

Policies for the Promotion of Shokuiku
(White Paper on Shokuiku) The Fiscal
Year 2023 Edition
[Summary]

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

- This report is the Policies for the Promotion of Shokuiku defined in Article 15 of the **Basic Act on Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education)** (Act No. 63 of 2005). The Act requires the national government to submit a report on the measures that were taken for the promotion of shokuiku to the Diet each year.
- In this report, we summarize and describe the measures that were taken for the promotion of shokuiku by relevant ministries and agencies, including the Food Safety Commission of Japan (FSCJ), the Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA), the Children and Families Agency (CFA), the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the Ministry of the Environment (MOE).

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1. Basic Framework of the Policies for the Promotion of Shokuiku

○ Basic Act on Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education) (Act No. 63 of 2005)

- The Basic Act on Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education) was promulgated in June 2005 and took effect in July 2005 to comprehensively and systematically promote shokuiku policies, thereby contributing to healthy and cultured living of Japanese citizens and a thriving and prosperous society in the present and in the future.
- The Act states shokuiku “be promoted for the purpose of educating people to become a person who is able to acquire knowledge about ‘food and nutrition’ and ability to choose appropriate ‘food and nutrition’ for the person's own sake through their various experiences, which enables them to adopt healthy dietary habits.”
- The Act points out that we need to make efforts to promote shokuiku as a national campaign for the general public, specifically in places such as households, schools, day-care centers, and local communities to help each citizen maintain a sound diet that improves mental and physical health by raising awareness of food and learning skills to make the right judgment based on reliable food information.

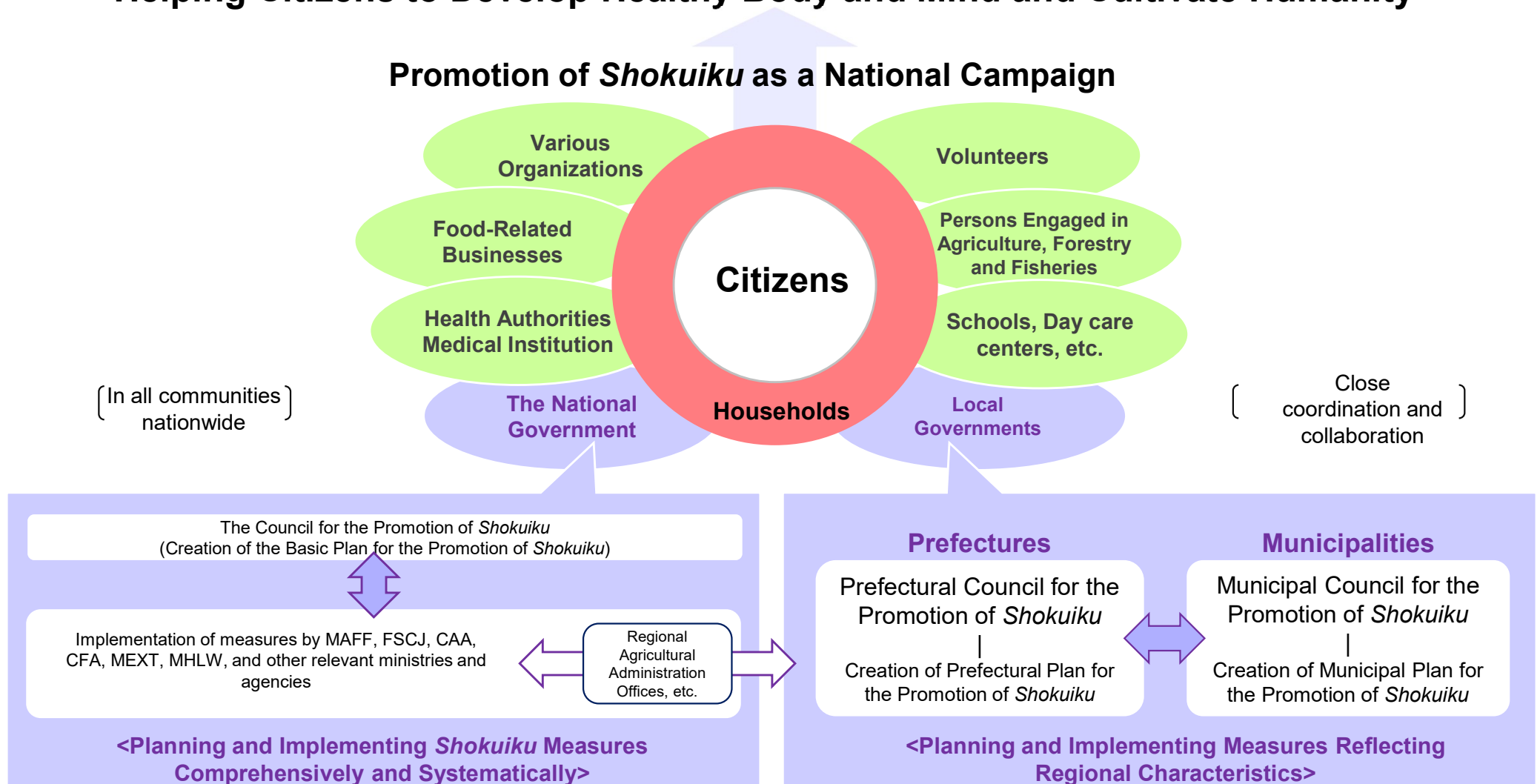
○ Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku

