

Promotion of Interaction between Producers and Consumers

- In order to ensure the stable supply of food for the future, it is important to raise public awareness about the necessity of securing farm land, farmers, and other agricultural resources. Additionally, it is crucial that as many citizens as possible have opportunities to learn about the roles of food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries and Japan's rural areas whose economy is based on these industries, as well as the significance of choosing domestic foodstuffs. This will encourage people to consider these issues as their own, think about the future, and take independent action to support each other from their respective positions.
- MAFF has implemented support for shokuiku activities in local communities by focusing on efforts to provide opportunities for agriculture, forestry and fishery experiences.
- In addition, to promote “Nohaku [Countryside Stay],” in which participants stay in rural areas, enjoy dining and have experiences that utilize regional resources during their stay, in conjunction with the development of implementation systems, strengthening of management, and other related aspects, the ministry has supported the development of accommodation and experience facilities utilizing old folk houses in an integrated manner.
- Furthermore, under the collaboration of the Cabinet Secretariat, Cabinet Office, MIC, MEXT, MAFF, and MOE, urban and rural interactions that contribute to factors such as shokuiku are promoted through “the exchange project for children experiencing farming and rural lives” providing children with agriculture, forestry, and fishery experiences in rural areas.

Case Study

Shokuiku Initiative Through “Fureai Kyushoku” for Promoting Underutilized Fish in Elementary Schools (The “7th Shokuiku Activity Awards”—Award of Director-General, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau)

- For fifth-grade students, local fishermen visit elementary schools to conduct lessons about local fisheries and fish, followed by a “fureai kyushoku” where students share a school lunch featuring fish.
- By incorporating underutilized fish like small mackerel and dolphinfish into school lunches, children have a valuable opportunity to interact with local fishermen and learn about fisheries.

Hiratsuka City Fisheries Cooperative
(Kanagawa Prefecture)



Demonstration of Fish Filleting Techniques

Promotion of Local Production for Local Consumption

- Initiative of local production for local consumption is an important initiative for vitalization of rural areas.
- “Food mileage” is an indicator calculated by multiplying the transportation distance by the volume of food shipped. In this respect, expansion of domestic production and consumption and promotion of local production for local consumption are expected to contribute to the reduction of environmental burdens as well.
- MAFF selected good practices for vitalization including local production for local consumption and income increase of rural areas whose economy is based on agriculture, forestry, and fisheries and disseminated the information of the activities nationwide. Additionally, the ministry supported shokuiku initiatives utilizing local products in school lunches and the development of new products leveraging regional resources as part of sixth industrialization efforts.
- “Nippon Food Shift: We think about Japan from the viewpoint of food” is carried on as a national movement in public-private collaboration focusing on young people (generation Z). The aim of the movement is to attract people’s sympathy and support for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural areas mainly engaged in these industries, which is expected to encourage specific behaviors, including active use of domestic agricultural products.

Promotion of Shokuiku Considering Sustainable Food Production and Consumption in Harmony with the Environment

- Based on the “ MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems ” and the “ Act to Promote Low Environmental Impact Business Activities for the Establishment of Environmentally Harmonized Food Systems ”, which is called “MIDORI Act” (Act No. 37 of 2022), shokuiku that considers environmentally friendly food production and consumption is being promoted.
- Based on the Fourth Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku, efforts are being made to increase public understanding and interest in initiatives such as sustainable agricultural production, including organic farming, and sustainable fisheries management, as well as maintaining biodiversity and natural material cycles and managing or increasing natural capital.
- To share examples of initiatives of local communities to support organic farming, such as the use of organic food in school lunches, various local government case studies were shared at the Organic Village National Assembly held in January 2024.
- Additionally, “visualization” initiative is implemented to clearly display the environmental burden reduction efforts by producers and support consumer choices. Demonstration sales of agricultural products with grade labels indicating their contribution to greenhouse gas reduction by the number of stars started in 2022. Starting from March 2024, an evaluation of biodiversity conservation efforts for rice was also added, and a new label design was introduced for full-scale operation in accordance with the guidelines.

