

THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACTIVITIES OF THE CITY OF ZAGREB CITY OFFICE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

Durdica Stubican¹, Josip Janes², Igor Miskulin²

*1Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb, Heinzelova 55, 10000 Zagreb,
Republic of Croatia, e-mail: stubican@vef.hr*

*²City of Zagreb Office for Agriculture and Forestry, Avenija Dubrovnik 12, 10000 Zagreb
Republic of Croatia, e-mail: igor.miskulin@zagreb.hr*

There has always been intimate and unbreakable relationship between animals and people on Croatian territory and many facts speak about humane relationship of people towards animals. People treated them naturally, and many of today's ethical principles considering animals originate from those treatments. Highly organized veterinary profession also contributed greatly (Stubican Durdica, 1993; Stubican Durdica, Bara Vinkovic, 1999).

In the north-west part of Croatia, where the city of Zagreb is situated, people were concerned with animals from times immemorial, and many factors speak about their coexistence and mutual respect (Stubican Durdica, 2002).

The city of Zagreb has the status of county, and on the city area of 640 km² with population of about 800.000 inhabitants. The socio political structure of the country is such, that there is also Zagreb County. Zagreb Civil Service has special offices for the implementation of professional city activities. One of these offices is the Office for Agriculture and Forestry, separated from the City Office for Management in 1990. This office cares about all animals and organizations situated on its territory that deal with the protection of animals and /or care about them, or deal with therapeutic riding for the physically disabled (Gamulin, Smiljana, 2000, Krmpotic, Jelena 2003) or rear and train dogs guides for the blind (Gyorgy Matesic, Julijana, 2001), or do the jobs of veterinary –hygienic service. There are about 15 societies for the protection of animals active in Zagreb, and from 2001 to 2005, 10 to 12 societies are constantly cofinanced. Every year Zagreb City Service invites applications for cofinancing of the activities of the societies for animal protection, and according to the societies' programmes the City of Zagreb, through the Office for Agriculture and Forestry, provides funds for these activities. Since 2002 the Office has established the system by which it evaluates the activities of the societies and funds them accordingly; there have been considerable differences among the societies depending on their purpose. Apart from that, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the part of which is

also the Department for Veterinary Science with its veterinary and sanitary inspection, controls all the animals, organizations and societies dealing with them.

The city of Zagreb has the long tradition of organized care for animals. In 1894 "*Zivobran*" – *Society for Animal Protection Zagreb*, was founded. Besides, in 1898 *Dalmatian Society for Animal Protection* was founded in Zadar, and in 1925 *Zagreb Society for the Protection of fish and birds* was founded in Zagreb.

Croatian veterinary legislation was in accordance with similar legislation in other developed farming countries, so in 1888 the first veterinary law was passed, in 1893 the first Law on Hunting, and the Law of Bird Protection.

As veterinary profession and its professional knowledge greatly contributes to animal welfare, in 1919 Faculty of Veterinaary Medicine University of Zagreb was founded, in 1948 Department of Animal Hygiene within the Veterinary Faculty, in 1933 Veterinary Institute; they provide better life for animals, and veterinarians are, apart from their professional obligations, also included in numerous activities to protect animals (Stubican, Durdica, Marija Vucemilo, M., Andrijanic, 2000).

When the Republic of Croatia was established in 1990, the previous activities for animal protection continued (Bukovic-Sosic, Branka i sur., 2000), and it has actively participated since in the world professional trends: "*We believe that animals can benefit more from the point of view that man is responsible for the provision of animal welfare than from the view which promotes animal rights alone*" (WVA, 1990) and "*Training and education of men are the best ways of animal welfare improvement and ethical approach to animals*" (Stubican, Durdica, 2000).

So Croatian Veterinary Association / Chamber passed in 1993 *Codex of Veterinary Ethics*, and in 1994 *Section for Ecology and Protection of Endangered Croatian Domestic Wild Animals* was founded. In 2002 Croatian Veterinary Society 1893 founded the *Section for Protection and Welfare of Domestic and Wild Animals*. In 1995 the group of psychologists, sociologists and veterinarians founded the *Association for Research and Promotion of the Role of Pets in Human Life* and till nowadays organized two symposiums on this matter. According this movement on animal welfare the veterinary profession worked out such a legislation and in 1999 the *Law on animal welfare* started in the function on the state level.

