

Message from JCCU President Elect



Mr. Asada Katsumi

At JCCU's 61st General Assembly held on June 17 2011, I was elected to succeed Mr. Yamashita Toshifumi (currently JCCU advisor) as the new president.

For a little bit of history, I joined Nada Co-op (now Co-op Kobe) in 1970, thereafter, I served as the executive director, managing director and in 2004 became the chairperson until May this year. My relationship with JCCU started in 2005 when I became a standing board member and later in 2007 as the vice president.

This year's GA focused on future initiatives related to the East Japan Earthquake and Co-op vision 2020. The assembly called for further efforts from co-operatives across the nation.

Vision 2020 aims at addressing the demands of members and the community through well structured co-op business.

And again, the UN has declared 2012 the "International Year of Co-operatives" under the theme "Co-operative enterprises build a better world". JCCU and its member co-ops stands committed in making the occasion successful.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank ICA and the various co-operative organizations that have extended help through fund donation.



this issue

Dame Pauline Green visits Japan **P.1**

News from member Co-ops **P.2**

Co-op member activities **P.3**

International Day of Co-operatives **P.4**

ICA President Dame Pauline Green visits Japan

The ICA president Dame Pauline Green paid a three-day official visit to Japan. As part of her program she visited the earthquake and tsunami affected co-op organization officials in the Miyagi Prefecture, paid a courtesy call to the Ministry of Health, Labor & Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, gave a lecture followed by a press conference and held a round-table conference with the board members of Japan Joint Committee of Cooperatives (JJC) where she presented an amount of US\$500,000 as ICA contribution towards the earthquake & tsunami relief effort.

Inspection of the stricken area:

A visit to Watari town was made and Dame Pauline Green had a glimpse of the situation at the area. At the press conference she stated, *"I went to the devastated area in Watari and the scale of destruction I saw was quite shocking. You cannot intellectually understand until you see it. I want to pay tribute to the huge effort being put up there for the cleanup"*.

In Watari, the ICA President visited a strawberry farmhouse and interacted with some of the farmers who have just begun strawberry cultivation. The area, which used to be called "strawberry road" was hit by the tidal wave. Pauline Green's visit was a morale boosting for the farmers who are facing many challenges such as overlapping debt (including mortgage repayments for those whose fields were destroyed by the tsunami and more loans needed to start farming).

Visit to Arahama port in Watari:

At the port, the ICA President received explanation about the problems caused by the tsunami to the fishermen. She was told that about 95% of the fishing boat got damaged and that rubbles are still buried in the sea preventing the resumption of fishing. Maintenance of the fishing boats is also estimated to take a long time.

When asked about the role of co-operative in this great earthquake, the ICA president answered: It is important to remember the co-operative society principle and cooperate in network formation. Solidarity and cooperation form part of the cooperative DNA, which makes us different from other organizations. Donation for reconstruction exercise is necessary, however, I think there is a role more important than this, which is co-operative networking.



Visit to stricken area in Watari



Visit to Arahama port in Watari

Environmental Activity of Lara Co-op

Nakashima river quality survey

This investigation was co-sponsored by the southern area committee members of Lara Co-op and the Nagasaki city environmental preservation bureau.

On July 21, thirty-five participants (22 children and 13 adults) gathered at the Nakajima river to conduct a "water quality survey" under the supervision of a personnel from the environmental protection division.

The project was undertaken for the purpose of examining the aquatic life of the familiar river while enjoying closeness with it. This year's investigation was the third time and results confirmed some changes in the aquatic organisms, such as the habitat of "river crab", and the discovery of an alien species "the Mississippi red-eared turtle (Midorigame) 25cm".

In addition, COD (chemical oxygen demand) and nitrite (nitrogen content) check were performed, and it was confirmed that the state of the river was relatively clean.

The children and the adults that participated in conducting the biological sampling forgot the passage of time and the opportunity to become familiar about the state of the river served as a memorable summer reearch event.



Scene at the river side

Branding of "Sendai cabbage" starts

The National Federation of Agricultural Cooperative Associations in co-operation with Miyagi Co-op and other local organizations have requested producers at the tsunami-devastated coastal areas to cultivate the land for the production of Chinese cabbage under a new brand name "Sendai cabbage".

Five coastal agricultural co-operatives (Watari Miyagi, Natori Iwanuma, Sendai, Ishinomaki, Minamisanriku) are eligible for this project, aiming to cultivate 10 hectares of land, with a yearly projection of 500 tons of yield.

