

JCCU participates in "Eco-Products 2014"

JCCU participated in Japan's largest environmental exhibition "Eco-Products 2014" held in Tokyo Big Sight (Tokyo International Exhibition Center) from December 11 to 13, 2014.

The yearly exhibition is organized by Japan Environmental Management Association for Industry with the support of various Government Ministries and organizations, and this year's event was the 16th of its series. The theme for Eco-Products 2014 was set to be: "Discover Ideas to Change the Future!"

JCCU collaborated in this exhibition including companies in the manufacturing and retail industries in Japan. JCCU set up a booth with the theme "Choosing environmental-friendly products leads to environmental protection".

The booth consisted of three corners under separate sub-themes "forests and fields", "people and living", "the sea and the fish" featuring environmentally-friendly CO-OP products and panel display of environmental technologies and services which attracted many visitors including young students, the business people and the general public.

In addition, stage events such as quizzes and experiments using the Co-op products as well as the introduction of co-op's efforts to think about the environment in everyday life were demonstrated.

The exhibition sends out message to the world for the building of a sustainable society with the environment at the core.



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JCCU Interviews new Codex Chairperson

Mrs. Awilo Ochieng Pernet, from Switzerland, who was elected new Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in July 2014 paid a visit to Japan to participate in the 19th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia in November.

Mr. ONITAKE Kazuo and Ms. MINACHI Emi from JCCU interviewed her at the IINO Conference Center, Tokyo.

When asked about her aspirations as a chairperson, she explained the purpose of the strategic plan which advances the mandate of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during the period 2014-2019 as follows:

Strategic goal 1: establish new Codex standards by reviewing existing Codex standards based on priorities of the CAC.

Strategic goal 2: ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards.

Strategic goal 3: facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members.

Strategic goal 4: implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices.

She emphasized that in an effort of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the role that consumers play is quite large, expecting that consumer co-ops take initiative in this respect since they organize a large number of consumers.

She added that delivering the Codex Alimentarius Commission's efforts to consumers requires a "translator" who is not just a linguistic who translates from English to Japanese, but a translator of the Codex concept. This type of "translator" is required also in the area of production. Codex could help producers provide safe and high quality products only in the presence of translators.

JCCU acknowledged that international food standards have a direct impact on the members of consumer and producer co-operatives and it is for this reason that representatives of JCCU on behalf of ICA Committee on Consumer Cooperation regularly participate in meetings of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary committees since the middle of 1990's when ICA was accorded observer status by Codex.

JCCU mentioned the contribution of observers from ICA in the formulation of 3 guidelines in Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Food Derived from Biotechnology by submitting comments.

In view of increasing importance and impact of Codex in protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practice in the food trade as well as the status of ICA as the world-largest nongovernmental organization, JCCU emphasized that, not only attendance to Codex meetings but also substantial participation in Codex works would need to be considered.



Mrs. Awilo Ochieng Pernet (R) pose for a picture with Mr. Onitake

Ibaraki Prefecture Consumers' Co-op Union held lectures on Co-op

As part of post-IYC activities to promote the visibility of Co-op among the younger generation, the Ibaraki Prefecture Consumers' Co-operative Union held the 8th voluntary lecture on Co-operative business at the Ibaraki University on December 2, 2014. Mr. SATO Yoichi, the chairperson of Ibaraki Co-op was the resource person and the lecture was attended by 42 students.

Various topics of Co-op business models were introduced to the students including the home delivery business, the store business, the welfare and insurance businesses and Co-op brand product development.

The lecture also emphasized co-ops social role in community development. Also a DVD featuring the support activities that co-op nationwide offered to the affected areas of the Great East Japan Earthquake was shown to the students.

The students were impressed to see co-ops support at the affected areas, especially with the delivery of essential goods at the time that victims really needed them. There was a general feeling among the students that for co-op to stand in for members was something very valuable and important and that co-op is a connection between people.



Three Consumer Co-ops win environmental award for low carbon emission

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Japan, has announced the winners of the "Fourth Carbon Offset Award" with Co-op Sapporo, Co-op Net Business Association and Co-op Mirai receiving prizes for excellence in their carbon offset initiatives out of the 50 applications this year.

