

WELCOME REMARK



Akio Miyamoto (Chair)

Welcome everyone to Obihiro, blessed with the clear blue skies of early summer, fresh greenery and air, and the delicious food and drinks of Hokkaido!

By your enthusiasm and immense efforts, the 20th ICAR 2026 will feature a top-level scientific program, bringing together leaders from around the world in various fields to deliver high-quality scientific information and future-looking messages across a wide range of areas related to animal reproduction. ICAR began in 1948, held every four years, and has consistently led the way in the fundamental and applied scientific fields of Animal Reproduction, as well as livestock production, wildlife conservation, and, in a broad sense, fish, birds, and large livestock—covering everything from basic to applied science for food production.

The 20th ICAR 2026 Obihiro has taken the baton from ICAR 2020+2 Bologna 4 years ago and has been in preparation for a long period. As everyone knows, the Bologna conference was postponed for two years due to the intense impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the greatest crisis facing humanity this century. Despite the challenges, the Italian LOC team bravely held the 19th ICAR 2020+2, and their efforts and perseverance in bringing together people from around the world involved in reproduction science have been incredibly inspiring! We are deeply grateful.

The 20th ICAR 2026 Obihiro consists of 5 plenary sessions, 12 symposia, 24 workshops with invited speakers, and around 600 poster presentations. All of invited presentations in the plenary sessions and symposia have been compiled into 52 review articles, published as an open-access collection in the **Journal of Reproduction and Development (JRD)** with the support of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). These reviews provide the latest basic, applied, and technological developments, as well as future perspectives, in animal reproduction science as of 2026. By the efforts of everyone involved who overcame various difficulties, this collection of reviews was published before the 20th ICAR 2026 was held. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the authors, the JRD Co-EIC members, the Editorial Board, the ICAR session chairs, and Professor Harayama, JRD Editor-in-Chief, who consistently provided warm support to me, Guest Editor-in-Chief, and to Ms. Matsumoto of the Editorial office for her meticulous and patient editing work. I also express my deep gratitude to the International Scientific Committee and the Local Organizing Committee for their efforts in constructing and running the overall program. Their efforts resulted in an extremely important and engaging program. And of course, Professor Kazuhiro Kikuchi, the secretary-general, and Professor Masahiro Kaneda, the secretary, work together to carry out all the necessary tasks and make the event possible.

The 20th ICAR 2026 Obihiro could not have been held without the sponsorship and cooperation of many companies. I sincerely thank each of the sponsoring companies that are leading the development and dissemination of livestock breeding technology. Thank you!

Now, let's begin the hot discussions in this five-day academic program. Of course, enjoy a fun of cool-down with Tasting Hokkaido and Gala Dinner, and get outside and have a blast in nature with our Excursion programs.

Welcome once again to the 20th ICAR 2026 in Obihiro!

Akio Miyamoto, 20th ICAR Chair
Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Obihiro, Japan