Launching National Campaign to Reduce Food Loss and Waste (FLW)

- In Japan, the volume of FLW was estimated 5.23 million tons in fiscal year 2021.
- The targets set in the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” for new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include halving per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level and reducing FLW along production and supply chains. Based on the “2030 Agenda” and other policies, Japan set a goal to reduce household and commercial FLW by half compared with fiscal 2000 by fiscal 2030.
- To promote reduction of FLW as a national campaign, the “Act on Promotion of Food Loss and Waste Reduction” (Act No.19 of 2019) came into effect in October 2019.
- The rising prices for energy, food, and other essentials demands efforts facilitate the flow of food to Kodomo Shokudo (community cafeterias providing free or low-cost meals for children), people in financial distress. For food banks, support is provided for costs necessary to expand their activities to receive and provide food, and specialists are dispatched to help with problem-solving, including securing of food donors.
- MOE established a portal site that aggregates information on FLW. Environments were developed in which each entity will be able to obtain accurate and easy-to-understand information on FLW.
- In addition to the enlightenment activities using a character named “Sugutabekun,” the ministry worked to make it natural for consumers to take home leftover food when eating out (“mottECO”).
- The CAA, MAFF, and MOE, along with the National Deliciously ‘Tabekiri (no leftovers)’ Movement Committee, implemented the “Deliciously ‘Tabekiri’ National Joint Campaign” from December 2023 to January 2024.
- The CAA launched the “Consumer Affairs Agency Certified for Food Loss and Waste Reduction” program in fiscal year 2022 to develop individuals who promote FLW reduction in each region. And the agency continued to certify supporters in fiscal year 2023.
- MOE started “Decokatsu” (a national campaign to create new and prosperous lifestyles that contribute to decarbonization) to achieve the 2050 carbon neutrality goal and the 2030 GHG emission reduction target. As one of the “Decokatsu Actions,” the ministry promotes FLW reduction, strongly supporting changes in behavior and lifestyle among the public and consumers.



“mottECO”
awareness raising material



Decokatsu Logomark

Shokuiku that Contributes to Passing Down of Diverse Food Culture of Communities Through Efforts in Utilization of Licensed Expert Cooks in Volunteer and other Activities

- Diet Improvement Promoters conducted programs, such as “Local and Traditional Cooking Classes,” to pass down local cuisine and food culture, and offered hands-on learning experiences in making local cuisine and traditional cuisine in different areas. The All Japan Chefs Association and the Nihon Chourishikai (Japanese Licensed Cooks Association) worked to promote shokuiku for the passing down of food culture through cooking classes and other activities.
- The registration of “Washoku; Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese” as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage celebrated its 10th anniversary on December 4, 2023. MAFF held events across three locations nationwide, including keynote speeches and panel discussions by chefs, to promote Washoku culture. Additionally, the Agency for Cultural Affairs held seminars and events utilizing Japan's registered intangible cultural assets, such as “Unbaked Sweets with Confectionery Name,” “Traditional Kyoto Cuisine,” and “Traditional Knowledge and Skills of Making Sake,” to foster enthusiasm for promoting food culture.
- The Agency for Cultural Affairs promotes registration of cultural properties based on the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (Act No.214 of 1950) and supports local governments that are promoting or working on the passing down and promotion of unique food culture in creating model cases to develop and disseminate the “Food Culture Story” that conveys the cultural background in an easy-to-understand manner.



Keynote Speech by a Chef

Case Study

Regional Development Through the Preservation of Local Cuisine (The “7th Shokuiku Activity Awards”—Award of Director-General, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau)

- The association launched the “Food Culture Festival” with the theme of “Rediscovering Nostalgic Mountain Village Cuisine,” featuring local cuisine.
- The festival inspired the creation of “Yamaai Kobo,” a local food processing group led predominantly by women, which has been active for 20 years. They are bringing vitality to the local communities through diverse food-related activities such as processing and selling locally inspired box lunches and side dishes, providing meal delivery services to elderly households, and offering lectures at elementary and junior high schools.

Kyotsu Hata Residents' Association (Iwate Prefecture)



Local Cuisine Seminar by “Yamaai Kobo”

Enhancement of Risk Communication

- As one of many approaches for risk communication on food safety, CAA, FSCJ, MHLW and MAFF worked together to organize meetings to exchange opinions among governments, consumers and other stakeholders. In particular, initiatives concerning “radionuclides in food” were strengthened.
- In fiscal year 2023, opinion exchange meetings regarding the producers’ efforts to reduce radionuclides, actual inspection results of radionuclides in food and other related topics were conducted in a hybrid format, both in-person and online, in Osaka Prefecture and Tokyo. Additionally, the opinion exchange meetings with university students were held in person at five locations across the country, while also connecting online with other universities.

