

Creating and Expanding Organic Villages: (2) The Organic Villages National Conference

- To achieve the goal of expanding organic agriculture as set out in the MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems, "organic villages" will be created, in which municipalities will take the lead in expanding organic farming.
- In January 2024, a "national conference" for organic villages was held, with Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Sakamoto in attendance, bringing together organic village mayors, organic farmers, actual users, and other relevant parties, with approx. 1,000 people attending.
- At the national conference, mayors from municipalities reported on efforts such as utilizing organic food in school lunches and on creative ideas in their regions, as well as on efforts by technical guidance organizations and distribution companies involved in organic farming.

[Photos from the Organic Villages National Conference]



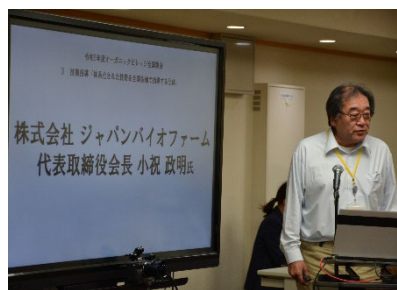
Greeting from Minister Sakamoto



Report on organic villages (Mayor Kitazawa, from Matsukawa Town in Nagano Pref.)



Minister Sakamoto with mayors who gave speeches



Speech by a technical guidance organization (Mr. Koiwai from Japan Bio Farm Co., Ltd.)

Date and time: Monday, January 15, 2024

Speakers:

Municipalities

- Abira Town, Hokkaido
- Kawanishi Town, Yamagata Pref.
- Echizen City, Fukui Pref.
- Matsukawa Town, Nagano Pref.
- Toyooka City, Hyogo Pref.
- Hamada City, Shimane Pref.

Distribution companies

- Rakuten Farm Co., Ltd.
- Next Generation Agriculture and Food Association

Technical guidance organizations

- Japan Bio Farm Co., Ltd.
- NPO Private Rice Research Institute
- MOA Natural Farming Culture Foundation
- MYFARM Inc.

MAFF Organic Agriculture Support Policies (Support for Creating Production Areas) (2)

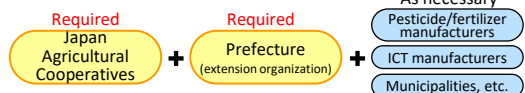
➤ Creating production areas

• Support for conversion to green cultivation systems (MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems grants)

In order to **promote a shift to "green cultivation systems" that incorporate "environmentally friendly cultivation techniques" and "advanced labor saving technologies"** suitable for each production area, **suitable technologies for the production area are verified and efforts to establish them are supported**

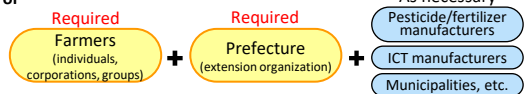
○ Implementing entity: Councils, prefectures, municipalities

Council composition

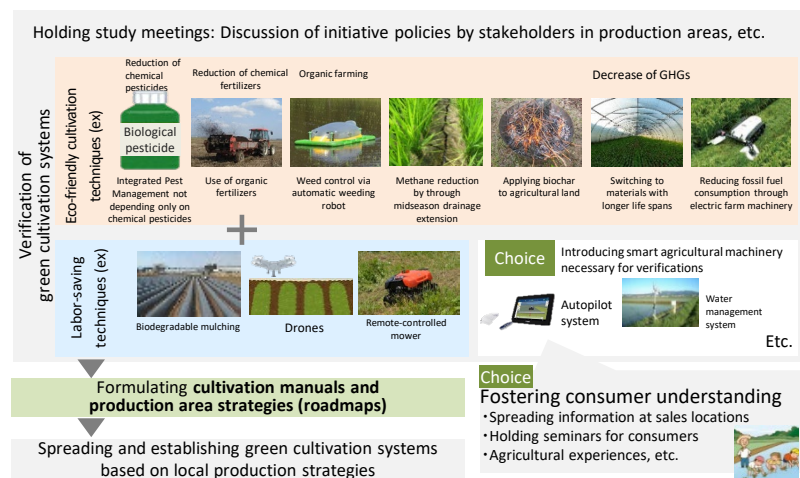


* If members do not include farmers, then farmers from the production area where the verification is being conducted must participate in the project.