The Chinese cabbage is characterized by its softness and sweetness. It is produced and shipped across the country with high popularity. In this project, the seeds would be sown in August and harvesting is expected in November.

Upon harvesting, Miyagi Co-op would purchase at a fixed-price and retail at it's store outlets in Miyagi Prefecture. Miyagi Co-op would promote the product to its members, demonstrasting way of cooking through prepared recipes. According to the Bureau of Agriculture, in 15 coastal municipalities of the province, up to 12,758 hectares of farmland were flooded.



It is expected that the salinity concentration has risen in these farmlands; however, it is assumed that the Chinese cabbage is strong in salinity and there wouldn't be any loss in harvesting.

Branding Sendai Cabbage forms part of the agenda to revitalize the farming business in the region, a symbol of the earthquake disaster reconstruction, leading to the restoration of victim's life.

Baby Olympics at Ibusuki store

As part of Co-op Kagoshima's 40th anniversary, a very interesting event organized by members, the "Baby Olympic Game" was held on May 21 at Ibusuki store.

Early morning of the day parents and children gathered in front of the store's parking lot with smiles and anxiety waiting to see how the event would go. The kick-off was at 11:00, and three kinds of competition; "crawling race", "rattling race", and "quick tissue taken race" were performed.

At the same venue, local volunteers put up a "toy hospital" and organized "Earthquake Reconstruction bazaar".

Each child competitor and parents booked in advance and for the crawling and rattle races children responded to mother's voice, and stretch forth to reach the purse, the cell phone or the toys that the mother was holding.

On the other hand some of the children were amazed about the overwhelmed gallery and got covered in fear.

Overall, the event was a memorable one enabling parent-and-child interaction as well as parent-parent interaction. The event ended with smiles on the faces of all participants.



Baby Olympic Scene



Earthquake Relief Fund reaches 1.86 billion JPY

The fourth donation of 1.16 billion JPY into the fund-raising account established for the purpose of supporting the disaster victims has been made. As of June 30, 2011, JCCU has submitted a total amount of 1.86 billion JPY.

The period for the fund-raising campaign has been extended from the end of September 2011 to the end of March 2012 to ensure long-term support of the victims.

Maehara Junior High School in Funabashi organizes "Workshop on Food"

On June 23 a dietary education workshop was held at Maehara Junior High School (attendance: 600 students) with the co-operation of Chiba Co-op.

The workshop was organized in response to the growing concern about the unbalanced-diet of lunch provided by the school.

A staff from Chiba Co-op (food and nutrition division) gave a presentation, explaining the food inequality situation of the world and the national effort to raise the Japanese food self-sufficiency rate. The workshop forms part of the school's nutrition education program aiming at developing the students understanding regarding food and nutrition dynamics and to enhance the student's quality of dietary life in the high interest in the environment.

Through some games and quizzes the students learned about the importance of food and the necessity to reduce food losses.



NEWS from member Co-ops Seminar on food safety held

JCCU held a seminar on food safety on July 12, for the food safety committee members from JCCU member co-ops at JCCU headquarters. A total number of 66 from 28 member co-ops attended the seminar.

The purpose of the Seminar was to outline the food safety challenges faced by Japan as a result of the Fukushima Nuclear Crisis and to address measures to reduce anxiety.

Two major topics were discussed by two different speakers.

1. radiation and radioactive material
2. how to read and understand food safety information in relation with problems associated with radioactive materials.

The first speaker, Mr. Kobayashi Yasuhiko, a research chief from the Japan Nuclear Energy Research Center gave a presentation outlined different hazards to food safety caused by radioactive contamination and explained radiation measurement in units of Becquerel and sieverts (units that have been used frequently on the media these days).

Eco-friendly cooking

Co-op Tokyo

With so much mainstream news coverage of global warming and carbon footprints, there are other less discussed lifestyle choices that are made every day that have a huge impact on carbon emissions.

Co-op Tokyo, as part of its agenda to raise members' awareness about environmental protection has been organizing series of eco-friendly cooking classes for its members.

During one of such occasions, Ms. Taoka Kyoko who is a member of the member representative council of Co-op Tokyo, and has been involved in co-op activities for many years, gave lectures on environmental friendly cooking. She described the steps and point to promote eco-cooked food as follows:

Eco-shopping: The best foods are seasonal ingredients (less energy to grow, higher nutritional value and economical), local consumption, and buy only as needed using own shopping bags.

Eco-cooking: With limited or no food waste (neither the leaf, the skin nor the stalk are thrown away), using only electricity and gas.