- In March 2021, the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku was decided by the Council for the Promotion of Shokuiku. The plan, covering approximately five years from fiscal year 2021 to fiscal year 2025, provides specific priority issues to be tackled during this period.
- In particular, the following three priority issues are specified taking into account the situation surrounding shokuiku, which includes changes in the environment with regard to the people’s health and food and the digitalization of society:
 - (1) Promotion of shokuiku supporting lifetime physical and mental health
 - (2) Promotion of shokuiku supporting sustainable food and nutrition
 - (3) Promotion of shokuiku in response to the “new normal” and digitalization

2. System for the Promotion of Shokuiku

- In order to roll out *shokuiku* as a national campaign, Japan promotes close coordination and collaboration among various community-level stakeholders, including schools, day care centers, persons engaged in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, food-related businesses and volunteers in addition to the national and local governments' efforts.

Helping Citizens to Develop Healthy Body and Mind and Cultivate Humanity



1. Changes in Circumstances Around the Food Security of Japan

- Regarding global food supply and demand, while an increase in global food demand is expected, there are concerns about market tightness in the mid to long term. Additionally, disruptions in the supply chains due to the spread of COVID-19 as well as other factors, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 have caused the prices of agricultural production materials like crude oil and fertilizers to soar. The domestic and international situations surrounding Japan's food are constantly changing, increasing the risks to food security.
- In June 2023, the “Headquarters for Stable Food Supply and Strengthening Agricultural, Forestry, and Fisheries Industries” decided on the “New Directions for Food, Agriculture, and Rural Policies,” which outlined three new pillars: establishing food security for each citizen from peacetime, transitioning to sustainable agriculture and food industries that consider the environment, and establishing a sustainable and robust food supply foundation even amid population decline.
- Since September 2022, discussions have been held under the Council for Policies on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas to verify and review overall policies based on the Basic Act on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, and a report was compiled in September 2023. The council's report suggests that, from the perspective of food security, one direction for revising agricultural policies should involve broad cooperation between the public and private sectors in promoting shokuiku through agricultural experiences for all generations, from children to adults, and initiatives like local production for local consumption, thereby fostering public understanding of agriculture.
- A bill for an “Act Partially Amending the Basic Act on Food, Agriculture, and Rural Areas” was submitted to the 213th Diet session (2024 Ordinary Session). The bill stipulates that the government shall implement measures to enhance understanding of the necessity for sustainable food supply in the formation of food prices.

2. Promotion of Shokuiku to Foster Public Understanding of the Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries Industries

- Promotion of shokuiku is crucial for fostering gratitude for and understanding of the fact that our daily dietary habits are based on the blessings of nature and supported by efforts by people engaged in food-related activities, contributing to the realization of a sustainable society.
- In particular, understanding agriculture, forestry, and fisheries as places where food is produced is important for fostering gratitude for food, and efforts to deepen the connection between “food” and “agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries” is required.
- Therefore, the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku includes measures to provide opportunities to understand the cycle of food from production to consumption and to participate in hands-on activities related to food.
- Additionally, given the significant changes in the circumstances around the food security of Japan mentioned in 1, it is necessary to further deepen public understanding of the processes and challenges from production to consumption in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries. The White Paper on Shokuiku Fiscal Year 2023 introduces initiatives that are particularly important for this purpose, such as providing agriculture, forestry, or fishery experiences and strengthening the connection between production areas and consumers, as well as enhancing educational opportunities related to agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