or



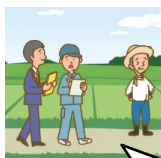
If the prefecture or the municipality are the implementing entity, then, in addition to farmers or agricultural cooperatives (in which farmers also participate), prefectural extension organizations must participate in the project.



• Supporting production areas by dispatching organic producers

Organic producers are dispatched to support production areas, where they propose and advise on sales strategies for organic farm products, etc.

How can we reduce shipping costs?



What about holding events that invite both buyers and consumers?

Examples of initiatives from previous years

MAFF FY2021

- Project to build a stable supply system for organic farm products
- Project to support the expansion of organic businesses
- Association for creating the next generation of agriculture and food



• Facility development, etc.

Support for the development of necessary facilities to promote reductions in chemical pesticides, reductions in chemical fertilizers, expansion of organic agriculture, and zero emissions

Comprehensive grant for building strong agriculture

Promoting the MIDORI Strategy for Sustainable Food Systems

Support for the development of necessary facilities to promote reductions in chemical pesticides, reductions in chemical fertilizers, expansion of organic agriculture, and zero emissions

Possible initiatives

- Development of shared facilities
- Renovation of existing facilities (limited to those w/ a useful life of 10+ years)
- Removal and disposal of unnecessary facilities associated with facility development and renovation

Subsidy rate of up to 1/2 See back side for details

MAFF Organic Agriculture Support Policies (Support for Human Resources Development) (1)

➤ Human resources development

• Organic conversion promotion project

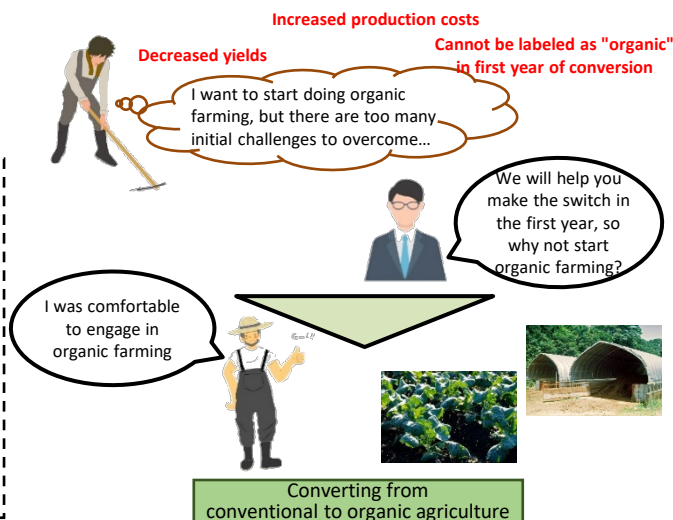
For farmers who are newly converting to organic agriculture, MAFF provides support for the necessary expenses to start organic agricultural production, such as purchasing organic seeds and seedlings, preparing the soil, and preparing a farmland environment that is less susceptible to pests and diseases.

① Eligibility

- Farmers who are newly taking up organic agriculture (farmers switching from conventional agriculture or new farmers)
- * Farmers who are already engaged in organic agriculture are eligible if they will be doing organic agriculture for a product that they have never done before and on a field where organic agriculture has not been done before.
- Planning to engage in international-standard organic agriculture for part or all of their farming
- For the purpose of sales
- Intend to continue international-standard organic agriculture after the project ends
- Have received MIDORI certification or are planning to receive it by the target results year

② Support unit price

Up to 20,000 yen per 10a (minimum application size: 10a)



• Direct payment for environmentally friendly agriculture

In order to promote the sustainable development of agriculture and to utilize the multifaceted functions of agriculture, MAFF is aiming to reduce the environmental impact of agriculture and to support **agricultural production activities that are highly effective in preventing global warming and conserving biodiversity.**

① **Eligibility:** Farmer-organized groups, and farmers who meet certain conditions, etc.

