

A Message to GSALS and Faculty of Agriculture Students

It has been more than a year since measures were first taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Japan. During this period, the Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences (GSALS) and the Faculty of Agriculture have been working to implement educational activities that incorporate to the extent possible safe face-to-face practical training and research activities. We realize that this situation is far from the student life you envisioned.

In May 2021, a GSALS COVID-19 Task Force was created to safely implement systematic and flexible measures to prevent the spread of infection while carrying on with our educational and research activities. For example, to prevent clusters from occurring in face-to-face classes, to ensure that countermeasures can be taken quickly and flexibly, and to protect privacy, the task force requires instructors to submit for confirmation and approval detailed practical training plans based on thorough simulations of infection control measures implemented beforehand. As progress is made in getting people vaccinated, we will continue working to implement effective and substantive combinations of online and face-to-face classes.

Much of your student life has been curtailed since the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic. You have not been able to engage fully in educational and research activities, and your communications with friends and laboratory mates have been severely limited. We commend you for remaining highly motivated in your studies and research despite the daily anxieties and difficulties of dealing with unfamiliar online classes and the need to curtail your activities. Unfortunately, this “life with the coronavirus” is expected to continue for a while. We urge you to remain steadfast and not give up on your objectives.

The Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences and the Faculty of Agriculture will continue to work in cooperation with all our members—students, faculty, and staff—to protect everyone’s physical and mental health. Please be assured that we will do our best to support you in your studies and research so that you may enjoy a fulfilling student life. We ask for your continued cooperation as we implement thorough measures to prevent infection. We also ask that you be sympathetic and respectful to those who have been infected as well as the people close to them and be considerate of their privacy and basic human rights.

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