due to these circumstances, many farmers struggle to earn sufficient income, and it is difficult for them to improve farm infrastructure or increase labor. Consequently, diseases such as pneumonia and diarrhea—both common and hard to manage—occur frequently, leading to higher antibiotic usage. Having previously observed only medium- to large-scale farms in Obihiro, seeing firsthand the challenges faced by small-scale farms in Thailand was eye-opening. I realized that effective infectious disease control must include preventive strategies that even small-scale farms can realistically implement; otherwise, fundamental improvement is unlikely.

Furthermore, I gained a clearer idea of my future goals. Before participating, I was simply interested in cattle medicine and farm management. However, the exposure to real-world challenges faced by Thai farmers—such as infectious disease control, heat stress, and limited resources—made me aware of the global scale of veterinary issues. I began to think more seriously about the roles veterinarians can play internationally, whether in disease prevention, public health, or improving production systems in developing regions. I am now more motivated to build the skills and knowledge needed to contribute not only within Japan but also beyond its borders.

Outside of academic activities, spending time with Kasetsart University students and graduates—sharing Thai meals and traveling together—became cherished memories. The Thai students were incredibly kind. They drove us to various places despite their busy schedules and often brought small gifts, breakfast, or drinks when we met. Their warm hospitality deeply moved me, and they taught me what it truly means to be kind to others. I hope to carry forward their spirit of thoughtfulness in my own actions. In addition, I was deeply moved when a Thai student generously shared stories about her family traditions and future dreams. Through these conversations, I was really happy that she shared such deep and personal stories with me, and I realized that, despite differences in language and background, students pursuing veterinary science share a similar passion and sense of responsibility. This sense of camaraderie gave me strength on challenging days during the program. One of the most memorable experiences was snorkeling in the Similan Islands. The Similan Islands are known for their stunning coral reefs and world-class diving spots. Since I did not have a diving license, I decided to try snorkeling instead. The seawater was incredibly blue and clear—beautiful enough to move me even before I began swimming. As I floated above the reefs, I was able to see many brightly colored fish, which made the experience even more enjoyable. The highlight, however, was unexpectedly encountering a sea turtle nearby and having the chance to swim alongside it. It felt like an unbelievable stroke of luck.

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Rattikarn, the professors and students at Kasetsart University, Professor Katagiri and the faculty at Hokkaido University, Ms. Kawashima, and all the Hokkaido University and Rakuno Gakuen University students who shared these two months with me. This program was far more than an academic training opportunity—it was a transformative experience that helped me grow as an aspiring veterinarian and as a person. The friendships I built, the clinical experiences I gained, and the cultural lessons I learned will stay with me for the rest of my career. I am truly grateful for the chance to participate in this program, and I look forward to applying everything I learned as I continue my journey in veterinary medicine.



Fig 2: The beautiful ocean of the Similan Islands

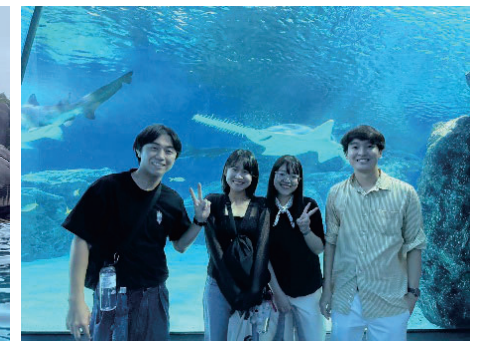


Fig 3: With my favorite friends

Takuma GOTO, 5th year

I joined a two-month clinical practice at Kasetsart University in Kamphaeng Saen, located about 1.5 hours from Bangkok, Thailand. We stayed there from mid-September to mid-October, during the transition from the rainy season to the dry season. We were told that the temperature was becoming milder; however, it still felt hot and humid to us. Our program consisted of a clinical rotation through six units. We had opportunities to learn about large animals (e.g., swine and ruminants) as well as areas that are less familiar to us, such as aquatic animals and exotics. In the first week, we studied swine medicine. Through farm visits and necropsies, we learned a variety of topics including farm management and major diseases. Among the necropsies, a case of PRDC (porcine respiratory disease complex), which presented as fibrinous polyserositis with abundant fibrin deposition on the epicardium, pleura, and peritoneal serosa (fig 1. Fibrinous pericarditis), was most memorable to me. In the second and third weeks, we studied fish and shrimp management. Although the schedule was demanding, with numerous farm visits, we learned many concepts in aquaculture. In the fourth and fifth weeks, we studied mainly bovine diseases in the ruminant unit. We encountered several infectious diseases that are problematic in Thai farms. Due to the hot and humid climate, blood parasite infections were common, and we had several opportunities to observe them. In the sixth week, we learned basic medical techniques in the exotic animal unit (e.g., rabbit restraint, raptor physical examination, and drug administration in turtles). I was also lucky to observe an elephant case, which made the week particularly memorable. In the seventh week, we studied pathology basics including necropsy, immunohistochemistry, and PCR. In the last week, we observed several equine infectious diseases (e.g., habronemiasis and trypanosomiasis). A case of surra was especially impressive as we were able to observe live, motile organisms on a blood smear (fig 2. *Trypanosoma evansi*).

One of my goals for this practice was to learn about infectious diseases that are rare in Japan. I was particularly looking forward to joining the pathology unit because pathology is my favorite field. In this unit, we studied blood parasites, avian necropsy and sampling, histopathology, immunohistochemistry, and PCR for diagnosis. For the blood parasite practice, we first observed eight demonstration slides to study the morphology of eight parasite species (e.g., *Anaplasma*, *Babesia*, *Theileria*, *Trypanosoma*, *Leucocytozoon*, *Plasmodium*, *Haemoproteus*, and *Microfilaria*). We then tried to identify infectious agents from blood smears of clinical cases. I found that *Anaplasma*, *Theileria*, and *Babesia* share similar morphology, making differentiation challenging. We then confirmed the species by PCR, which revealed that many cases involved co-infections, further complicating on-site diagnosis. This was a valuable experience, as we rarely encounter such cases in Hokkaido.

Avian necropsy was one of the most memorable parts of this exchange program because I could learn a technique that was new to me. In standard avian necropsy procedures, we cut the ribs to remove the sternum and expose the heart and lungs. However, this method often damages the air sacs, making observation difficult. This time, we learned that by cutting the sternum longitudinally and opening it to both sides, the air sacs could be observed more clearly (fig 3. Chicken necropsy, air sacs are easily observed). Through the necropsy, we also learned how to collect samples for cytology and bacterial culture. As we usually do not perform cytology during necropsy in our lab, it was valuable to learn the appropriate sampling technique. They also emphasized the importance of considering the budget, as farmers need to pay for diagnostic tests. In some cases, cytology is sufficient for diagnosis and much easier and more rapid than histopathology.

We also had the opportunity to study histopathology, including slides of lumpy skin disease and pythiosis. We learned classical histological features for lumpy skin disease (e.g., ballooning degeneration of keratinocytes, intracytoplasmic inclusion bodies), which was also found in Japan last year. We also saw a gross image from a horse

infected with *Pythium*, a filamentous organism, showing a large granuloma with ulceration on the skin. Since I was not familiar with this disease, studying real histological examples was particularly meaningful to me.

We performed immunohistochemistry for hexon antigen in liver sections from chickens with IBH (fowl adenovirus infection). We also discussed how we could improve the staining by adjusting the conditions. I was fortunate to observe histological slides for several cases, which was especially enjoyable for me (fig 4. IBH, basophilic intranuclear inclusion bodies).

Last year, I participated in the IVEP program and spent one month in the animal hospital at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. I studied small animal medicine there, so it was especially meaningful for me to learn about large animals during the rotation at Kasetsart University. Aquatic animals and exotic animals were particularly unfamiliar to me, and I felt fortunate to have the opportunity to study them in the program. Through this two-month stay, which was the longest I have ever spent abroad, I also became more familiar with Thai food and culture. Thailand and Japan have differences in food, culture, environment, and climate, which sometimes made daily life a bit challenging; however, we spent a fulfilling and meaningful time thanks to the delicious food and the kindness of the people we met. I would like to express my gratitude to all the instructors who supported the program, the students with whom I spent these two months, and everyone who helped us in Thailand.

