



Fido Forever: South Korean Lab Will Clone Beloved Pets For A Mere \$100,000

TN Note: Cloning technology is gaining acceptance and popularity. From favorite pets to prize breeding stock in the global food chain, new labs keep popping up. It would not be accurate to say that all cloning labs are operated by Transhumans. It would be accurate that all Transhumans are critically interested in and supportive of the developing technology, because the cloning of humans will not be far behind.

At \$100,000 a head, the puppies frolicking around the fenced lawn in western Seoul don't come cheap—but at least their owners know exactly what they are getting.

The lawn belongs to the Sooam Biotech Research Foundation, a world leader in pet cloning that has run a thriving commercial business over the past decade catering to dog owners who want to live with their pets forever ... literally.

With a client list including princes, celebrities and billionaires, the foundation offers owners protection against loss and grief with a cloning

service that promises the perfect replacement for a beloved pet.

Since 2006, the facility has cloned nearly 800 dogs, commissioned by owners or state agencies seeking to replicate their best sniffer and rescue dogs.

“These people have very a strong bond with their pets ... and cloning provides a psychological alternative to the traditional method of just letting the pet go and keeping their memory,” said Wang Jae-Woong, a researcher and spokesman for Sooam.

“With cloning, you have a chance to bring back the pets,” he said in the facility’s “care room” where each cloned puppy is kept in a glass-fronted, temperature-controlled pen and monitored by researchers around the clock.

Ever since the milestone birth of Dolly the sheep in 1996, the rights and wrongs of cloning have been a topic of heated debate and Sooam Biotech has been regarded with particular suspicion because of its founder, Hwang Woo-Suk.

In two articles published in the journal *Science* in 2004 and 2005, Hwang claimed to have derived stem-cell lines from cloned human embryos, a world first.

Fraudulent hero

He was lauded as a national hero in South Korea before it emerged that his research was fraudulent and riddled with ethical lapses.

Hwang was given a two-year suspended prison sentence in 2009, after being convicted of embezzlement and bioethical violations.

Sooam Biotech clones many animals, including cattle and pigs for medical research and breed preservation, but is best known for its commercial dog service.

The process involves harvesting a mature cell from the dog to be copied and transferring its DNA to a donor egg cell that has had its own genetic

material removed.

The cell and the egg are “fused” with an electrical jolt, and the resulting embryo is implanted in a surrogate mother dog, which will give birth about two months later.

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