The Carbon Offset Award Program, organized by Carbon Offset Network, an organization of local governments and private companies, inaugurated in FY2011, aims to recognize outstanding entities that achieve excellence in terms of conducting carbon-offsetting efforts towards achieving a low-carbon society and to introduce specific achievements to the public as case examples.

The Environment Minister's Prize recognized Co-op Sapporo for their carbon offsetting campaign launched with the Hokkaido Government and Sapporo Breweries aimed to promote the growth of Hokkaido forests and the consumption of

local resources. The initiative resulted in 220 metric tons of CO₂ which was purchased by 3.3 million JPY and the fund used in multiple areas in the Hokkaido province for revitalization of forest.

Excellence Price was given to Co-op Net Business Association and Co-op Mirai also, which participate in the project to stop the cutting of tropical rainforests in Indonesia, Borneo Central Kalimantan from September, an activity that help to reduce greenhouse gas emission.

The initiative resulted in a reduction of 12,100 metric ton of greenhouse gas which is used to offset the total emission estimated to be discharged by the two organizations in fiscal 2014.

The award ceremony was performed in Tokyo on December 11.

Ibaraki Co-op wins the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Award

At the ceremony held on November 7, Ibaraki Co-op won the second "Dietary Education Excellent Activity Commendation Award" established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery, as an initiative to promote and boost consumption of domestic fresh produce.

The award recognized persons concerned with agriculture, forestry and fishery and food-related business operators who performed food education activities last year.

For this award 146 organizations nationwide submitted application.

The Minister's prize recognized Ibaraki Co-op for their "dietary education activities that promote local production for local consumption in collaboration with various organizations such as schools, local governments, member co-ops of Japan Agriculture (JA) and producers, while working with several groups to convey the importance of the "Japanese-style diet, providing effective dietary education to children and nurturing human resources (supporters) to promote the activities of dietary education.

At the commendation ceremony, Mr. SATO Hidemichi, the Parliamentary Vice Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries presented the award and a souvenir to Mr. SATO Yoichi, Chairperson of Ibaraki Co-op.

In addition, Ms. ICHIHARA Ruriko a board member of the co-op in-charge of the division of dietary education, as the winner of the Minister's prize, presented a case study of dietary education.



Mr. SATO Hidemichi (left) presenting the award to Mr. SATO Yoichi



Ms. ICHIHARA Ruriko (L), presenting her case study.

Co-op Mirai establishes its own fueling station

Co-op Mirai on December 1, set up its own fueling station on the site of one of its home delivery centers (Narashino center), and announced the running of the facility from December 10.

The need to build this facility is to ensure that there will be enough fuel for the home delivery vehicles to run their errands of delivering goods to members home without a halt in event of a disaster.

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, JCCU and member co-ops developed a new business continuity plan (BCP) and the issues related to logistics was given a priority.

The fuelling station has underground storage tank that could store 20 kiloliter gasoline and 10 kiloliter diesel oil. With this storage even if a large-scale earthquake disaster occurs the home delivery business around the area would continue the delivery of goods to the members.

The station covers home delivery centers within the 30 kilometer radius in Chiba and Tokyo area, and can refuel delivery vehicles of them. It has a reserve capacity of approximately 2 weeks delivery.

Co-op Mirai plans to set up a similar facility that could serve part of Tokyo and Saitama areas.



Self-refueling facility installed in Co-op Deli Narashino Center.

Product Inspection Center tour by elementary school children

As part of summer vacation activities for children, U CO-OP organized on August 6 and 8, a study tour to its Product Inspection Laboratory located in Atsugi, Kanagawa Prefecture, where various inspections are conducted to promote food safety and security.

On August 6, sixty-one people (32 adults 29 children), including family members and co-op members took part in the tour.

The participants were conducted around under seven different themes including, hand washing experience, radioactivity inspection, odor experience, microscopic and microorganism testing experience.

In both days participants were able to inspect and touch inspection equipment directly. They experienced the strict measures under which co-op products are tested before being sold to co-op members through the store and the home delivery outlets.

The children were given the chance to perform simple test. Through this opportunity the children deepened their understanding about the importance of food safety.