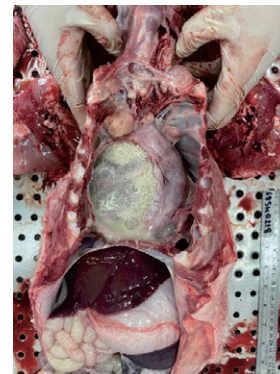


fig1: fibrinous pericarditis

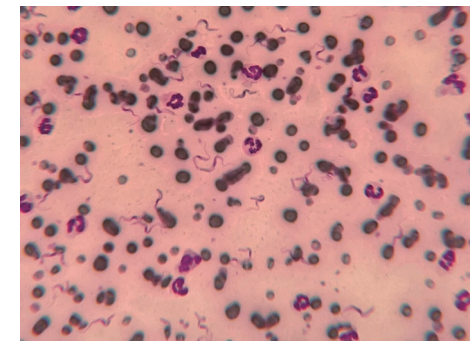


fig2: *Trypanosoma evansi*



fig3: chicken necropsy

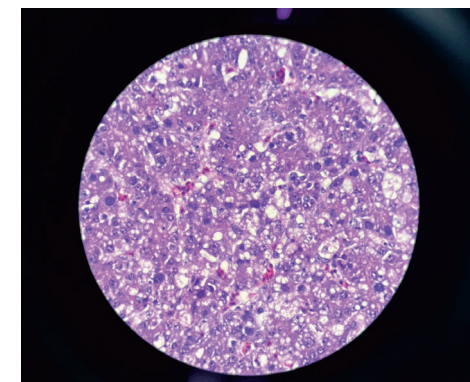


fig4: IBH

Moe DOI, 5th year

The most memorable part of my stay was the Exotic Unit. During the one-week rotation, I spent three days observing clinical cases at the hospital and two days at the Wildlife Unit, where I encountered a wide range of species—from elephants standing nearly three meters tall to turtles as small as three centimeters.

At the hospital, I mainly observed clinical examinations and surgeries, and learned various handling and restraint techniques for exotic species. Most of the cases brought in were injured or ill wildlife and pets, with turtles, fighting cocks, and squirrels being particularly common.

The university animal hospital where I trained is located in Kamphaeng Saen, an area rich in greenery with abundant wildlife, yet also heavy traffic. As a result, many of the wildlife cases we saw were related to road accidents. After treatment, these animals are released into quiet, low-traffic areas within the campus.

In some cases, wildlife require more than a year of continuous treatment. The cost is generally covered by the person who rescued the animal, but when this is not possible, the veterinarians or veterinary nurses sometimes take responsibility and cover the expenses themselves.

During the two days at the Wildlife Unit, I observed clinical procedures for raptors, as well as anesthesia and treatments for deer and an elephant.

In the raptor unit, we were able to experience hands-on wildlife medicine that we rarely encounter in Japan, including capturing a rescued kite, performing physical examinations and blood collection, and administering subcutaneous vitamin injections. A variety of rescued raptors, such as eagles and owls, were being cared for at the facility.

The following day, we assisted with anesthesia and medical procedures for deer kept on the Kasetsart University campus in preparation for their transfer to another farm. Among a herd of more than 30 deer, we identified the target individuals, delivered dart injections accurately, induced anesthesia, and transported them out of the paddock. To prevent dehydration during transport, we administered IV fluids, along with vitamins and mineral supplements for overall health. Working as a four-student team, we divided our tasks—IV injections, anesthesia monitoring, subcutaneous injections, and intramuscular injections—and performed the procedures efficiently within the limited anesthesia window.

In the afternoon, we visited a temple near Bangkok to observe an elephant medical examination. The patient was a 50-year-old male standing about three meters tall. His sheer size was both exciting and a little intimidating. Unlike Japan, elephant medicine in Thailand is conducted in a direct-contact manner. Although students participated from behind two protective barriers, the hoof treatment still felt very tense and demanded great care.

Through this training program, I gained many insights into the relationship between people and animals in Thailand. As mentioned earlier, at the Exotic Unit, many wild animals are brought in by members of the public who have rescued them on their own. It was refreshing to see people bring in turtles or squirrels injured in traffic accidents, pay for their treatment, and continue to care for them afterward.

In the Bovine Unit, I also learned that injured beef cattle are sometimes treated even to the extent of performing limb amputation, and that cattle on their way to slaughterhouses may be reclaimed by charity groups and taken to temples. These are situations that would be difficult to imagine in Japan. Through these experiences, I was reminded

of the diversity of values toward animals and gained insights that will be highly valuable in my future career as a veterinarian.

Before this program, I had already been considering a career in large animal veterinary medicine, but this experience strengthened that intention even further. In Japan, most of the cattle I encountered during practical training were healthy animals kept on well-managed, hygienic large-scale farms. In contrast, in Thailand, I was able to observe a wider range of cases involving cattle raised under more diverse environmental conditions, which I found extremely interesting.

I also learned an important concept from a professor in the aquaculture field in Thailand: the policy for food-producing animals, “Effort that matches what you want to gain.”

This means that whether farmers carefully raise expensive juveniles for high-value sale, or choose inexpensive stock and provide only minimal care for low-cost production, the economic efficiency can be the same; neither approach is inherently superior. This was a completely new way of thinking for me. It led me to realize that even if a farm appears to have suboptimal management by Japanese standards, improvement is not always necessary as long as the management does not compromise animal welfare and is appropriate for that farm’s operational goals. This was a significant insight for me.

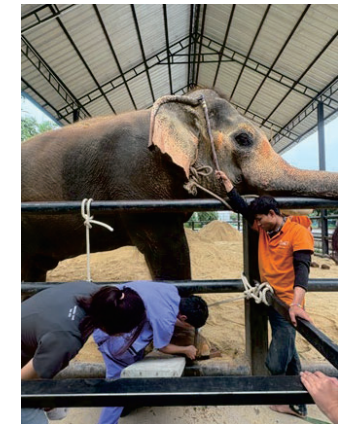
Lastly, all of the classes and practical sessions in this program were specially designed for Japanese exchange students. I was able to learn so much thanks to the tremendous support from Dr. Narut, Ms. Rattikarn, and many other faculty members, veterinarians, and staff.

I am also deeply grateful to Professor Katagiri and Associate Professor Yanagawa from the Department of Teriogenology, Associate Professor Hiono from the Department of Microbiology, Lecturer Sunaga from the Department of Surgery, Ms. Kawashima from the administrative office, and Mr. Mike, who guided my presentations. The support from previous exchange students and local students also played a major role in ensuring that I could spend eight weeks safely and stay fully focused on my studies.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to everyone involved.



△ This kite was rescued with fractured primaries.



△ Hoof management of the elephant. Students work from outside the enclosure for safety.

Tohshiroh YAMAGUCHI, 5th year

I would like to report on my experiences during the Kasetsart University exchange program. This was the longest program within IVEP, lasting eight weeks, and enabled me to study a broad range of topics in industrial animal studies. I gained valuable experience in learning about infectious diseases not found in Japan and husbandry practices unique to Thailand. I would like to focus my report on the Aquatic Animal Unit, where I studied topics rarely covered in Japanese veterinary programs.

<Aquatic Animal Unit>

This unit covered numerous topics, including fish and shrimp aquaculture management, transport management, sample collection, and water quality examination methods. At Hokkaido University, while we learn about shrimp and fish diseases through lectures, there are few opportunities to study other aspects, making this experience invaluable. Below, I report on the specific content learned during this unit.

First, aquaculture management methods vary widely depending on the objectives and target species. Among these, the management practices at the giant tiger prawn breeding farm particularly impressed me, so I will describe them in detail. Giant tiger prawns are edible species of prawn, with males being preferred for their larger body size. This farm uses a technique to ensure that all prawns born are male. They perform surgery on one-month-old male juvenile prawns to induce feminization. The sex chromosomes of prawns are ZZ in males and ZW in females. Therefore, through surgery, females possessing the male genetic makeup (ZZ) – known as neo females – are created. Breeding these with males (ZZ) ensures offspring with ZZ sex chromosomes (males) are produced. The surgery specifically refers to the removal of the androgenic gland, an organ producing male hormones located on the ventral side of the prawn. This prevents the suppression of feminization that normally occurs in males, resulting in feminization.

In transport management, I learnt about the transportation of ornamental fish. It was fascinating to discover how packing methods differ depending on whether fish are transported by plane or by car. Furthermore, I was impressed and struck by the realization that even in transport, various ingenious methods are utilized. These include keeping fish at low temperatures to reduce their metabolic rate, conserve oxygen and energy, and enable them to endure long transportation periods.