Case Study

Learning the Importance of Food and Life through Tours of Farms and Dairy Factories

Meiji Co., Ltd. (Tokyo)

- At the Tokachi Factory in Hokkaido, a new initiative was planned for fiscal year 2023 with the theme “See, Eat, Experience, and Learn!” to help people understand dairy farming by allowing them to experience dairy-related activities.
- The initiative features not only tours of the factory to see the process of fresh milk being turned into products and dairy products being manufactured, but also hands-on experiences at affiliated farms, such as milking cows and tasting the finished dairy products.
- Through the process of dairy products being made from freshly milked milk, the initiative provides an opportunity for parents and children to feel the importance of food and life and increase their interest in livestock and dairy farming.



Cow Milking Experience

Case Study

Bridging Producers and Consumers through Cooking Classes Using Local Ingredients and Agricultural Experiences (The “7th Shokuiku Activity Awards”—Award of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries)

Community Cafe Gokko (Toyama Prefecture)

- At a community cafe that uses locally produced agricultural products as ingredients, cooking classes and food education lectures using local vegetables are held.
- Additionally, participants can visit farms where vegetables are grown and take part in agricultural experiences. Through the process from soil preparation to vegetable production, they learn about the dedication of the producers to agriculture and communicate consumer needs to the producers, thereby fostering a mutual understanding where consumers appreciate the efforts behind production and producers are aware of consumer demands.
- By providing a place where participants can experience the cycle of food from vegetable production to eating the dishes, the cafe serves as a bridge between producers and consumers.



Experiencing the Flow from Soil Preparation to Vegetable Production

Case Study

Conveying the Charm of Agriculture and the Importance of Food through Picture Books (The “7th Shokuiku Activity Awards”—Award of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries)

AGRI BATON PROJECT (Ibaraki Prefecture)

- Inspired by agricultural women, a picture book conveying the charm of agriculture and the importance of food was created and published. Farmers in the local communities read it to children and talk about vegetable growing, conducting food education activities that help children feel closer to agriculture and food.
- Furthermore, by sharing this method with farmers participating in an online community from all over the country, it enables the expansion of food education activities in various regions through the accessible method of picture book reading.
- Feedback from children who listened to the picture book readings includes comments like “I feel like I can eat vegetables I didn't like before,” and “I want to try growing vegetables from seeds,” providing an opportunity to deepen their interest in food and agriculture.



A Picture Book Full of the Charm of Agriculture with QR Codes

Case Study

An Initiative to Learn about Kesennuma's Fish and Fisheries, and Fostering Appreciation for the Nature of the Area and Food through Living Fish as Live Education Materials

Kesennuma Fish in School Lunches Promotion Association (Miyagi Prefecture)

- Activities include on-site classes by fishermen where children learn about fisheries, and hands-on activities such as tours of fish markets, fishing boats, and processing plants. Also, free pamphlets showing the process from food production to school lunches are distributed, deepening the understanding of this cycle.
- Feedback from children includes comments like “I learned that school lunches require a lot of effort, and I want to eat everything without leaving anything,” and “I want to express gratitude when eating fish.”
- By utilizing fish produced in the children's local environment as a living education material through the use of fish landed in Kesennuma or caught by Kesennuma fishing boats in school lunches, the initiative fosters children's love of the nature of the local communities and culture, and gratitude for food.



Children Eating Swordfish Croquettes at School Lunch

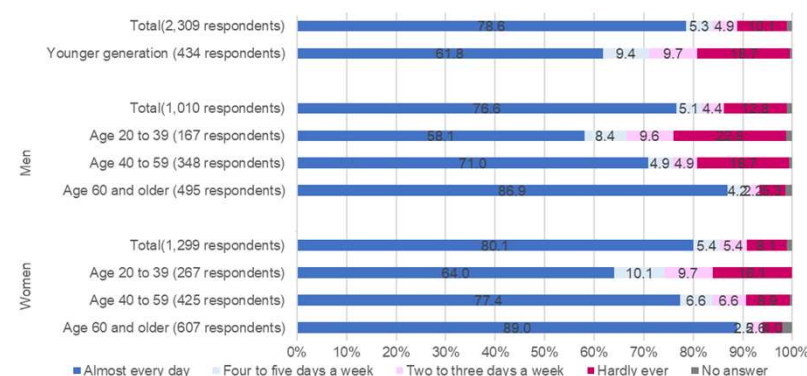
1. Positioning in the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku

- In the “Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku,” promotion of shokuiku supporting lifetime physical and mental health is emphasized. It aims to promote continuous and lifelong shokuiku that addresses various life stages, lifestyles, and diverse living situations, and to promote lifelong shokuiku in various settings such as homes, schools, day-care centers for children, workplaces, and local communities.
- Establishing healthy eating habits in childhood is the foundation for cultivating a healthy mind and body and nurturing a well-rounded personality throughout life. To build children's basic life habits, it is necessary for local communities, schools, and private organizations, including businesses, to cooperate and collaborate with families and promote initiatives that encourage children and their parents to enhance their awareness of and engage in developing healthy life habits together.
- Additionally, the 20s and 30s age group (hereafter referred to as the “younger generation”) still faces many issues, including skipping breakfast. It is important to engage this generation in shokuiku, as they play a key role in passing on shokuiku to the next generation, to deepen their understanding and interest in food.
- To enhance interest and understanding related to food, it is important for children to participate in hands-on activities related to the production of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products, thereby deepening their awareness and understanding of these industries.
- In light of this, this special feature focuses on shokuiku initiatives for children and the younger generation, describing the awareness and practice of shokuiku and introducing case studies of these initiatives.

2. Current Status of Children and the Younger Generation’s Interest in Shokuiku and Eating Habits

- In the younger generation, the percentage of people who skip breakfast (those who eat breakfast “two to three days a week” and “hardly ever”) is 28.3%, which is higher compared to the total. Particularly among male respondents, 22.8% responded that they “hardly ever” eat breakfast.

The percentage of people who skip breakfast (by sex and age)



2. Current Status of Children and the Younger Generation's Interest in Shokuiku and Eating Habits

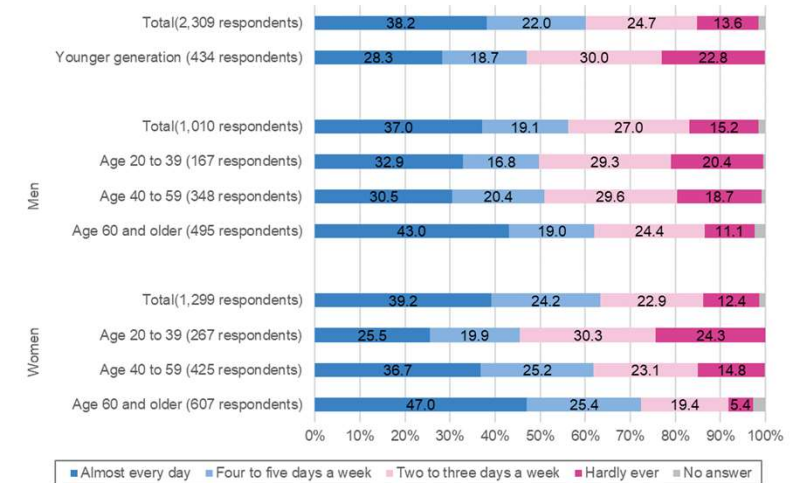
- The percentage of people who eat at least two meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes almost every day is 28.3% in the younger generation, which is lower compared to the total.

- When asked about what is needed to increase the frequency of meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes, the younger generation frequently cited “having time” and “having sufficient money for food.”

- In households living with children*, a higher percentage cited “having time,” “not time-consuming,” and “having sufficient money for food.”

