



THE INSTITUTE OF CETACEAN RESEARCH

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MEDIA RELEASE

Whale meat from Japan's whale research programs on sale

Tokyo, JUL. 26.- The Director General of the Institute of Cetacean Research in Tokyo, Dr. Seiji Ohsumi, announced today that whale meat from Japan's research in the Antarctic will be distributed through local wholesale markets from July 31 to August 31.

For the past 15 years Japan has been conducting research in the Antarctic to obtain data required for proper management of minke whale stocks. Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling specifically provides for IWC member countries to issue permits for catching whales for research purposes. The Convention also requires that the by-products of the research, that is the meat, be processed in order that valuable resources are not wasted.

The Institute of Cetacean Research will distribute 273 tons of whale meat for use in public institutions by local governments and 588 tons to wholesale markets. Because the supply of products is short of the level of demand distribution to each prefecture is decided on the basis of historical consumption and current demand to ensure a broad and equitable distribution and pricing. An additional amount of the byproduct will be used for further processing. Proceeds from the sale of the whale meat are used to cover a portion of the research costs. The current sale is from the research conducted from November 2001 to May 2002. Consumers of whale meat products are assured that all products offered for sale have been tested and meet the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare standards concerning contaminant levels.

Dr. Ohsumi said "The IWC Scientific Committee has said that Japan's research programs are providing valuable scientific information". "The management of all marine resources should be based on sound scientific advice so this research is important" he added.

For further information on Japan's whale research programs please go to the website of the Institute of Cetacean Research <http://www.icrwhale.org>

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