Samples were collected from both shrimp and fish. For shrimp, blood sampling was performed using two methods: drawing blood directly from the heart and collecting it from the blood vessels running alongside the ventral nerve cord. Fish blood was drawn from the dorsal aorta located below the spine. In addition to blood sampling, gills, fins, and mucous membranes were collected for microscopic examinations to test for infections such as parasites and bacteria. Trichodinia was actually observed.

Regarding water quality management, we conducted actual examination of the water quality in the growth-out ponds for the White leg shrimp. Specifically, we tested pH, alkalinity, total ammoniacal nitrogen, salinity, and nitrogen dioxide using test kits and other methods. During this process, we also learnt how abnormalities in these parameters affect aquaculture and how to prevent abnormal values, thereby deepening our understanding of aquaculture management.

< Campus life >

During my stay at Kasetsart University's Kamphaeng Saen campus, I lived in the International Dormitory, where daily life was comfortable and enjoyable. The pond in front of the dorm was beautiful, and looking at it whenever I came home always helped me relax. For lunch, I often ate at the White Canteen. When I joined the Bovine Unit on farm visits, the staff kindly took me to many different restaurants, allowing me to try a variety of Thai food. In the evenings, I usually went to the campus markets. Large markets were held on Mondays and Wednesdays, and on other days the

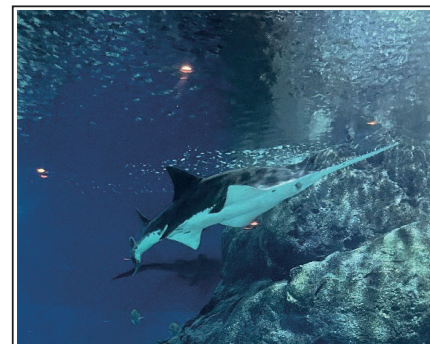
Green Tent next to the Orange Canteen was open. My favorite food stall was in the very back row of the Green Tent, where they cooked omelet pad Thai right after you ordered. It was always hot, fresh, and delicious. These two months gave me a small but meaningful look into the daily life of Thai students. It was a great chance to enjoy the campus atmosphere, meet friendly people, and experience the food culture at Kamphaeng Saen.

<Trip>

During the weekends, I had many opportunities to travel, and one of the most memorable experiences was a trip to Bangkok with both Thai friends and fellow Japanese students. Together, we visited Sea Life Bangkok, one of the largest aquariums in Southeast Asia. The exhibits were beautifully designed, and I was impressed by the wide variety of aquatic species, from tropical fish and jellyfish to large rays and sharks. Walking through the long underwater tunnel was a memorable experience, as it allowed us to observe marine animals up close in a calm and immersive environment. Visiting Sea Life with friends from different countries made the trip even more enjoyable, and it became a valuable cultural experience that deepened our friendship. It was a refreshing break from academic activities and allowed me to appreciate another aspect of Thailand's unique and vibrant culture.

<Acknowledgements>

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the faculty members of Kasetsart University, Hokkaido University, and Rakuno Gakuen University who cooperated with this program; to the administrative staff of both universities who handled the procedural matters; to my friends at Kasetsart University who supported my life there; and to my fellow students at Hokkaido University and Rakuno Gakuen University. I was able to participate in this program despite the exchange student quota being already filled, thanks to the exceptional arrangements made for me. I extend my profound gratitude once more to the staff at Kasetsart University who made an exception to increase the number of exchange students, and to the staff at both universities who worked so hard to make this possible. I realize this involved many irregularities not seen in previous years, and I am truly grateful for your flexibility in accommodating these irregularities. I also express my deepest gratitude to those involved with the Hokkaido Future Challenge Fund at the Hokkaido Government, who provided financial support for this exchange. I shall endeavor to contribute to society by applying what I have learned during this exchange. Thank you very much again.



The shark at Sea Life Bangkok



Omelet Pad Thai in the Green Tent

Noriko UWAI, 5th year

Looking back on the wonderful 8 weeks in Thailand, I'd like to write specifically about the Swine Unit and my personal impressions of this program.

- Swine Unit

This unit was composed of lectures, a necropsy, and a field trip to a swine farm. In the lectures, we gained basic knowledge of the Thai swine industry and farm management. It was our first time studying swine production in such depth, and acquiring new knowledge in English was an exciting experience. As for the necropsy, we were informed of the client's complaint and allowed to dissect some piglets by our own hands, beginning with euthanasia. We were fortunate enough to observe a range of lesions-including pericarditis, pleuritis, peritonitis, splenomegaly, lung consolidation, gastric ulcer, and enteritis. Based on the client's complaint and necropsy findings, PRDC (Porcine Respiratory Disease Complex) or a diarrheagenic *E. coli* infection was suspected in some cases. At a large pig farm outside campus, we witnessed and understood the whole production flow from heat detection and artificial insemination to farrowing, nursery, and fattening. It was our first time seeing a commercial swine farm, and everything I saw was new to me. The animals appeared healthy, housed in clean, well-lit pigpens with sufficient ventilation. What I found most interesting at the farm was its cooling facility, which utilizes the heat of water vaporization. One side of the pen features a zigzag wall, where water slowly runs down from above and evaporates by fans. On the other end, huge fans suck air, creating a one-way airflow in the pen for both ventilation and cooling. They told us that this efficient (but a bit expensive) cooling system can improve average daily gain, increasing the profit in the long run. Not only that, but the evaporative cooling system can minimize the risk of pathogen invasion from outside because it's a semi-closed system with no wide windows for air exchange. I'm glad we learned about a practical way to manage heat stress in the tropics, since it's a major issue not only in Thailand but also in Japan and other countries. Although we did not encounter any cases of African Swine Fever, we were required to provide negative PCR results for the virus before visiting the farm, which reminded us of the seriousness of ASF in Thailand.

- Giving presentations

Every Friday, we gave a presentation (either a unit summary or a case study) for each unit. Preparing for a presentation in such a short period was challenging, but teamwork made it possible. I can't say I was satisfied with the presentations I delivered, but the entire process from preparation to answering questions was deeply educational. Even when I thought I had no questions in lessons, once I started making slides, questions kept popping up one after another: "Why did they administer this antibiotic?" "How can I differentiate this disease from that?" During the presentation session, the professors asked us many questions and enriched our understanding by providing further information on what we learned that week, such as the prevalence of certain diseases in Thailand, various treatment options, and species-specific management strategies. At times, they corrected our misunderstanding. These intensive learning experiences taught me never to accept what textbooks say without questioning their basis. In addition, they often asked us, "What about in Japan?", which made me realize the importance of knowing my own country.

- Thai life and people

People in the veterinary faculty were so responsive to our questions, explaining whatever we wanted to know. Unfortunately, we didn't have a chance to take a class with Thai students this year, but they warmly kept in touch with us during our stay, taking us to many nice restaurants and tourist spots. Some of the Thai foods they recommended

became our real favorites: Thai BBQ called "mookata", shrimp with tamarind sauce, among others. Some Thai cuisine was deadly spicy, but that is one of my pleasant memories. I'm looking forward to returning the favor when they come to Japan. Apart from that, though it was only in the final week, a Hungarian student joined us. It was so much fun and enlightening to casually discuss the differences between veterinary medicine in Thailand, Japan, Hungary, and other Western countries.

Beyond the university, the Thai public was remarkably kind and friendly to us, despite the fact that some of them couldn't speak or understand English at all. For example, when I was hurrying to the classroom on foot (because I mistakenly left my bicycle at a bus stop), a total stranger on a motorcycle spoke to me in Thai and gave me a ride!

Every weekend, we made quick trips to so many amazing places around Thailand. Bangkok downtown, Ayutthaya temples, Cha-Am beach, Chiang Mai city, Doi Inthanon National Park, Khao Sok National Park, Khao Yai National Park, and Erawan National Park are all unforgettable. Kasetsart University itself was also abundant in nature and wildlife, where we could see gigantic monitor lizards, colorful birds, fireflies, squirrels, and adorable stray dogs; though we had to be cautious about rabies.

- Studying veterinary medicine abroad

This might just be my personal bias, but we Japanese tend to hesitate to speak English, being afraid of making trivial mistakes. In contrast, the most impressive thing about Thai people's English was that they seemed to speak English confidently without worrying about grammar. This experience reinforced my belief that trying to make yourself understood in simple English is important, even with some errors. And of course, over the 8 weeks, we learned many English terms in veterinary medicine. The words and knowledge I got in real-world contexts are hopefully stuck in my head.