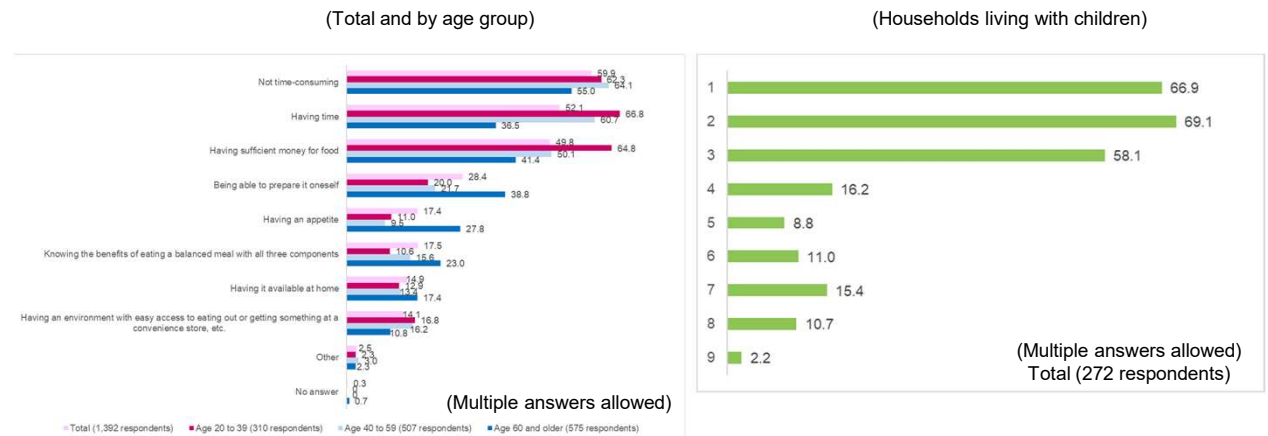
*Households living with children who are infants, toddlers, elementary school students, junior high school students, high school students, or technical college students (excluding households living with grandchildren).

Frequency of people eating a meal consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes (by sex and age)



Data Source: MAFF. The Survey on Attitudes towards Shokuiku (Annual). Conducted in November 2023.

Necessary factors for eating a meal consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes

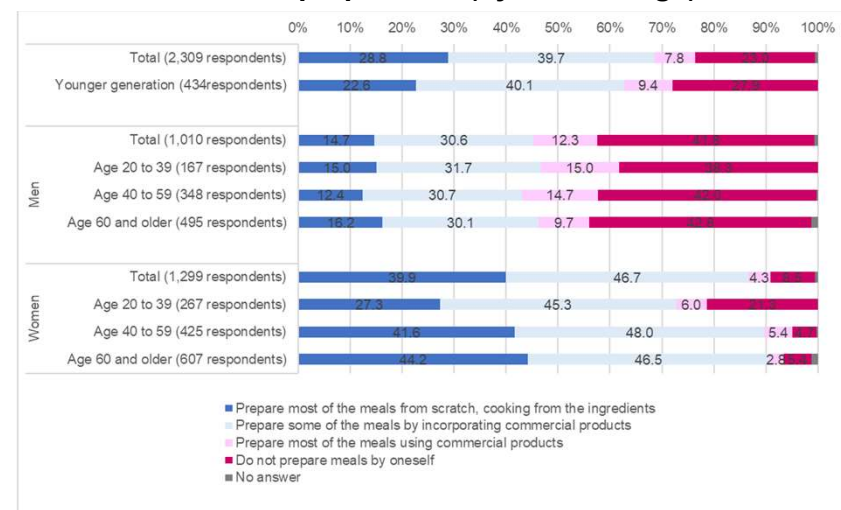


Data Source: MAFF. The Survey on Attitudes towards Shokuiku (Annual). Conducted in November 2023.

2. Current Status of Children and the Younger Generation's Interest in Shokuiku and Eating Habits

- Regarding usual meal preparation, 27.9% of the younger generation responded that they “do not prepare meals by oneself,” which is higher compared to the total. Additionally, across all generations, male respondents significantly outnumber female respondents in this category.
- In households with infants, the percentage of those who “prepare some of the meals by incorporating commercial products” is higher compared to the total.

Status of usual meal preparation (by sex and age)



Data Source: MAFF. The Survey on Attitudes towards Shokuiku (Annual). Conducted in November 2023.

