

Network for Organic Agriculture in Fukushima Prefecture

(1) Project operator: Network for Organic Agriculture in Fukushima Prefecture

[Establishment] January 26, 2009

[Objectives] Following the enactment of the Act Concerning the Promotion of Organic Agriculture in December, 2006, the network was established to further promote organic agriculture in Fukushima, with organic farmers, consumers, researchers/engineers, agricultural groups and public administrations all working together, and contribute to the promotion of organic agriculture in Japan, in close coordination with similar groups nationwide.

[Major activities]

- (1) To build a network of organic farmers in Fukushima Prefecture, consumers, researchers, engineers, agricultural groups and public administrations.
- (2) To offer training programs about organic farming techniques, organic product marketing, and food and agriculture education, and provide opportunities where producers and consumers can interact and share information.
- (3) To conduct promotional and educational activities to let more and more people know about organic farming
- (4) To give consultation services to farmers who are trying to start organic farming
- (5) To make policy proposals and express opinions to promote organic farming
- (6) To help farmers make a living in organic farming
- (7) Other matters necessary to promote the objectives of the network

(2) Activities for recovery and achievements

The network has been promoting various projects based on the idea of “Yuki-no-Sato (organic farm town)” in Fukushima Prefecture to drive Fukushima’s recovery through organic farming. Main activities of the network and the overview of “Yuki-no-Sato” concept are as follows:

- Previous activities:
 - (i) Inaugural meeting of the Network for Organic Agriculture in Fukushima Prefecture,” a specified non-profit corporation (NPO) (November 27, 2011)
 - (ii) 1st meeting to exchange opinions (December 27, 2011)
 - (iii) Technical workgroup for agricultural recovery in Fukushima (January 22, 2012)
 - Status of radioactive contamination and future planting
- Overview of the concept of Fukushima “Yuki-no-Sato”
 - (i) To promote organic farming techniques: An experiment to demonstrate organic farming techniques in the fields regarding the reduction of radiation levels
 - (ii) To develop safety and security systems: Radiation measurement of produces made in Fukushima Prefecture
 - (iii) To make safety and security declaration and promote exchange programs: Interaction

with consumers, partnership with mass media

- (iv) To promote product distribution
- (v) To encourage engagement in agriculture
- (vi) To develop model businesses of Fukushima “Yuki-no-Sato”
- (vii) To records activities

The activities mentioned above demonstrated the effectiveness of various farming techniques in cultivated fields in terms of radioactivity level reduction. And the results of radioactivity measurements verified that “plants are strong and don’t absorb radioactive substances from their roots that much”. And the fact that “we have created more opportunities to let people outside Fukushima know about the grim realities in the prefecture and provide accurate information” is also another achievement.

(3) Future development

The network designated Nihonmatsu City as a model area to promptly and practically promote the concept of Fukushima “Yuki-no-Sato,” and develop model projects. The project period is about 10 years, and the followings are major activities.

- Major activities:
 - (i) To improve and expand organic farm lands (2012-2021)
 - (ii) To promote techniques of organic farming in model areas (2012-2021)
 - (iii) To establish core facilities (2012-2016)
 - (iv) To establish a center for farming experiences and interaction with consumers (2012 -)
 - (v) To encourage engagement in agriculture (2012 -)
 - (vi) To promote distribution and sales (2012 -)