Throughout the program, I kept feeling my lack of veterinary knowledge and skills, as well as my English proficiency. This experience will keep me motivated for years to come to grow into a veterinarian with an international perspective. We truly enjoyed this once-in-a-lifetime learning opportunity, all thanks to those involved in the program. I can never thank them enough.



Dinner on the Chao Phraya river



Kayaking on Cheow Larn lake



Night market on campus

Taro FUJINO, 5th year

To begin with, I am truly glad to have returned home safely after spending about two months in Thailand. During this program, I completed practical training in six different units over eight weeks, each of which offered valuable learning experiences. In this report, I would like to focus on the Equine Unit, which left the strongest impression on me. Since becoming an equine clinician has long been one of my future goals, I had especially been looking forward to this part of the program.

In the Equine Unit, we mainly worked with hospitalized and first-visit patients, practiced various clinical examinations and treatment techniques, and took part in a field visit to a riding club. In dealing with hospitalized and new patients, we encountered a wide range of cases such as laminitis, pneumonia, omphalitis, and rectovaginal fistula. I had the opportunity to closely observe physical examinations and treatments performed by the veterinarians, and in some cases, we were even allowed to participate in the examinations ourselves. Among the cases, what impressed me the most was a suspected case of surra (*Trypanosoma evansi* infection). Based on the horse's symptoms - such as fever and jaundice - and blood test results, surra was suspected, and under the microscope we were able to observe the actively moving parasites in the blood sample. Since surra has never been reported in Japan, it was extremely valuable to see both an actual clinical case and live parasites with my own eyes.

For the training in clinical examination and treatment techniques, we practiced physical examinations, abdominal and cardiac ultrasonography, injections, and nasogastric tube insertion. I found the abdominal ultrasound practice especially memorable. We learned about the FLASH method (fast localized abdominal sonography), a widely used technique for diagnosing colic, and then applied it to real horses. Although I had learned a part of it in lectures at my university, this was my first time handling the probe myself on horses and interpreting the images. Through this hands-on experience, I clearly understood why the FLASH method is so widely used: clearly defined scanning points allow for consistent images and enable veterinarians to assess major abdominal organs quickly and efficiently.



Practical training of FLASH method

During our visit to a riding club in the suburbs of Bangkok, we studied lameness evaluation, stable management, and some research conducted there by the professor. We observed the horses' trot and discussed with the professor which limbs were affected. At times, the opposite limb appeared to move abnormally, which made me realize how challenging lameness observation can be. The stables were well maintained, with spacious 4×4 m stalls equipped with ceiling fans and air conditioning. The stalls were kept clean, and the horses always had access to feed and water. I was impressed by the management practices that reflected a strong consideration for animal welfare. For research, the professor explained to us about his laboratory's research on the effects of bedding on horses' behavior. They mainly use 3 devices for their research: the belt sensor for detecting the motion and heart rate of a horse, the monitoring cameras for checking horse's sleeping habit, and the dust sensor for detecting the air quality, temperature and humidity of the stable. Also, they use 3 types of bedding for research: straw, paddy rice and no bedding. For the time being, little has been discovered about the impact of bedding on horses, and I obtained a hope that this research might enable us to improve the health of horses in the future.

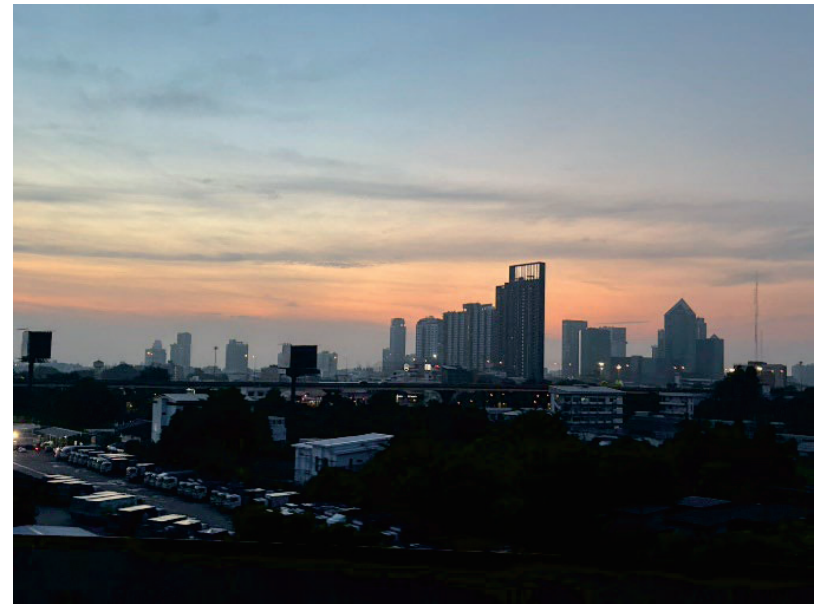
Through this training, I gained exposure to cases that cannot be seen in Japan and was able to observe equine management practices unique to Thailand. Also, I was able to practice various kinds of clinical examination skills,

many of them for the first time. The training was precious for me to deeply understand the mechanism and the importance in the clinical fields. These experiences strengthened my motivation to further develop my skills and knowledge in equine medicine. I am determined to make the most of what I learned in the Equine Unit and continue making efforts toward my future goals.

On my days off, I traveled around Thailand almost every week. I visited cities such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Kanchanaburi, and Surat Thani, and enjoyed the nature of national parks such as Erawan, Khao Yai, and Khao Sok. I rode an overnight train from Chiang Mai to Bangkok for the first time, saw Muay Thai with Thai friends in the Rajadamnern stadium in Bangkok, saw many wildlife such as elephants and porcupines in Khao yai national park, and even rode a horse on Cha-am beach – these are the experiences that have become unforgettable memories for me.

Over these two months, both on campus and during my travels, I was able to appreciate the warmth of Thai people, the diversity of the food culture, and the richness of the country's nature and wildlife. Especially, I was impressed the most by how polite Thai people are. Even though I was a stranger from a foreign country and could not understand Thai, every Thai person was willing to communicate with me, supporting me in every aspect. From daily life, practice to trip, my stay in Thailand became full of precious experiences thanks to all the supports. Moreover, the knowledge and experiences I gained through the training have inspired me to further develop my skills and someday contribute as a veterinarian on an international level. In the near future, as a veterinarian and a more matured person, I eagerly hope that I will come back to Thailand and meet all the people I met this time again.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the professors, international section staff, and students at Kasetsart University; the professors and staff at Hokkaido University; my fellow classmates who shared these two months with me; and everyone else involved in this program. Thank you very much.



Dawn in Bangkok, from night trains

時間でした。また、染色の合間に症例の組織切片も観察させて頂きました(図4. IBH、好塩基性核内封入体)。

私は昨年も IVEP プログラムを通してチュラロンコン大学(タイ王国)で1カ月の病院実習に参加させて頂きました。タイと日本では食事や文化、環境、気候が異なり、多少苦勞することもありましたが、現地のおいしい食事や優しい人々に支えられ、充実した日々を過ごすことができました。今回のプログラム携わってくださった先生方、一緒に2ヶ月を過ごしたみなさん、そして現地でお世話になったすべての皆様に深く感謝申し上げます。

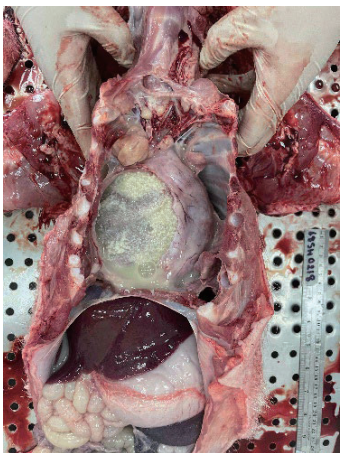


Fig 1. 線維素性心膜炎

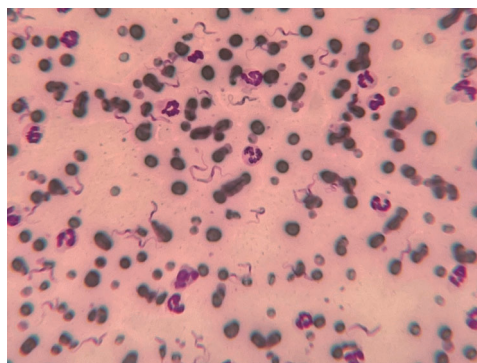


Fig2. トリパノソーマ



Fig3. 鶏の解剖

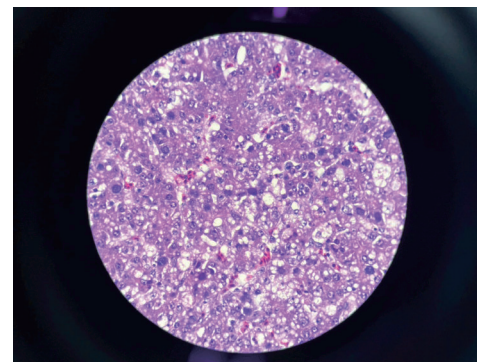


Fig 4. IBH

学生氏名：土井 萌 (獣医学部 5年) IVEP カセサート大学派遣

私にとって今回の渡航で最も印象深かったのは Exotic Unit です。1週間の Exotic Unit において、うち3日間は病院での診療見学、残り2日は Wildlife Unit で、最大で体高3メートルのゾウから、わずか3センチ程度のカメラまで、様々な動物の症例に対面しました。