Article

Kodomo Wakamono ★ Iken Plus “Iken Hiroba” – Promoting Shokuiku for Children and Youth

- CFA has launched a new initiative in fiscal year 2023 called “Program to Promote Reflection of Opinions and Views of Children and Young People (Kodomo Wakamono ★ Iken Plus),” which provides opportunities for children and young people to express their views and participate in society in various ways.
- To understand the challenges and needs of the children and young generation, MAFF conducted a survey within the “Kodomo Wakamono ★ Iken Plus” project with the theme of “Promoting Shokuiku for Children and Youth.” This involved an online survey (81 responses) and face-to-face views exchange with those who volunteered to participate (22 participants) with elementary school fifth graders to high school third-year students.
- Participants were divided into groups to exchange views about “skipping breakfast,” “agriculture, forestry or fishery experience,” “using digital technology for shokuiku,” and “developing the ability to formulate meals based on nutritional balance.” They exchanged views on the challenges and support needed for implementing initiatives in each area.
- The online survey and face-to-face views exchange revealed views such as actively thinking about their eating habits in everyday life and having interest and knowledge but lacking opportunities to practice or incorporate.

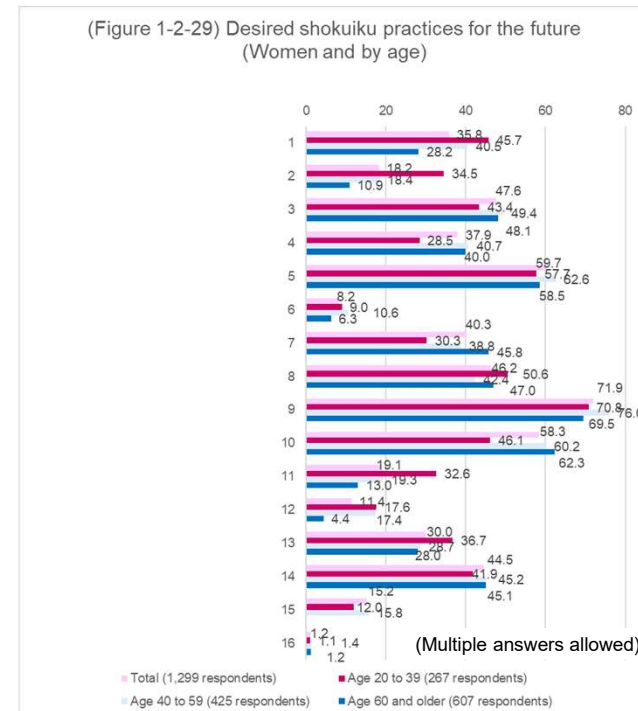
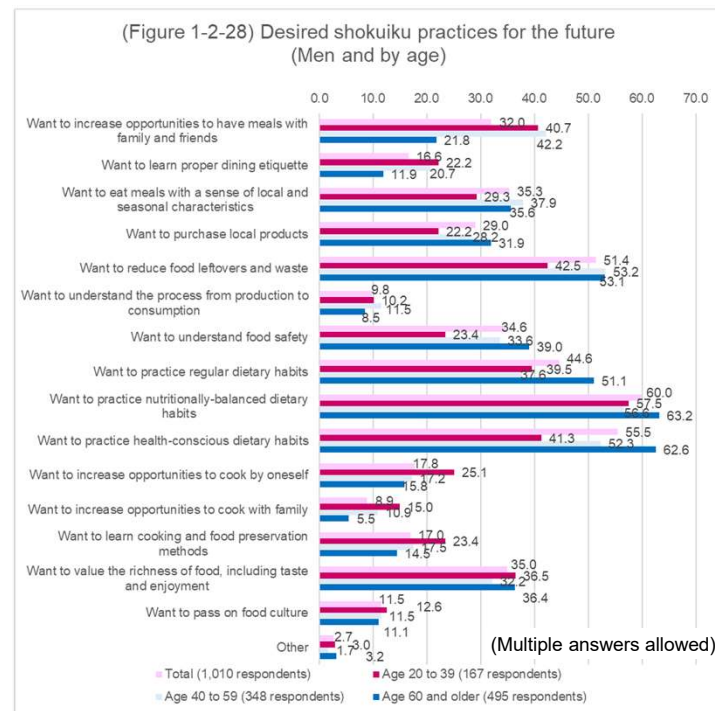


Exchanging Views in Groups

2. Current Status of Children and the Younger Generation's Interest in Shokuiku and Eating Habits

- When asked about the shokuiku practices they would like to implement over the next year, the most common response from both male and female respondents was “want to practice nutritionally-balanced dietary habits.” Compared to other generations, the younger generation shows a greater tendency to want to increase “opportunities for cook by oneself” and “opportunities to cook with family.”
- Additionally, when examining the percentages of those who want to implement each item by sex, male respondents generally had lower percentages, while female respondents had higher percentages overall.

