



Check against delivery

A statement by Gordon Bonnet,
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Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft Zoologischer Fachbetriebe GmbH (WZF, Interzoo Organizer)
on the occasion of the ZZF **Press Conference at Interzoo 2022**
On Tuesday, May 24, 2022, 9:30 a.m.
NCC Ost, Level 1, Hong Kong Room

Welcome to all! It's wonderful to see you here! Interzoo is back in Nuremberg! Of course, Interzoo was never really gone, we only had to put in an unscheduled break. Last year, we offered a virtual version of the exhibition, Interzoo.digital. To be honest, however, while digital meetings are indeed practical and facilitate networking, they are even remotely comparable with the experience of an in-person gathering, which engages all the senses. After we first had to cancel Interzoo 2020 due to the pandemic, it has been four long years before we now have the chance to see each other in person again in Nuremberg. Now that the time has finally come, I am overjoyed, as you can see!

Just as I spoke last year about the great effort required to organize Interzoo.digital in only a few months, so too have the preparations for Interzoo 2022 been anything but easy. The pandemic injected a great deal of uncertainty into the planning process and even now, exhibitors and visitors from many countries are hardly able to attend. The dreadful war in Ukraine has led to further restrictions. Thus, the exceedingly difficult framework conditions have demanded much flexibility, courage, and heightened drive of us all, including us as the organizers and our exhibitors. And therefore, this Interzoo must be seen as a marvellous collective accomplishment on the part of everyone involved. I am exceedingly pleased that both the international trade press and the German trade media have already expressed their appreciation of this tremendous effort. I thank you most sincerely for your support!

Our industry needs Interzoo. It is the ideal platform for finding new suppliers, sharing ideas and opinions, making contacts for the future, holding discussions within industry associations, educating ourselves, and keeping our finger on the pulse of the times.

Particularly today when supply bottlenecks are not uncommon, as Norbert Holthenrich just pointed out, the exhibition can help companies sound out alternative production sites or

realign their own core businesses. And we absolutely must work together to overcome the great challenges of our time, particularly those that impact the pet industry. Without saying more on this subject at the present time, I would like to at least mention the trends of globalization, digitalization, and sustainability, which are not mere buzzwords by any means, but rather necessary, far-reaching change processes that require continuous adjustment and recalibration.

The Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA) is bringing attention to the changes in the trade fair landscape caused by the coronavirus pandemic with its Germany-wide campaign "MesseMonatMai" ("Trade Fair Month of May"). Interzoo is glad to participate in this passing of the baton, which will appear in social media today. With around 50 trade fairs, May will finally be a big month for trade fairs in Germany again. More than half are international in nature, including many leading worldwide exhibitions such as Interzoo, which has just begun and will offer a unique blend of topics, campaigns, and presentations spanning the entire pet industry, all in one place.

We are looking forward to the inspirational experience of absorbing the presentations of the trade fair stands and the offered campaigns, viewing the products of well-established companies and young companies alike, and conversing with international exhibitors and visitors. It is also a great reunion of good friends, old acquaintances, and new, exciting encounters. Relationships will be cemented, new contacts made, people woven together. All the topics of current interest in the pet industry will be condensed into one magical moment. After the mainly digital gatherings of the last two years, the in-person experience will be more refreshing and meaningful than ever. Dr. Rowena Arzt will shortly reveal to you the many exciting innovations that we as the organizers have in store for our visitors this year.

Naturally, pets are the beating heart of Interzoo. We aspire to make the lives of the creatures entrusted to the care of us humans as healthy and pleasant as possible. Although people may sometimes disagree about the exact criteria for responsible pet care, the importance of animal welfare is incontrovertible and takes the highest priority. People love their pets. They want to live with them and mostly regard them as family members.

[We of ZZF - the German Pet Trade & Industry Association](#) therefore actively strive to ensure that people can live together with all kinds of pets in harmony with the principles of animal welfare. To this end, we have adopted the Heidelberg Resolutions as standards that are continually updated on the basis of the latest scientific findings and technological innovations. And we advise and inform the pet industry through a wide variety of channels and with many different tools. Pet shops help pet owners decide which pets are best suited for them and how to take care of them in the best possible way. Dog grooming salons teach owners how to groom their pets. We too provide information to pet owners about how to best take care of their particular pets once the work-from-home trend fades and they have to spend more time in their offices again.

Many political issues transcend our own national borders. For this reason, the close collaboration between our organization, the German Pet Trade & Industry Association, and transnational organizations such as the European Pet Organisation (EPO) and the International Pet Advisory Council (IPAC) is a big win for the harmonious cohabitation of

people and animals. These international ties broaden our understanding of the global challenges faced by the pet industry. I am exceedingly proud that the EPO has traditionally held its membership meeting at Interzoo and will do so again. For the first time this year, the IPAC membership meeting will be held as an in-person summit of worldwide pet industry associations during Interzoo, though it will actually be a hybrid event with nearly 20 persons here on location and another 15 participating online.

The industry's sense of responsibility and love of animals have been on full display since the start of the war in Ukraine. Many companies have organized aid shipments of pet food and supported rescue centres in the neighbouring countries. As the German Pet Trade & Industry Association, we have donated a five-digit sum of money in support of two such aid organizations. Moreover, the WZF and NürnbergMesse will organize a special campaign on the final day of the trade fair: We will set up a collection centre in Hall 10 where exhibitors can donate large supplies of the pet products they have exhibited at the trade fair. The products will be properly packed and then transported to Ukraine by the initiative #weareallukrainians to help distressed animals in that country. I do hope that many exhibitors will take part in this campaign, as an especially impressive and moving manifestation of the close tie between humans and pets.

With this in mind, I wish us all a successful, responsible, and forward-looking trade fair with many good discussions about new ways of promoting the welfare of humans and pets alike.

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