病院では主に診療や手術の見学をしたり、特殊な動物の保定方法などを学びました。来院する症例は主に怪我や病気をした野生動物、ペットたちで、特にカメ、闘鶏、リスなどが多かったです。今回の派遣先の大学動物病院は Kamphaeng Saen 県に位置し、緑が豊かで野生動物が多い地域ですが、交通量も多いため、様々な交通事故の症例が見られました。そのような野生動物を保護し、治療した後、キャンパス内の人通りの少ない環境にリリースします。時に1年以上にわたる野生動物の治療、費用負担は基本的に飼い主の方が行いますが、飼い主が支払いきれない場合は、獣医師の先生や看護師の方々が引き取り、負担することもあるそうです。

Wildlife Unit では二日間にわたって猛禽類科での実習、鹿の麻酔・処置とゾウの診療を見学しました。猛禽類科では、保護個体のトビの捕獲、身体検査や採血、ビタミン剤の皮下投与など、普段は体験できないような実践的な野生動物診療を体験できました。保護個体の中にはオオワシやフクロウなど、様々な猛禽類が保護されていました。

その翌日は、カセサート大学内で飼育されている鹿を他の牧場に輸送するための麻酔・投薬処置などを行いました。30頭以上の鹿群の中から目的の個体を見つけ、的確に吹き矢を打ち、麻酔をかけて、牧場から搬出し、麻酔下で輸送中の脱水を防ぐために輸液を行い、健康管理のためにビタミン剤やミネラル剤を投与しました。4人の学生で、各々静脈注射、麻酔モニター、皮下注射、筋肉注射を分担し、短い麻酔有効時間の中で効率的な順番を考えて処置を行いました。

そして、同日午後、バンコク付近の寺院を訪れ、ゾウの診療に参加させていただきました。50歳の雄ゾウは体高が3メートルに及び、圧倒的規模感でワクワクする反面、少し怖いとも感じました。タイでは日本と異なり、直接接触型、ダイレクトコンタクト形式で診療を行います。今回、学生は2本の安全柵を介して治療に参加しましたが、それでも蹄の治療の際はとても緊張感がありました。

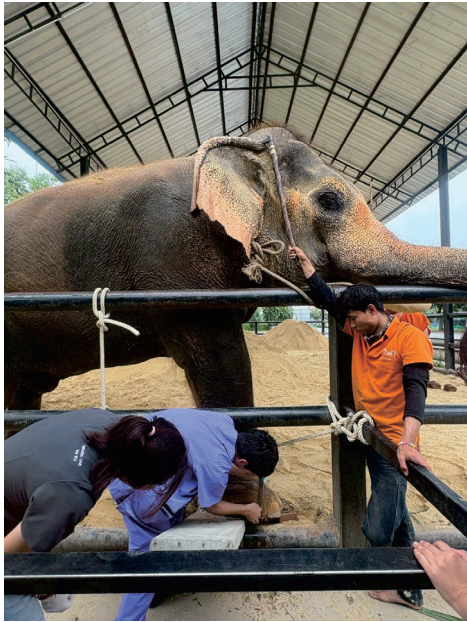
今回の留学を通して、タイの人々と動物との関係性には気付かされるものがありました。前述の通り、Exotic Unit では、多くの野生動物が一般の方々の手で運ばれて来ます。車に轢かれたカメやリスを連れて病院を訪れ、治療費を負担し、その後も面倒を見る、その姿を見て、とても新鮮に感じました。また、Bovine Unit で、怪我をした肉用牛を断脚までして治療したり、と畜場に行く途中の牛がチャリティ団体によって回収され、寺に持ち込まれるなど、日本では想像もできないような事例がよくあると聞き、驚きました。動物に対して、様々な価値観があるということを再認識し、今後の獣医人生に役立つ重要な学びを得られました。

最後に、今回の派遣において、全ての授業や実習は日本人留学生のためにデザインされたものであり、Narut 先生、Rattikarn さんを始めとする多くの教員、獣医師、職員の方々の支えのもとに、貴重な学びを得ることができました。また、留学に至るまで、北海道大学獣医学部、繁殖学教室教授の片桐先生、准教授の柳川先生、微生物学教室准教授の日尾野先生、外科学教室講師の須永先生、事務の川島さん、英語の Mike 先生に発表指導や引率など、多くのご助力をいただきました。他にも去年の派遣学生の先輩方や現地の学生など、

数多くの方々に支えていただいたからこそ、8週間、安全に、勉学に集中することができたと存じています。
この場をお借りして心からの感謝を申し上げます。



△羽が折れて保護されたトビ、2週間に1度状態を観察し、野生に戻せるか判断をします。画像の右手で触れている羽と、その内側の羽が折れています。



△ゾウの蹄擦り。学生は安全のためケージの外から、現地の獣医師の先生方は直接施設内に入って作業をします。

学生氏名：山口冬志朗(獣医学部5年)IVEP カセサート大学派遣

私がカセサート大学交換留学プログラムで体験したことを報告する。本プログラムは IVEP の中では 8 週間と最長であり、産業動物の幅広い分野を学ぶことができた。日本では発生していない感染症や日本にはない飼育管理など、タイだからこそ学べたことが多く、貴重な経験になった。私は特に日本の獣医学部では学ぶ機会の少ない水生生物のユニットで学んだことを報告しようと思う。

<Aquatic Animal Unit>

このユニットでは魚やエビの養殖管理、輸送管理、サンプル採集、水質検査の方法など多くのことを学んだ。北海道大学ではエビや魚の病気については座学で学ぶものの、その他のことは学ぶ機会がほとんどないため今回の経験は貴重であった。以下、このユニットで学んだ具体的な内容を報告する。

まず養殖管理といっても目的や対象種によって幅広い方法がある。その中で特にオニテナガエビの繁殖農場の養殖管理が印象に残ったため詳細を記す。オニテナガエビは食用のエビで、雄の方が、肉付きが良く好まれる。この農場では生まれてくるエビをすべて雄にする工夫を行っていた。生後一か月の雄の幼エビに手術を行って雌化を誘導していた。エビの性染色体は雄が ZZ で雌が ZW である。そのため手術により雄の遺伝子(ZZ)を持った雌(ネオフィメイル)が誕生し、これを雄(ZZ)と交配させることで必ず ZZ の性染色体を持った子(雄)が生まれるようになる。手術とは具体的に、エビの腹側にあるアンドロゲン腺と呼ばれる雄性ホルモン産生器官を除去することである。これにより雄で本来起こる雌化の抑制が起こらず、雌化する。

輸送管理は観賞魚の輸送について学んだ。飛行機で輸送するか、車で輸送するかでパッキングの仕方が異なり、興味深かった。また魚の代謝を低下させ、酸素やエネルギーを温存させ、長時間の輸送に耐えられるように魚を低温に保って輸送する工夫がされており、輸送一つをとっても様々な工夫がされていることを実感し感銘を受けた。

サンプル採集はエビと魚の両方で行った。エビの採血は心臓から採血する方法と腹側の神経に沿って走る血管から採取する 2 通りがあった。魚は脊柱の下にある背側大動脈から採血を行った。採血以外にも寄生虫や細菌などの感染を検査するために鰓や鱗、粘膜などを採取して顕微鏡で観察した。実際にトリコジナを観察することができた。