Desired shokuiku practices for the future (by sex and age)



Data Source: MAFF. The Survey on Attitudes towards Shokuiku (Annual). Conducted in November 2023.

3. The Need for Shokuiku for Children and the Younger Generation

- The reasons why the younger generation struggles to eat breakfast and meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes include “not having time” and “not having sufficient money for food.”
- For households with children, barriers to increasing the frequency of meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes include “not having time,” “not time consuming,” and “not having sufficient money for food.”
- Additionally, regarding daily meal preparation, a higher percentage of male respondents compared to female respondents do not prepare meals by themselves. Furthermore, in households with infants, the percentage of those who “prepare some of the meals by incorporating commercial products” is higher compared to the total.
- Meanwhile, in the younger generation, desired future practices include “practicing nutritionally-balanced dietary habits” and “cooking by oneself.” However, although they want to cook for themselves while being mindful of nutritional balance, aspects such as not having time make it difficult to put this into practice.
- It is important for national and local governments, relevant organizations, and food-related businesses to work together to create an environment where necessary foods and ingredients for practicing a healthy diet are easily accessible. Additionally, it is necessary to create opportunities that lead to practice by providing accessible spaces for those who wish to cook for themselves and by disseminating information about such spaces.
- To understand the food cycle from production to consumption and to cultivate a sense of gratitude for receiving life as a natural blessing and for everyone involved in bringing food to the table, it is essential to provide shokuiku through opportunities such as hands-on activities at schools and day-care centers, and agriculture, forestry or fishery experience.
- When it comes to shokuiku for children and the younger generation, it is essential to view it not as an individual or family issue to be overlooked but as a societal issue that needs to be addressed comprehensively.

Case Study

Initiatives in Student and Employee Dormitories Centered Around Meal Provision

Kyoritsu Maintenance Co., Ltd. (Tokyo)

- In student and employee dormitories, well-balanced meals devised by registered dietitians are provided.
- Homemade meals are provided starting with breakfast, along with special event meals, local cuisine, and efforts to increase vegetable intake.
- After moving out of the dormitory, students have reported, “feeling the difficulty of preparing their own meals, and gaining a renewed appreciation for the provided meals at the dormitory.”



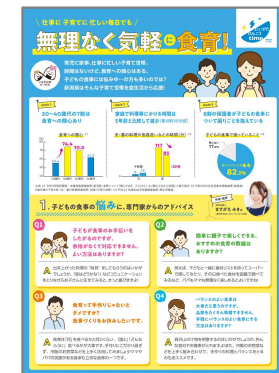
Example of Provided Meals Using Seasonal Ingredients

Case Study

Towards Shokuiku that Parenting Households can Easily and Naturally Engage In – Supporting Parenting Households in Terms of Dietary Habits

Niigata Prefecture

- For the fiscal year 2023 Shokuiku Month, a leaflet titled “Easy and Attainable Shokuiku!” was created for parenting households.
- As one of the initiatives to support parenting households in terms of their dietary habits, this approach introduces the use of “Karada ga Yorokobu Deli” (Delicious Deli for a Healthy Body), a range of prepared foods and box lunches that meet the prefecture’s unique standards for energy and sodium content. This allows for a reduction in cooking time and the provision of balanced meal options.
- Additionally, the Minami-Uonuma Health Center in the prefecture conducted a shokuiku survey targeting parenting households, in collaboration with day-care centers and Integrated centers for early childhood education and care. In the future, the survey results are planned to be used as foundational material for disseminating information and raising awareness at home.



“Easy and Attainable Shokuiku!” Leaflet for Parenting Households

Case Study

Learning about Sustainable Resource Cycles in Food and Agriculture, with a Focus on School Lunches

Yokohama National University Faculty of Education Affiliated
Kamakura Elementary School (Kanagawa Prefecture)

- Compost is created from leftover school lunches, and vegetables are grown without pesticides using this compost on school grounds. The harvested vegetables are then used as ingredients in the school lunches.
- By experiencing the sustainable circulation of food and agriculture, students develop the ability to understand and practice desirable healthy eating habits.
- Through the active implementation of shokuiku classes by diet and nutrition teachers in collaboration with various subjects and the use of foods covered in these classes in school lunches, students’ interest in food and their range of choices are being expanded.



A Shokuiku Class Integrated with A School Subject