Eco-clean: Efficient water usage and proper disposal of food leftovers. Save water in the washing device (wipe off the dirt before washing, use a washing bowl) discard food waste after drying (processing energy is reduced).



Scene at the seminar

The second speaker, Ms. Matsugana explained about radioactive risk from scientific view.

Radioactivity is a problem, which has come out suddenly, and many co-op members do not know what to believe and do under the present circumstances.

Through the experience and knowledge gained from this meeting food safety committee members could organize meetings at local levels to educate members to remove radiation anxiety and fears from co-op members.

After the lectures, and for practical demonstration participants prepared an eco-meal.



Scene at the Eco-friendly cooking classes



JCCU holds gender equality seminar

JCCU held a seminar on Gender Equality on June 30 2011 with the attendance of 67 members from 23 co-ops and one organization.

The purpose of the seminar was to provide a chance for representatives from JCCU member co-ops to learn about the national basic plan and co-op action plan and approach regarding gender equality with the view to enhance the promotion of gender equality in co-op.

At the beginning, Ms. Yuko Inoue, Deputy Director of Gender Equality Promotion Division of the Cabinet Office gave a lecture on "the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality".

It was followed by a report introducing JCCU's "fourth mid-term action plan for the promotion of Gender Equality.

For case example, Ms. Hisako Yoshida manager of the personnel department of Dai-ichi Mutual Life Insurance Ltd. gave a lecture about her company's efforts to promote diversity in the context of gender integration.

She mentioned that for the past 20 years the company has been committed to building women leaders in the diversification of customer needs and lifestyles.

She further stated that her company aims at promoting high-value jobs and improve the level of individual staff members through short-term "corporate business study abroad " which is part of career support programs.



Scene at the seminar

International Day of Co-operatives held

Every first Saturday of July is the International Day of Co-operatives and it is celebrated by co-operatives around the world.

This year the 89th commemoration was uniquely held on July 14, 2011 in Tokyo, Japan.

In light of the earthquake and the tsunami followed by the Fukushima Nuclear crisis this year's theme was settled on "What co-operative society can do for the earthquake disaster reconstruction".

Representatives from 63 co-operative societies in Japan totaling 550 attended the occasion.

Opening greetings was given by Mr. Katsuo Uchihashi, the nationwide planning committee chairman of IYC, followed by a report from each of the three panelists regarding updates from the quake-hit area. Based on these reports the future work by co-operatives towards the reconstruction to overcome the challenge were discussed.

Next was a panel discussion in relation to the theme by six panelists, two each from the fishery, agricultural and the consumer co-operatives with Professor Kobayashi Masaya (Chiba University Graduate School) as the coordinator.

Mr. Kumagai, the chairperson of the Fukushima Prefecture Co-operative Union reported about the collaborated effort being taken by co-op and various local organizations in tackling the mischief brought by the radioactive contamination in Fukushima.



A typical scene

Mr. Haga, the managing director of JCCU reported about the wide range of support being given by JCCU and its member co-ops towards the rehabilitation work at the stricken area. He also mentioned that within the year JCCU would present its viewpoint about the energy policy of Japan.

Professor Kobayashi concluded that the challenge confronting Japan must be regarded as personal and requires greater effort from the government, co-operatives, the private sector and individuals.

It was a very successful gathering and all the speakers gave the attendees lots of food for thought.

Countdown to International Year of Co-operatives 2012

Japanese Co-operative Societies are earnestly working towards the launch of IYC 2012. The January issue of JCCUNews reported the formation of nationwide planning committee, creation of a website and a "national call to action leaflet".

Recent developments include the production of DVD to introduction IYC at various IYC related events. The DVD was shown to the audience during the International Day of Co-operative celebrations.

Besides the national planning committee, prefectural IYC committees have also been formed consisting of representatives from

local co-operative organizations and researchers. Report from the various committees are summarized into a newsletter which is posted on the website. There are series of events underway but the ones already confirmed are listed below.

Date	Event
July 14, 2011	88 th International Day of Co-operative
Jan 13, 2012	Nationwide opening Event
July 7, 2012	The 89 th International Day of Co-operative
Nov 28, 2012	ICA-AP Forum (Kobe)

Co-op Plaza
3-29-8, Shibuya, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo, Japan 150-8913
+81(3)5778-8103 tel
+81(3)5778-8104 fax
<http://jccu.coop/eng/>
email:kokusai@jccu.coop

JCCUNews is published by the International Department.
For inquiries contact the address on the left:

Download the previous issues from:
<http://jccu.coop/eng/jccunews/index.phd>