水質管理についてはバナメイエビの Growth-out pond の水質を実際に検査した。具体的に、pH、アルカリ度、総アンモニア性窒素、塩分濃度、二酸化窒素を検査キットなどにより検査した。その過程でこれらの項目の異常が養殖にどう影響するか、異常値にならないためにどう工夫するかなども併せて学ぶことができ、養殖管理への理解も深まった。

<謝辞>

最後にはなりますが、このプログラムに協力してくださったカセサート大学の先生方、北海道大学および酪農学園大学の先生方、事務的手続きをしてくださった両大学の事務員の方、現地での生活を支えてくれましたカセサート大学の友人、ともに学んだ北海道大学および酪農学園大学の友人に深く感謝を申し上げます。私はすでに交換留学生の枠が埋まっているなか、無理をいって本プログラムに参加させていただきました。受け入れを特例として増加してくださったカセサート大学の方々とそのために尽力してくださった両大学の方々に再度、深く感謝を申し上げます。またそのために例年にはない、イレギュラーなことが多くあったと思いますが、柔軟に対応していただき誠にありがとうございました。また本留学にあたり資金の援助をいただいた北海道庁の北海道未来チャレンジ基金に携わっておられる方々に深く感謝を申し上げます。今後は本留学で学んだことを活かして、社会に貢献するよう尽力して参ります。本当にありがとうございました。



エビ農場見学の様子



魚の採血の様子

学生氏名:上井のり子(獣医学部5年)IVEP カセサート大学派遣

タイ、カセサート大学での素晴らしい8週間を振り返って、ここでは Swine Unit での学びと、日々の生活で印象的だったことについて述べさせていただきます。

・ Swine Unit

講義では、タイでの養豚産業と農場管理についての基礎的な事項を学ぶことができました。豚についてここまで詳しく学んだのは初めてのことで、英語で新しい知識を得られて刺激的だった。

病理解剖では、学生3人あたり1頭の子豚を提供して頂いた。オーナーの稟告が何なのか知らされたうえで、自らの手で安楽死から解剖を行うことができ、心膜炎、胸膜炎、脾臓の腫大等の様々な病変が観察された。

学外の大規模養豚場の見学では、豚の発情検知から人工授精、分娩、子豚の育成、そして肥育までの生産フロー全体を実際に目で見て理解することができました。養豚場を見学するのは日本を含めて初めてのことで、全てが新鮮だった。この農場見学で最も興味深かったのは、水の蒸発を利用した冷却システムだった。豚舎の一方にはジグザグの構造をした壁があり、そこに上からゆっくりと水を流してファンで蒸発させるというものである。さらに、豚舎の逆側には空気を吸引するための巨大なファンがあり、豚舎内に一方向の気流を生み出すことによって換気と冷却に寄与していた。この効率的な冷却システムは多少の投資を要するものの、豚の平均増体量が高まるため、総合的には利益増加が見込めるとのことだった。また、この蒸発冷却システムは換気のための大きな窓を必要としないため、外部からの病原体侵入のリスクを低減できることも学んだ。暑熱ストレスはタイのみならず日本や世界の畜産においても重要な問題であり、熱帯に属するタイ現地において、このような実用的な暑熱対策を見ることができて非常に良かったと思う。

・ プレゼンテーション

毎週金曜には、そのユニットのまとめもしくは症例報告のプレゼンを行った。自分のプレゼンの出来に満足できたとは言えないが、スライド作成から発表、質疑応答までの過程を通して多くを得ることができた。授業中には疑問点はないと思っても、いざプレゼンを作り始めると「なぜこの抗菌剤を投与したのか」といった疑問が次々に浮かんだ。毎週の濃密なプレゼン作業を通して、教科書に書いてあること、見たこと聞いたことを鵜呑みにするのではなく、根拠や理論を追求していく姿勢が身についたと思う。

・ タイの人々

獣医学部の先生方は本当に親切で、私たちが質問したことにとことん答えてくださった。残念なことに現地学生と一緒に実習を受けることはできなかったが、タイの学生はよく声をかけてくれ、レストランや観光地へと車で連れて行ってくれた。彼らが日本に来る際には、できる限りのお返しができたらと思う。

タイの一般の方々もとてもフレンドリーで優しく、英語が一切分からないにも関わらず私たちを助けてくれることもしばしばだった。ある日、自転車をバス停に置き忘れてしまい講義棟へと走っていたところ、見知らぬ女性がタイ語で話しかけてきて、バイクで送ってくれるということさえあった。

・ 英語での獣医学の学び

私の偏見だが、日本人は英語を話す際に些細な文法ミスを心配して消極的になる傾向がある。それとは対照的に、タイの人々は文法を気にしすぎることなく堂々と話している印象を受けた。この経験を通して、英会話においては、単純な表現でも、間違いがあっても、ためらわずに伝えようとする姿勢が重要であるということを実感した。また実習全体にわたって、多くの獣医学専門用語を知ることができた。このような実体験を通して学んだ知識は、願わくは記憶に定着したはずである。

8週間のプログラムを通じて、自分の英語力はもちろん、獣医学の知識技能の不足を痛感する日々だった。この経験を将来にわたって勉強のモチベーションとし、国際的な視野を持った獣医師になれるよう努力していきたいと思う。このような一生に一度の学びの機会をくださった日本とタイすべての皆様には、感謝してもしきれない。



チャオブラヤ川上で
酪農学園の友達とディナー



大学のナイトマーケット



カオソック国立公園でカヌー

学生氏名:藤野太朗 (獣医学部 5年) IVEP カセサート大学派遣

はじめに、約2か月にわたるタイでの生活を終え、無事に帰国できたことをうれしく思う。今回のプログラムでは、8週間にわたり異なる6つのユニットで実習を行い、それぞれで多くの学びを得ることができた。本報告書では、中でも特に印象に残った Equine Unit について記す。私は元々、馬の臨床医を進路の一つとして考えており、今回のプログラムでも Equine Unit での実習を最も心待ちにしていた。

本ユニットでは、入院患者や初診患者への対応に加えて、臨床検査法・治療法の実習、さらに乗馬クラブへの訪問実習を主に行った。まず、入院患者と初診の対応では、蹄葉炎、肺炎、膈膜炎、直腸陰瘻など、多様な症例の診療に携わった。それぞれの症例で先生方が行う身体検査、治療を間近で見ることができ、私たちが身体検査に携わった症例もあった。中でも特に印象に残ったのは、スーラ病 (*Trypanosoma evansi* 感染症) が疑われた症例である。発熱や黄疸などの臨床症状、血液検査の結果などから診断され、検鏡では血液中を活発に動く *T. evansi* の虫体を観察することができた。スーラ病は日本ではこれまで発生のない感染症であり、実際に発症馬と生きた虫体をこの目で確認できたことは非常に貴重な経験となった。

次に、臨床検査法・治療法の実習では、身体検査、腹部や心臓の超音波検査に加え、注射や経鼻胃カテーテルの挿入などの練習を行った。特に、腹部超音波検査では、腹痛診断で世界的に普及している FLASH 法 (fast localized abdominal sonography) について説明を受け、その後実際の馬で検査を行った。北大の講義で概要を学んだことはあったが、実際に自分の手でプローブを当て、画像を確認するのは初めてであった。検査部位が明確で、常に同様の構成の画像を得ることができる点や、主要な腹部臓器の状態を短時間で把握できる点など、FLASH 法が実際の診療で重宝されている理由を理解することができた。



FLASH 法の実践練習

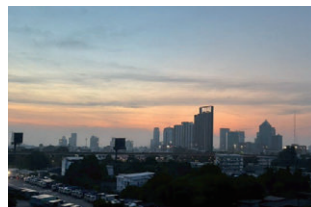
訪問実習では、バンコク郊外にある乗馬クラブを訪れ、跛行診断や飼養管理について学んだ。跛行診断では、クラブの馬の歩様を確認し、どの肢に異常があるかについて先生方と議論した。時に跛行した肢とは反対側の肢の動きが悪く見えることもあり、観察の難しさを実感した。また厩舎の環境は良好で、馬房は約4×4mとゆとりがあり、天井には扇風機と冷房が設置されていた。馬房内は清潔に保たれ、馬が常に飼料と水を得られる環境が整っており、動物福祉に配慮した飼養管理が行われていると感じた。

実習を通して、日本で見ることでできない症例に触れ、タイでの馬の飼養管理の実際を見学する経験ができたことに加え、「馬臨床に関わる知識、技術をより身に付けていきたい」という強いモチベーションを抱くことができた。Equine Unit で得た経験を糧に、将来へ向けて一層努力を続けたいと考えている。