Providing Information on Food Safety

- It is important to provide consumers with accurate information so that they can make rational decisions on their food choices based on scientific knowledge. For this purpose, relevant ministries and agencies collaborated to deliver clear and easy-to-understand information to consumers.
- In fiscal year 2023, MAFF created a video summarizing the characteristics and preventive measures of food poisoning related to various pathogens, including clostridium perfringens, which requires careful cooking and storage, particularly in stews, campylobacter, which needs thorough heating during meat preparation, and anisakis, which requires proper removal of internal organs and cooking of seafood. The content was made approachable for a wide range of generations, including children, by featuring a food safety mascot, for example.



To Safely Enjoy Seafood
–Prevention of Anisakis infection
(Left: Mikke, Right: Food Safety Doctor)

Implementing Basic Survey and Studies and Providing Information on the Results

- In April 2023, MEXT published its “Standard Tables of Food Composition in Japan - 2023 (Eighth Revised Edition),” which includes a total of 2,538 foods. It will continue to enhance the content by adding newly listed foods and other items in accordance with the actual state of people’s diet.
- MAFF provided the public with basic statistical data on the state of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, food production, distribution and consumption, which are necessary for the promotion of shokuiku.

Promoting Understanding of Food Labeling

- In recent years, there has been an increase of consumers' awareness of food safety and health, and consequently, the need for plain food labeling.
- CAA has been making efforts to promote understanding of food labeling among consumers and business operators, through holding seminars and dispatching lecturers to training sessions.
- In the “Food Guidance Companion–Second Revised Edition,” created by MEXT for teachers and school employees, there is a passage which is utilized at schools that says to “cultivate a mentality to proactively obtain information such as that on food quality and safety, from items such as food labeling.”

Article

Initiatives to Enhance Understanding of Health-Promoting Foods Using Video Education Materials

- CAA has created the video “What Are Health-Promoting Foods?” to help consumers acquire accurate knowledge about health-promoting foods and make informed and autonomous choices about the foods they need. The video is utilized in consumer seminars and other events.
- In Aomori City, a training course for Diet Improvement Promoters was held in fiscal year 2023 under the theme “Learn About Food Labeling.” By incorporating the CAA’s video, which is visually easy to understand, participant interest was increased and understanding was enhanced, making the course highly effective.



“What Are Health-Promoting Foods” Video

State of Shokuiku Abroad, Promotion of International Exchange, etc.

- MAFF’s English website “Promotion of Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education)” provides “Dietary guidelines for Japanese,” “Japanese Food Guide Spinning Top,” “Interpretation of ‘Japanese Food Guide Spinning Top,’” “Recommendation of Japanese-style dietary habits,” and other documents. It also contains brochures to introduce shokuiku of Japan to the world.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan promotes and raises awareness of shokuiku-related topics in its overseas public relations and cultural activities, including the distribution of “niponica,” a magazine for informing international readers about Japanese affairs, through diplomatic missions overseas.

Part III: Goals and Evaluating Progress of Shokuiku Promotion Efforts

Goals				
Detailed target values		Values when the Fourth Plan was Created (FY2020)	Current Values (FY2023)	Target Values (FY2025)
1 Increase the number of citizens who are interested in shokuiku				
(1)	Percentage of citizens who are interested in shokuiku	83.2%	78.1%	90% or more
2 Increase the number of “kyoshoku” occasions for breakfasts or dinners with family members				
(2)	Number of kyoshoku [breakfast or dinner eaten together with family members]	9.6 times/week	9.0 times/week	11 times or more/week
3 Increase the percentage of citizens participating in kyoshoku in communities as they hope to				
(3)	Percentage of citizens participated in kyoshoku in communities as they hope to	70.7%	62.8%	75% or more
4 Decrease the percentage of citizens skipping breakfast				
(4)	Percentage of children who skip breakfast	4.6% (FY2019)	6.1%	0%
(5)	Percentage of young people who skip breakfast	21.5%	28.3%	15% or less
5 Increase efforts to use local products in school lunches, etc.				
(6)	Average number of times diet and nutrition teachers provide guidance on local products	9.1 times/month (FY2019)	12.4 times/month	12 times or more/month
(7)	Percentage of prefectures maintaining or improving the percentage of local products used in school lunches (on a value basis) from the current value (FY2019)	-	66.0%	90% or more
(8)	Percentage of prefectures maintaining or improving the percentage of domestic foodstuffs used in school lunches (on a value basis) from the current value (FY2019)	-	66.0%	90% or more
6 Increase the number of citizens who adopt dietary habits that are in consideration of balanced nutrition				 
(9)	Percentage of citizens who eat at least two well-balanced meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes almost every day	36.4%	38.2%	50% or more
(10)	Percentage of the young citizens who eat at least two well-balanced meals consisting of a staple food, a main dish, and side dishes almost every day	27.4%	28.3%	40% or more
(11)	Mean daily salt intake	10.1g (FY2019)	10.1g (FY2019)	8g or less
(12)	Mean daily vegetable intake	280.5g (FY2019)	280.5g (FY2019)	350g or more
(13)	Percentage of those with a fruit intake of less than 100 grams per day	61.6% (FY2019)	61.6% (FY2019)	30% or less
7 Increase the percentage of citizens who put into practice a healthy diet from day to day where they take care to maintain an appropriate weight and limit salt intake in order to prevent or treat lifestyle diseases				
(14)	Percentage of citizens who put into practice a healthy diet from day to day where they take care to maintain an appropriate weight and limit salt intake in order to prevent or treat lifestyle diseases	64.3%	63.1%	75% or more