② **Requirements for eligible farmers:**

- Producing main crops for the purpose of selling them
- Attending training and self-evaluations for sustainable agricultural production
- Engaging in activities to expand environmental conservation-based agriculture efforts (activities related to improving technologies and promoting understanding, etc.)

③ **Supported activities**

Agricultural activities (**organic farming, etc.**) that are highly effective in preventing global warming and preserving biodiversity, etc., in conjunction with efforts to reduce chemical fertilizers and synthetic pesticides by more than 50% in principle.

④ **Initiative expansion supplement**

Support for activities aimed at taking in and establishing new organic farmers to organic farming **(4,000 yen/10a)**

[Supported initiatives and unit price]

▶ Common national activities

National initiatives designated by the government

Common national activities		Granted amounts of payments (yen/10a)
Organic farming	Farm products except coarse cereals (e.g. buckwheat) and forage crops Of these, an additional 2,000 yen will be added only if organic farming with high carbon storage effects is practiced	12,000 yen
	Coarse cereals (e.g. buckwheat) and forage crops	3,000 yen
Applying compost		4,400 yen
Planting cover crops		6,000 yen
Living mulch (wheat, barley, and Italian ryegrass)		5,400 yen (3,200 yen)
Sod culture		5,000 yen
No-till farming		3,000 yen
Extending midseason drainage		800 yen
Autumn plowing		800 yen

▶ Regionally approved initiatives

Regional initiatives (winter flood control, charcoal application, etc.) that are limited to a certain area and approved by the government based on the local environment and agricultural conditions

For more details↓



MAFF Organic Agriculture Support Policies (Support for Human Resources Development) (2)

➤ Human resources development

• Support for farmers new to organic agriculture to acquire skills

Support for farmers who are new to organic farming (those who have been doing international-standard organic farming for the past five years or who plan to do so in the future) **with training for Organic JAS certification and their first field inspections, etc. at a unit grant of up to 120,000 yen.**

In addition, **MAFF also holds organic agriculture cultivation technique seminars** for each product.

(Examples of seminars held in FY2022)

- Subsoil breaking and soil preparation for improving physical properties, and types of machinery and how to use them
- Organic agriculture management and business improvement
- Data-based organic cultivation techniques for tomatoes and strawberries
- Organic tea management, fertilization, and pest control
- Basics and use of green manure (cover crops)
- Practical post-harvest theory for organic cultivation



Support program for new organic farmers to acquire skills

Eligible recipients

- Individuals who have engaged in international standard organic farming for all or part of their agricultural operations for the past five years, or who plan to do so in the future.
- Individuals who have not undergone an Organic JAS farmland inspection in the past.
- Individuals who intend to obtain Organic JAS certification during or after the project.
- Individuals who will cooperate with the MAFF questionnaire survey and the Organic JAS certification status that will be conducted in the year following the project implementation year.
- * International standard organic farming is a production method that meets the criteria of Article 4 of the Japanese Agricultural Standard for Organic Products of Plant Origin (Public Notice of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries No. 1605 of October 27, 2005).
- * Individuals working at managing entity may attend the seminar (limited to those who are or will be the representative, production process manager, or grading manager for the managing entity).
- * Products subject to Organic JAS certification are primarily organic agricultural products, and organic feed is eligible if it is produced as pasture or feed crops.