The great responsibility of the veterinary profession in promoting the welfare of animals is also evident in the activities of the veterinarians from the Office for Agriculture and Forestry. In 2000, initiated by them, the City of Zagreb passed the *Resolution of having animals to keep people company and animals dangerous for people's lives*. It regulates:

conditions and ways of keeping dogs, movements of dogs, treatment of unregistered dogs and stray cats, keeping of wild animals and beasts and other dangerous and ill-natured animals, surveillance and criminal regulations (Janes J., 2004). During the last four years, the Office was the coorganizer, sponsor, and active participant of four "Round Tables" about animal welfare (on 17th December 2002.; 13th May 2003; 24th September 2003; 12th May 2004), and it also cooperates with similar organizations in our country like Foerderverin fuer Tierschutzin Kroatien and in the world like RSPCA from Great Britain. The Office organizes free lectures for the general public and animal owners on Tribina Grada Zagreba and it has already twice organized happenings on public places at the International Animal Day (on 04.10.2003. and 04.10.2004). During these events promotive materials were on display, such as booklets, leaflets or concrete things for cleaning animal waste on roads or in parks. There were also educational programmes on TV and radio, articles in newspapers and periodicals, and Zagreb *Society for Animal Protection* supported the action " Let's Save Dogs from Dog Pound".

Great responsibility of veterinarians from the Office for Agriculture and Forestry in their work, refers them to cooperate with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb which helps the animal welfare by educating and training veterinarians.

Table 1 shows all the organizations cofinanced in 2004 that care for abandoned or found animals, or house animals for humanitarian purposes such as guide dogs for the blind or horses used for riding by disabled persons. The table contains the following information: the year of founding of the organization, the name of the organization, approximate number of members, the activities of the organization, the species of animals it holds, the number of housed animals (1597 total number) and the total number of 1736 animals it cared for in 2004.

If we compare the current problem area of animal welfare in mass media with published papers like veterinary medicine degree reports, master's theses, doctor's theses from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Zagreb, we can see that they confirm the need for education and training of all generations of people, and the need for communication among people who keep animals (Ponos, A., 1994.; Stubican, Durdica, 1979., 1997).

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Table 1. Showing associations for the protection of animals in Zagreb City area in 2004

Founded in	Association	Number of members	Activities	Animal species	Number of animals that were found home in 2004	Number of animals cared for in 2004
1884	Croatian Society for the protection of animals	100	protection of animals, prevention of cruelty to animals, education	cats, dogs		50 cats
1925 (Continuitation of 1984)	Zagreb Society for the protection and rearing of birds and fish	81	protection of birds in nature (nest building), education, workshops on protection and healing	birds, fish	protection of song-birds habitats	
1977	Society of Small Animals Rearers "Tresnjevka"	52	development, advancement, protection and rearing of small animals	small animals, rabbits, pigeons, small rodents, etc.		
1990	"Noah's Ark"	170	caring for abandoned animals	dogs, cats	303 dogs, 173 cats	158 dogs, 162 cats
1990	Croatian Guide Dog and Mobility Association	156	training and distribution of guide dogs, increasing public awareness	guide dogs for the blind	19 dogs	38 dogs
1990	Zagreb Society for the Protection of Animals	33	caring for abandoned animals, finding homes, veterinary protection	dogs, cats	23 dogs, 15 cats	24 dogs, 37 cats
1994	"Wings" – therapeutic riding for persons with psychophysical handicaps	20	programmes of therapeutic riding for persons with psychophysical handicaps	horses, dogs		15 horses, 5 dogs
1999	"Blue Cross" – association for protection of abandoned animals	12 regular, many activists	caring for abandoned animals, finding homes for dogs at veterinary hygienic service	dogs	302 dogs	
2000	"Second Chance" – association for protection of abandoned animals	45	caring for abandoned cats	cats	104 cats	670 cats
2001	"Bastet" –	a great	caring for	all		

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	association for cats protection	number of volunteers	endangered, wounded or sick wild animals	animals		
2001	"Animals' Friends"	1050	education, animal rights promotion	all animals		
2002	AWAP – Association for Wild Animals Protection (private)	a great number of volunteers	caring for endangered, wounded or sick wild animals	storks, owls, hawks, eagles, turtles	98 animals rehabilitated	126 storks, hawks, eagles, reptiles
2003	Zagreb Association of Animal Welfare Organizations	223	bringing together and work coordination of member organizations, founding of Info- Centre for animals	all animals	327 dogs, 185 cats	228 dogs, 192 cats
2004	"Futura" – Association for Animals Protection from Cruelty and Irresponsibility	18	reducing the number of abandoned animals in the urban area, developing consciousness about responsibility towards animals, caring for abandoned animals	cats, dogs	48 dogs	15 dogs, 16 cats

Although there are no regulations for the time being about keeping animals in kindergartens, primary and secondary school, correctional institutions, old people's homes, private ZOOS and similar institutions, we should now educate veterinarians competent about keeping animals at such places. Veterinary profession should legally coordinate its special position regarding all other professions that deal with animals and its obligation should be to ensure the organization and supervision of education of professionals who should inform the public through media, organize lectures, seminars, courses, as well as postgraduate studies for veterinarians, biologists and agronomists of farming orientation. In this way the veterinary profession would contribute to general welfare of animals (Baker, R.M., 1997), and the past work of the Office for Agriculture and Forestry and the activities on animal welfare of its veterinarians, would continue in the organization of their future work.

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