Goals				
Detailed target values		Values when the Fourth Plan was Created (FY2020)	Current Values (FY2023)	Target Values (FY2025)
8 Increase the percentage of citizens who take time to eat and chew well				
(15)	Percentage of citizens who take time to eat and chew well	47.3%	47.9%	55% or more
9 Increase the number of volunteers engaging in the promotion of shokuiku				
(16)	Number of citizens involved in volunteer groups, etc. that are engaged in the promotion of shokuiku	362,000 (FY2019)	323,000 (FY2022)	370,000 or more
10 Increase the number of citizens who have agriculture, forestry, or fishery experience				
(17)	Percentage of citizens (households) who have agriculture, forestry or fishery experience	65.7%	63.2%	70% or more
11 Increase the number of citizens who choose agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foods with an awareness of production area and the producer				 
(18)	Percentage of citizens who choose agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foods with an awareness of production area and the producer	73.5%	67.4%	80% or more
12 Increase the number of citizens who choose environmentally friendly agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foods				 
(19)	Percentage of citizens who choose environmentally friendly agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foods	67.1%	60.2%	75% or more
13 Increase the number of citizens who take action to reduce food loss and waste				
(20)	Percentage of citizens who take action to reduce food loss and waste	76.5% (FY2019)	76.7%	80% or more
14 Increase the percentage of citizens who have received and pass on traditional cuisines and table manners, etc. from their communities or families				
(21)	Percentage of citizens who have received and pass on traditional cuisine and table manners, etc. from their communities or families	50.4%	44.7%	55% or more
(22)	Percentage of the citizens who eat local and traditional cuisine at least once per month	44.6%	54.5%	50% or more
15 Increase the percentage of citizens who have basic knowledge on food safety and are able to make appropriate decisions based on it				
(23)	Percentage of citizens who have basic knowledge of food safety and are able to make appropriate decisions based on it	75.2%	76.4%	80% or more
16 Increase the percentage of municipalities that have created and implemented the Municipal Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku				
(24)	Percentage of municipalities that have created and implemented the Municipal Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku	87.5% (FY2019)	90.3%	100%

Data Sources for (1) to (3), (5), (9), (10), (14), (15), (17) to (19), (21) to (23): Survey on Attitudes Towards Shokuiku (Annual). (MAFF)

For (4): National Assessment of Academic Ability. (MEXT)

For (6): Survey on Efforts to Teach about Local Products in Schools. (MEXT)

For (7), (8): Survey on the Use of Local Products and Domestic Food Stuffs in School Lunches. (MEXT)

For (11) to (13): National Health and Nutrition Survey. (MHLW)

For (16), (24): Consumer Affairs and Shokuiku Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau, MAFF

For (20): The values of fiscal 2019 are based on the “Survey of Consumer Attitudes: Survey on Awareness and Efforts Taken for the Food Loss and Waste Reduction (CAA).” The values of fiscal 2023 are based on “FY2023 Survey on Attitude and Awareness in Consumer Life (Second Survey) (CAA).”

Note: 1) The goals that have been achieved are colored in blue.

2) Shokuiku Pictogram “Don’t become overweight or underweight” of “(6) Increase the number of citizens who adopt dietary habits with consideration of balanced nutrition” corresponds to the target values of (11).