Expenses eligible for subsidy

Max of 30,000 yen

Attend Organic JAS seminars



Max of 90,000 yen

Have on-site farmland inspections



*Refer to "3. Expenses Eligible for Subsidy" for details on what is included in expenses eligible for subsidy



• Training organic agriculture instructors

Prefectural governments support **training costs for organic agriculture instructors, travel expenses and honorariums, etc. for instructors' instruction activities.**

FY2020:
131 farmers
trained in
17 prefectures

FY2021:
376 farmers
trained in
26 prefectures
(cumulative)

FY2022:
734 farmers
trained in
30 prefectures
(cumulative)

FY2023:
1,138 farmers
trained in
31 prefectures
(cumulative)

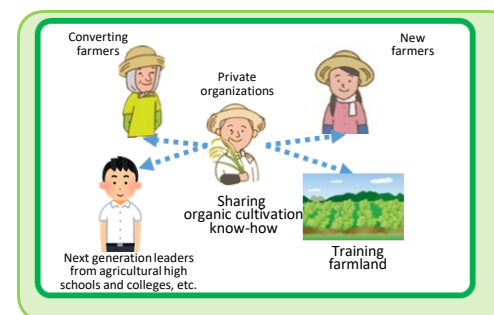
*What are organic agriculture instructors?

Organic agriculture instructors are individuals who have undergone certain training (or who have practical experience) and provide guidance and advance on organic agriculture techniques and the Organic JAS system.

In addition to prefectural employees such as extension advisors, agricultural cooperative employees such as farming instructors, municipal personnel, employees of private companies, and experienced organic farmers, etc., can also be appointed.

• Support for private organizations providing guidance on organic agriculture

MAFF supports initiatives such as **on-site guidance for farmers by private organizations that widely provide organic agriculture cultivation techniques, as well as the creation of manuals for acquiring cultivation and seed collection techniques**

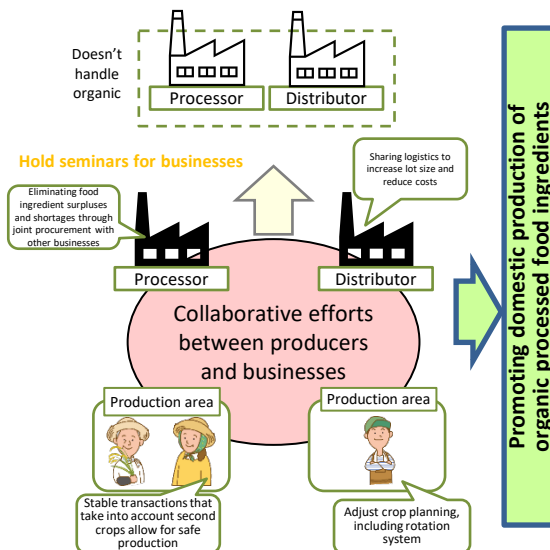


Increasing the number of organic farmers and improving yields

Organic Agriculture Support Measures by MAFF (Support for Domestic Production of Organic Processed Food Ingredients and Expanding Demand)

• Support for domestic production of organic processed food ingredients

In order to promote the replacement of imported organic processed food ingredients with domestically produced ones, MAFF supports efforts to expand production and handling of organic processed food using domestically produced organic ingredients by distribution, processing, and other businesses that are engaged in producing domestically produced organic processed food in cooperation with producers. (such as joint procurement of food ingredients and holding seminars to increase the number of businesses handling domestically produced organic foods)



➤ Increasing consumer understanding

➤ Diversifying sales opportunities

• Support for expanding demand for domestic organic farm products

In order to expand demand for domestically produced organic farm products, MAFF supports efforts to stimulate demand for domestically produced organic farm products in collaboration with retailers and other businesses that handle these products, efforts to raise awareness of organic farm products, and efforts to promote the environmental conservation benefits of organic agriculture.