Participants receiving explanation



Participants pose for a group picture

Co-op Kobe starts personalized coupon service experiment

For the purpose of attracting more customers to Co-op Kobe stores, and as a new means to enhance communication with the members, the co-op in collaboration with NTT West Japan have begun a personalized coupon service experiment to issue individual coupons in accordance with the purchase history of the user.

Starting from October 2014, a coupon issue terminal (kiosk ticketing terminal) has been installed in each of 5 stores of Co-op Kobe to begin the ticketing experiment which will run through May 31, 2015.

During the store visit, upon holding one's member's card against the ticketing terminal that is installed in the store, coupons are issued on the spot by reading the bar code on the member's card.

By presenting the coupon to the cashier when shopping, the user receives the point. An issued coupon can be used from the day of issue and expires in a week.

On the average, between 20% to 40% of members visiting the store use the coupon service.

Because it is simple mechanism of just holding the member's card, both the elderly and children can smoothly use coupon ticketing terminal.

The purchasing data of the 5 stores is being analyzed to find out how the coupon ticketing is influencing the sales performance as well as the frequency of members visit.

In the future, in order to attract internet users to the real store, Co-op Kobe will deliver QR code through e-mail magazines, and expand the structure of coupon issue with QR cord displayed on internet terminals including cell-phones and tablets.



Coupon terminal that holds members card

Delegates from Finland Co-op visit JCCU

On November 20, 2014, six Board Members of the North Karelia Coop, Finland, paid a visit to JCCU after their board meeting held in Tokyo.

The purpose of the visit was to learn about the consumer co-operative business and membership.

The North Karelia consumers' cooperative is one of the local consumers' cooperatives in the North Karelia Prefecture in eastern Finland, with the goal of contributing attractive service and value to the members of the association, through running businesses such as store operation, hotel restaurants and service stations.

After being welcomed by the president of JCCU, Mr. ASADA Katsumi, the delegates received the outline explanation of JCCU and the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative business.

They later paid a study visit to U Co-op Idasanmai store where they were impressed about the various assortment of goods, variety of CO-OP products and different kinds of ready meal.



State of Store Visits



Mr. ASADA, (3rd from left) poses for a group picture with the delegates.

JCCU will continue to cooperate with cooperative-related institutions both at home and abroad.

News in Brief

ICA-AP Training Program for Managers of Consumer Co-ops

The second batch of the 2014 training program for managers of consumer co-operatives organized by ICA-AP in collaboration with Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) was held from November 8-22. Co-op Kobe and the Co-op Net Business Association provided the training grounds, the facilities and resource persons.

Five co-operative staff from NTUC FairPrice Singapore (Mr. CHONG Chie Siang, Mr. TAN Wei Heng & Mr. YAP Yaozong Victor), Saigon Coop (Mr. NGUYEN Huu Dai & Mr. NGUYEN Tien Dung) attended the training program which was designed to cover the training proposals requested by the trainees.

Upon arrival, the trainees received a 2-day orientation course at JCCU headquarters, where they received lectures on the outline and the product development policy of JCCU.

At the Co-op Net Business Association, they received explanation on the structure of the business association and their social and environmental initiatives. They later paid study visits to Co-op Net eco-center and Saitama Co-op Futatsumiya store to gain more understanding about Co-op Net business.

In Co-op Kobe, after being introduced the outline of the organization, they received various lectures including "business reform in store operation", "quality assurance", "staff education", "home delivery business" and a practical training at a store.

Since the competition environment in the retail industry of both Singapore and Vietnam is severe, the trainees enthusiastically discussed and shared views on how to improve staff skills to add more value to customer service to enhance their competitiveness.

At the end of the training, an action plan was drawn by the trainees to address what they intend achieving upon returning to their home countries. They returned home on November 23.



Experiencing store operational activities



Co-op Kobe executives and trainees pose for a group picture after action plan presentation

Season's Greetings to all our readers

As this is the last newsletter before the New Year, it seems a good opportunity to thank you all for your interest and reading of JCCU News over the past years.

In this season of gratitude, we are thankful for your friendship and support.

All of us at JCCU especially the International Department join in saying "Thank you" and wish you all a Happy Holiday and Fruitful New Year.

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