休日には、毎週のようにタイ国内のさまざまな場所へ旅行に出かけた。バンコク、チェンマイ、カンチャナブリ、スラータニといった都市を巡り、エラワン、カオヤイ、カオソックなどの国立公園では自然を満喫した。人生で初めて夜行列車に乗ったり、バンコクでタイの友人たちとムエタイを観たり、国立公園で野生のゾウやヤマアラシを見たり、砂浜で乗馬をしたり、思い出は数えきれない。

この2か月、キャンパスでの日々や各地への旅を通して、タイの人々の温かさ、多様な食文化、豊かな自然、野生動物など、タイの持つ多くの魅力を実感した。さらに、実習を通して得た多くの学びは、「より知識や技術を身に付け、獣医師として国際的に活躍したい」というモチベーションを私の中に生み出してくれた。またタイへ戻りたい、その時には獣医師として、より成長した姿で先生方や友人たちに会いたい、と強く感じている。

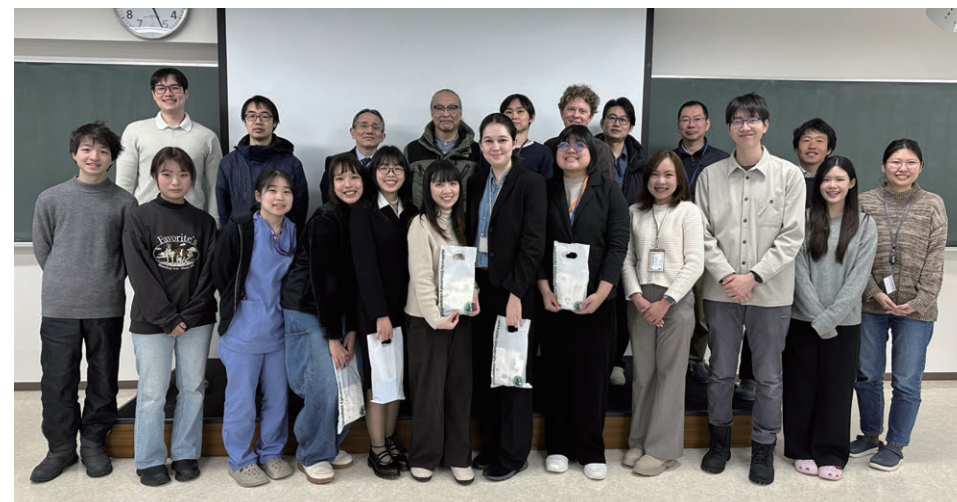
最後に、カセサート大学の先生方、事務の方々、学生の皆さん、北海道大学の先生方、事務の方々、そして2か月間共に過ごした同期の仲間たち、本プログラムに関わっていただいたすべての方々に深く感謝を申し上げます。本当にありがとうございました。



夜行列車からみたバンコクの朝焼け

IVEP

Hokkaido University-Kasetsart University
International Vet Exchange Program 2025
Achieving Global Standards of Excellence in Veterinary Education



Student Report from Kasetsart University
January 13th to February 27th 2026

Project Managers
Kasetsart University
Professor Seiji KATAGIRI
Laboratory of Theriogenology, Hokkaido University

From Kasetsart University

Pattanit Panthaworn (Gift), 6th year

My exchange experience in Japan has truly been one of the best experiences of my life. I almost did not get the chance to join this program, but somehow fate led me here, and I am endlessly grateful for that.

Studying at Hokkaido University opened my eyes in so many ways. One of the first things I noticed was the difference between the education systems in Japan and Thailand. Here, I spent much more time working in the laboratory and gained hands on experience that I had never had before. Research is strongly emphasized, and being in this environment made me realize that this could truly be the right place for my future studies. Clinical rotations at the animal hospital were also different from Thailand. The veterinarians here do not take too many cases each day, which allows them to spend meaningful time teaching students. Students are encouraged to perform many procedures themselves, tasks that would normally be done by veterinary nurses in Thailand. I believe this hands on approach helps students become more skillful and confident, both in performing procedures and in communicating with animals and their owners.

However, coming to Hokkaido was not only an academic journey. It was also a journey of life. I learned about Japanese society and its deep respect for rules and time. People live simply, yet meaningfully. I had the chance to try many kinds of Japanese food, some that I had tasted in Thailand before and others that were completely new to me. Honestly, eating Japanese food in Japan feels different. It carries emotions and atmosphere that make each meal special. Although there were moments when I missed Thai food, Japanese cuisine always brought me happiness. Nature in Hokkaido became a part of my daily life. I walked thirty minutes to class every day, and along the way I observed the scenery changing around me. White snow covering the ground and bare trees standing quietly may seem simple, but to me they were beautiful every single time. Nature could also be harsh. During my first week, I experienced a snowstorm. I was frightened as my shoes sank into the snow, the freezing wind hit my face, and walking became extremely difficult. My umbrella was useless against the strong wind, and all I could do was keep moving forward until I safely reached my dormitory. When I finally arrived, I felt proud of myself. I realized that I was stronger than I had thought. I also had the opportunity to explore many wonderful places, including Otaru, Maruyama Zoo, Noboribetsu, and areas around Sapporo. Each place had its own unique character. Some made me feel calm and peaceful, others excited and joyful, and some simply made me laugh. I am grateful for every place I visited and every memory created there. One experience that stands out clearly in my heart is skiing at Rusutsu Ski Resort. I had always wanted to try snowboarding, but for my first time I chose skiing instead. It was exhausting and I fell many times. My body felt sore and I realized how little physical strength I had. Yet at the same time, I felt incredibly alive. In those moments, I was fully present. Skiing made me understand how much I enjoy physical activities and how alive I feel when I move my body. I truly hope that one day I will have the chance to ski again, or perhaps finally try snowboarding.

Most importantly, I will never forget the people. The professors and doctors at Hokkaido University, also Kawashima san and Mike, were incredibly kind and supportive. Despite the language differences, they always tried their best to teach us, guide us, and help us solve problems. I am deeply thankful for their patience and generosity. The Thai seniors made my stay much less lonely. Being able to speak my own language sometimes, being invited to meals and activities, and feeling cared for meant more than I can express. My Japanese friends were also a precious part of this journey. From the first day when I struggled with heavy luggage until the day I left, they were always there to help, to translate, to invite me to dinners and takoyaki parties, and to make me feel welcome. Even though we spent only two months together, I feel incredibly lucky to have met them.

Two months may not seem like a long time, but these two months have changed me in the best possible way. I can now see more clearly the person I want to become in the future. I am grateful for every experience and every

person I met. I truly hope that one day our paths will cross again.

Hokkaido, I will carry you in my heart. ♡



From Kasetsart University

Akira Burns, 6th year

Participating in the exchange program at Hokkaido University (HU) was a meaningful and enriching experience for me, both academically and personally. During my time at HU, I had the opportunity to observe different aspects of veterinary education and research while working in several laboratories and visiting the veterinary hospital. Through laboratory rotations in fields such as microbiology, veterinary hygiene, public health, and theriogenology, along with several other subjects, I was able to gain practical experience and see how research is conducted in a highly organized academic environment. These rotations allowed me to observe different laboratory techniques, participate in discussions, and understand how scientific research contributes to veterinary medicine and animal health. Observing clinical work at the veterinary hospital was also very interesting, as I could follow veterinarians in different departments and learn about complex cases and advanced procedures. Seeing how specialists approach diagnosis and treatment helped broaden my understanding of clinical veterinary practice.

One of the most interesting aspects of the exchange program was comparing HU with my home university. At HU, there is a strong emphasis on research and laboratory work, and students are often encouraged to actively participate in practical activities. This hands-on environment helped me gain a deeper understanding of the subjects we studied. In the veterinary hospital, the referral-based system means that many cases are complicated and require specialized knowledge. Because the number of cases per doctor is relatively lower, veterinarians are able to spend more time discussing cases and explaining their clinical reasoning to students. At my home university, the caseload is often higher, which creates a faster-paced working environment. Both systems provide valuable learning opportunities, but the teaching style at HU allowed students to analyze cases more thoroughly and learn about advanced diagnostic and treatment approaches.