Tanto Marche in the basement event space at Umeda Daimaru (from June to August, once per week) [Organizer]



Attendees: 1,000/week

Displays with organic produce and processed organic products, and sales staff use posters created by the project to explain about Organic JAS

Working with distributors, processors, retailers, and other businesses to stimulate demand, and holding seminars on the organic processed food system and labelling.

Organic Rice Flour Nare: Organic Processing Recommendations at QUESTION, Kyoto (February 25, 2023) [Organizer]



Attendees: 130

Held a lecture on how to use organic flour, a course on making bread that uses organic rice flour, and a course on making rice noodles that use organic rice.

• Support for exports

In order to expand exports of organic agricultural/livestock products and organic processed foods, MAFF supports the acquisition of Organic JAS certification and participation in export trade fairs and exhibitions

See here for examples of past initiatives ↓



See here for more details on support programs for obtaining Organic JAS certification and GAP certification ↓



• Organic Supporters

A platform for MAFF to work together with businesses to stimulate demand for domestically produced organic food



111 participating companies as of March 25, 2024

Stimulating Demand for Domestically Produced Organic Foods

- ◆ To further expand organic agriculture initiatives, MAFF has also launched the **"Japanese Organic Supporters"** platform for retailers and food service businesses who support domestically produced organic foods

Japanese Organic Supporters
is a new platform by MAFF to
work with businesses to stimulate
demand for domestically
produced organic foods!



As of March 25, 2024, the following 111 companies are participating



See here if you would
like to join Japanese
Organic Supporters →



Networks of Local Governments Considering Organic Agriculture and Regional Development

MAFF is establishing "networks of local governments considering organic agriculture and regional development" as forums for information exchanges amongst local governments that are utilizing organic agriculture to promote regional development and for local governments that are considering doing so, and is also **promoting information sharing with private companies and organizations.**

As of March 15, 2024,
101 municipalities, 24 prefectures, and 4 organizations are participating

Member municipalities	Member prefecture	Member private companies/organizations
<p>Hokkaido Abira Town Aomori Pref. Kuroishi City Gonohe Town Miyagi Pref. Tome City Akita Pref. Ogata Village Odate City Yamagata Pref. Kawanishi Town Tsuruoka City Yonezawa City Shinjo City Takahata Town Yamagata City Fukushima Pref. Bandai Town Nihonmatsu City Ibaraki Pref. Hitachiomiya City Kasama City Tochigi Pref. Oyama City Ichikai Town Shioya Town Utsunomiya City Gunma Pref. Takayama Village Kanra Town Saitama Pref. Ogawa Town Chiba Pref. Isumi City Kisarazu City Sammu City Sosa City Sakura City</p>	<p>Kanagawa Pref. Sagamihara City Odawara City Niigata Pref. Sado City Shibata City Toyama Pref. Nanto City Fukui Pref. Ikeda Town Yamanashi Pref. Hokuto City Nagano Pref. Matsukawa Town Iida City Tatsuno Town Iizuna Town Gifu Pref. Shirakawa Town Shizuoka Pref. Kakegawa City Fujieda City Aichi Pref. Togo Town Obu City Minamichita Town Mihama Town Toyokawa City Ama City Taketoyo Town Okazaki City Mie Pref. Owase City Nabari City Iga City Kyoto Pref. Kameoka City</p>	<p>Shiga Pref. Koka City Omihachiman City Hino Town Hyogo Pref. Ichikawa Town Tamba City Tamba-Sasayama City Shiso City Yabu City Awaji City Toyooka City Kamigori Town Kobe City Kato City Asago City Nara Pref. Uda City Tenri City Wakayama Pref. Wakayama City Katsuragi Town Tottori Pref. Ninichan Town Shimane Pref. Hamada City Gotsu City Yoshika Town Onan Town Oda City Okayama Pref. Wake Town Hiroshima Pref. Higashihiroshima City Jinsekikogen Town</p>

Member prefecture

Aomori Pref., Akita Pref., Yamagata Pref., Miyagi Pref., Fukushima Pref., Ibaraki Pref., Tochigi Pref., Gunma Pref., Chiba Pref., Toyama Pref., Ishikawa Pref., Fukui Pref., Nagano Pref., Aichi Pref., Shiga Pref., Hyogo Pref., Wakayama Pref., Okayama Pref., Yamaguchi Pref., Tokushima Pref., Nagasaki Pref., Kumamoto Pref., Miyazaki Pref., Kagoshima Pref.

Member private companies/organizations

Japan Organic Products Association
Iseki & Co., Ltd.
INGEN Inc.
HyperAgri, Inc.

★ Participation accepted at any time ★

Inquiries: Sustainable Agriculture Division, Crop Production Policy Department,
Crop Production Bureau (03-6744-2114)

HP : <http://www.maff.go.jp/j/seisan/kankyoyuuki/jichinet.html>



Case report seminars held

July 2023

Introducing leading-edge case studies on the theme of **"Production of organic products of plant origin and regional cooperation for expanding usage" (Organic Bridge initiatives)** (Izumotsu City, Osaka Pref., Tsuruoka City, Yamagata Pref., Sado City, Niigata Pref.)

Sept. 2023

Introducing **"Efforts by local governments that have been declared as organic villages" at the Organic Lifestyle Expo** (Kisarazu City, Chiba Pref., Kameoka City, Kyoto Pref., Tambaasayama City, Hyogo Pref.)

Jan. 2024

Held the **Organic Villages National Conference**

Municipalities

(Matsukawa Town, Nagano Pref.; Kawanishi Town, Yamagata Pref.; Hamada City, Shimane Pref.; Echizen City, Fukui Pref.; Toyooka City, Hyogo Pref.; Abira Town, Hokkaido)

Private entities

(Rakuten Farm; Jidainokai; Japan Biofarm Co., Ltd.; NPO Private Rice Research Institute; MOA Natural Farming Culture Foundation; MYFARM Inc.)

[Past]

2018

○ Preparatory meeting for establishing networks
Introduction and sharing of organic agriculture promotion initiatives from six municipalities nationwide

2019

○ **Creating organic agriculture production areas that expand from school lunches** (Isumi City, Chiba Prefecture, Togo Town, Aichi Pref.)
○ **Processed products and marketing seminar** (Kodawariya Co., Ltd.)
○ **Local government challenges to expanding sales channels for organic agricultural products** (Usuki City, Oita Prefecture, Shimane Pref.)



2020

○ **Expanding organic farming initiatives using deserted arable land** (Agreen Heart Co., Ltd., ONE DROP FARM Co., Ltd., Chiba Prefecture Organic Agriculture Promotion Council)
○ **Organic Agricultural Product Logistics Efficiency Seminar 2021** (Introduced initiatives, and presented opinions from domestic organic supporters, etc.)
○ **Use of organic produce in school lunches, networking** (hosted by Kohnsaka Laboratory, Nagoya University)



2021

○ **Expanding local consumption of organic produce, and introduction into school lunches, etc.** (Kisarazu City, Chiba Prefecture, etc.)
○ Held at **Organic Lifestyle EXPO**
○ Efforts by **local governments to support acquisition of organic farming techniques**, progress in introducing **organic ingredients to school lunches, etc.**



2022

○ **Community-wide efforts to expand organic farming, trial use of organic farming in school lunches, and introduction of smart machinery, etc.** (Kuroishi City, Aomori Pref., Hitachiomiya City, Ibaraki Pref., Komatsushima City, Tokushima Pref., etc.)
○ Held at **Organic Lifestyle EXPO**
○ Held the **Organic Villages National Conference**



(Reports from mayors of municipalities, including Minamisatsuma City, Kagoshima Pref.; Yamato Town, Kumamoto Pref.; Kisarazu City, Chiba Pref.; Takanabe Town, Miyazaki Pref.; and Uda City, Nara Pref.)