Beyond academic learning, the exchange program also provided many memorable non-academic experiences. Living in Hokkaido during winter was something completely new for me. I experienced heavy snowfall for the first time and learned how to adapt to the cold weather while commuting to campus and exploring the city. I also had the chance to travel to several places around Hokkaido, such as Otaru and Noboribetsu, and experience winter activities like skiing. These experiences allowed me to appreciate the natural beauty of Hokkaido and gain a deeper understanding of Japanese culture and daily life. Trying local Japanese food, visiting traditional hot springs, and spending time with friends from different countries were also highlights of my stay.

For future exchange programs, organizing even more opportunities for interaction between exchange students and local Japanese students could further strengthen cultural exchange. Activities such as group events or informal gatherings would allow students to share experiences and learn more about each other's cultures. Overall, this exchange program was an incredibly valuable experience that contributed greatly to my academic development and personal growth. I am very grateful for the kindness and support from the professors, doctors, and friends I met during my time at Hokkaido University, and I will always appreciate the knowledge and memories gained from this opportunity.

From Kasetsart University

Sirinya Pathomjaroensukchai (Toon), 6th year

Studying abroad as an exchange student was something I had never imagined I would have the opportunity to experience in my life. However, I was fortunate enough to finally come and study at Hokkaido University in Japan. This opportunity has become one of the most meaningful and unforgettable experiences of my life. Living and studying in another country allowed me to step outside of my comfort zone and see the world from a new perspective.

During my time here, I had the chance to learn about Japanese culture and the daily lifestyle of people in Japan. Everything felt new and exciting. Studying at Hokkaido University also gave me the opportunity to experience the Japanese education system and learn directly from professors and experts in various fields. The supportive environment and opportunities for hands-on learning made the experience even more meaningful. As part of the program, we rotated through different departments such as Microbiology, Anatomy, Toxicology, Veterinary Public Health, and Theriogenology. Although working in laboratories could sometimes be challenging, I truly enjoyed the experience. Learning about new research topics broadened my perspective and allowed me to develop my knowledge further, opportunities that undergraduate students in Thailand may not always have the chance to experience.

Another valuable part of this program was learning at the university animal hospital. I truly felt that the hospital was an excellent place for learning. We followed veterinarians during their work and closely observed how they handled different clinical cases. I also had the chance to observe complex surgeries, such as orthopedic and kidney surgeries. In addition, I was able to see advanced medical technologies and hospital systems that are different from those in Thailand. Beyond academics, joining this exchange program also gave me the opportunity to explore the city and visit many wonderful places. I traveled to Otaru, visited the zoo, and went to Noboribetsu to experience the famous onsen, as well as exploring areas around Sapporo. Meeting people from different backgrounds and spending time with friends created many wonderful memories filled with laughter and good moments together.

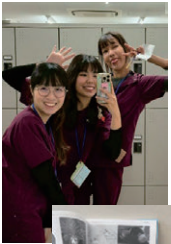


This program helped me grow both academically and personally, just as I had hoped when I first decided to apply. I learned how to adapt to new situations, communicate with people from different cultures, and become more confident in myself. Everyone I met during my time here was incredibly kind and supportive, and I truly appreciate their care and generosity. Even though we spent only a short time together, I could feel the genuine friendship that we shared.

This exchange program has given me unforgettable memories, new friendships, and valuable lessons that I will carry with me throughout my life. I feel deeply grateful for the opportunity to be here and experience such a special and inspiring time in my life. These two months were truly worth the decision I made, and if I had the chance to choose again, I would still come here without hesitation.

From Kasetsart University

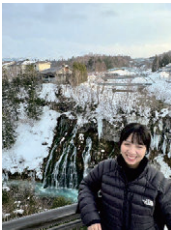
Samineekarn Maneenate (Few), 6th year



The exchange program at Hokkaido University has provided me with a truly enriching experience and a wealth of knowledge, both from lectures and laboratory work. It also allowed me to observe clinical activities at the Hokkaido University Teaching Animal Hospital. In addition, I had the opportunity to choose a host laboratory, and I selected the Wildlife Biology and Medicine Laboratory. During my time there, my professor assigned me a research project on the comparative morphology of four bear species: the polar bear, brown bear, Asiatic black bear, and sun bear with different feeding behaviors. For this project, I designed the study myself, including determining which parameters of the bear skulls should be measured. I conducted the skull measurements, analyzed the data, and prepared the final presentation independently. This experience allowed me to go through the entire research process from study design to data collection and presentation, which made my exchange program both comprehensive and deeply meaningful.



When comparing this experience to studying in Thailand, I feel that the learning approaches are quite different. At Kasetsart University, the focus is mainly on clinical practice and developing hands-on skills. In contrast, Hokkaido University places a strong emphasis on research. This approach highlights the importance of research in generating new knowledge, offering fresh perspectives, and contributing valuable insights to the field of veterinary medicine. Personally, I believe this exchange program is already excellent. I had the opportunity to rotate through different laboratories and observe clinical work at the teaching hospital, which broadened my academic perspective. If I could suggest one improvement, it would be that the time spent at the hospital could include more opportunities for hands-on activities. I think gaining more direct practical experience would make the program even more valuable. Beyond the academic experience, I also had the chance to explore many beautiful places in Hokkaido. I visited the Big Buddha, Furano, Biei, Asahikawa Zoo, the Otaru Aquarium, Otaru Canal, and the charming shopping streets in Otaru. I also enjoyed visiting the Hokkaido Jingu Shrine and relaxing at Jozankei Onsen. One of the most memorable experiences for me was bathing in an onsen, especially an outdoor onsen. The weather was extremely cold, but soaking in the warm water while surrounded by nature was an incredible feeling. It was my first time experiencing an onsen, and for someone from Thailand, it felt very new and unforgettable. I also truly enjoyed Japanese culture and cuisine. From sushi and ramen to curry and soup curry, everything here is delicious, and the seafood is incredibly fresh. I have come to love Japanese food very much during my time here. In conclusion, I would like to sincerely thank Hokkaido University for their support, as well as the JASSO scholarship for making this exchange program possible. I feel extremely happy and deeply grateful for the warm welcome I received here. I truly hope that one day I will have the opportunity to return again.



From Kasetsart University

Lakhanabut Komchum (Fah), 6th year

Participating in the exchange program at Hokkaido University (HU) has been one of the most refreshing and transformative experiences of my life. Over the course of the program, I was given the incredible opportunity to expand my veterinary knowledge through hands-on practice while deeply immersing myself in the unique culture of Japan.

Academically, the curriculum at HU was diverse and intensive. We rotated through various specialized laboratories, including microbiology, veterinary hygiene, public health, and theriogenology. In the theriogenology lab, I practiced assisted reproductive technologies, such as oocyte pick-up and embryo transfer in cattle. A challenging process but we all were having fun with that challenge. Furthermore, my clinical rotations in the veterinary hospital were truly eye-opening. I followed doctors in internal medicine, oncology, and orthopedics, observing surgical procedures like a TPLO, laparoscopic spay surgeries, and ureteral stent placements.

A notable difference between my home university and HU is that the HU veterinary hospital operates strictly on a referral basis. This system ensures a lower caseload per doctor, allowing students to study each complex case in remarkable depth alongside experts. We also visited a newly built infectious diseases research complex, learning about global "One Health" initiatives and cross-border viral transmission.

Beyond academics, my time in Japan was filled with vibrant cultural experiences and adventures. I fully embraced the freezing but beautiful Hokkaido winter by skiing at Rusutsu, braving heavy snowfalls for city walks, and visiting the fantastic Snow Festival. Food became a central part of my cultural immersion and a way to bond with new friends. I challenged myself to finish a level-30 spice soup curry at SAMA, savored fresh sushi at Hanamaru, Katsusen, Toriton and experienced the warm, welcoming atmosphere of local izakayas. We even had a Takoyaki party where we learned about regional cooking styles. Taking time to relax in traditional sentos and the Hoheikyo Onsen provided much-needed rest after long study weeks. Exploring beyond Hokkaido, I traveled to Osaka to visit Universal Studios Japan and explored the fascinating historical exhibits at Meiji-mura in Nagoya.

This exchange program has profoundly impacted my personal and professional growth. I learned to navigate cultural differences, adapt to unexpected challenges, and build lasting international friendships. I got huge support from so many people the professors, doctors, and my wonderful friends were incredibly kind and always ready to help me. Whether it was receiving guidance during complex laboratory experiments or getting help when I needed to carry 40 kg parcels through the snow, the community at HU was always there for me.

I am returning home with plenty of veterinary knowledges, collection of unforgettable memories, and appreciation for cross-cultural collaboration.

