

Earthquake Relief Donation to Miyagi Prefecture

On 13 March, just two days following the earthquake, JCCU made the decision to launch assistance activities among consumer co-ops nationwide. Thereafter, JCCU commenced preparations so that the most essential relief supplies would reach disaster victims at the earliest stage possible, coordinating with the disaster management headquarters of Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures. Besides the material supplies, JCCU also launched a fund raising campaign with its member Co-ops. The amount of fund drawn to the fund-raising account established by JCCU is 920 million yen as of May 12, 2011.

Mr. Yamashita, the president of JCCU visited the Miyagi Prefectural government following the first presentation to Fukushima Prefecture (April 5) and Iwate Prefecture (April 13), and presented the fund-raising amount of 150 million yen to the sub-governor Mr. Masahiro Wako on May 10, 2011. Prior to the presentation, Mr. Yamashita introduced Co-op's initiatives to help the victims. Mr. Wako expressed his thanks for the support from the Co-op.



Mr. Yamashita (left) presenting the donation to Mr. Wako



Miyagi Co-op Disaster Management Headquarters

this issue

Business plan for 2011 **P.1**

News about effect of the quake **P.2**

Co-op members support activity **P.3**

Reconstruction effort **P.4**

Disaster response and business plan for 2011



Mr. Kazuhiro Yano MD/CEO

2011 began with a state of emergency in the Great Tohoku Earthquake response. However, the business plan and budget for Vision 2020 had been formulated earlier and discussed before the earthquake.

This earthquake has raised various issues related to the foundation of co-operatives. We are now facing the challenge of rebuilding the lives of the victims in the stricken area through co-op business. JCCU and member co-ops recognize this as one of the top priorities in 2011 business plan.

2011 is the year to finalize the first step of the 2020 Vision of Consumer Co-ops nationwide. The details in the vision have been put together by the collective effort of co-op members, staff and officials from across the nation. It is also a year to lay out a road map to meet our goal by standing on the achievement in 2010.

The basic understanding of the proposed vision and key words are "to demonstrate the role of co-operatives to meet the demands of a new era and to serve the needs of the union members".

In the 11th mid-term plan twelve priority issues of Japanese Consumer Co-op's were raised.

1. *Strengthening of co-op products, daily foods and freshness*
2. *Turnaround of the store business*
3. *Profitability maintenance of the home delivery business, expanding membership*
4. *Quality control & Risk communication*
5. *Expanding policy holders of mutual life insurance*
6. *Turnaround of welfare & housing businesses*
7. *Human resources development and strengthening internal controls and management structure*
8. *Greenhouse gas reduction plan*
9. *Strengthening Business Alliance*
10. *Revitalizing the member organization and leadership training*
11. *Promoting community building*
12. *Sharing of vision*

We regard the International Year of Co-operatives as the first step to realize our 2020 Vision. With necessary measures for IYC, we will improve our transparency and promote some key tasks such as the amendment of the Co-op Law.

For the victims to rebuild lives:

With the solution to the problems of the nuclear crisis still uncertain, the anxiety at the stricken area continues especially for those victims who have lost their property and job. Most victims are under serious stress and they require psychological care.

Many relief assistance is coming from across the nation as well as from the world to the stricken area, however, regarding the extent of the damages it is difficult to say whether all the needs of the victims could be met or not. The situation still requires long-term commitment.

Co-op will continue with its effort to supply relief items, raise fund and support victims through co-op business activities.

School kids visit the atomic bomb site of Hiroshima

In order to get the next generation children to think about the importance of peace and to know that some people in Hiroshima are still suffering from the aftereffects of the atomic bomb, five elementary school children from the fifth grade to the first grade of junior high-school together with two secretariat visited the atomic bomb site of Hiroshima.

On the first day a visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum was made where the children had the chance to listen to stories of the survivors.

During the second day a fieldvisit to the monument in the city of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was made.

One of the participated schoolchildren commented that, "until today I though I knew about atomic bomb, but of the truth there are many more things that I don't know. It was good to see many things and to touch them in this field visit. It has been a good experience for me."



Chicken branding in the Tohoku Region halted by the March 11 earthquake

The earthquake and subsequent tsunami have had a significant effect on the poultry industries in the Miyagi and Iwate prefectures in the Tohoku region.

Feed manufacturing facilities that exist in the region were impacted so much that they were unable to raise their own brand of formula feed for poultry for an appreciable length of time.

Under the circumstances the facilities were forced to use domestic feed blend for poultry and sold them as domestic chicken rather than house brand product.

The Tohoku region ranks third in Japan for the production and shipment of original brand chicken. With the area devastated by the tsunami the earliest time to resume shipments of chicken brand would be around the end of June for the fastest companies.

Major chicken egg farming company Jumonji (Ninohe, Iwate Prefecture) was not able to secure the special feed for the production of brand chicken until the end of April.

The supply of the formula feed was stopped a week after the earthquake of March 11. 160 million birds out of 740 million died under this circumstance.

To compensate for the lack of growth in chickens, the growth period until shipping is extended.

The operation of the meat processing plant was also reduced to two to three days a week.

According to the production manager of the plant, full production at the plant could only be realized by the end of June.



Scene of devastated Kamaishi plant

Co-op Sapporo has three designated production sites in Iwate, Miyagi and Aomori for the production of "Co-op Michinoku chicken" however with the current situation proving difficult for the standard based production, the product is sold not as a Co-op specific product but as any other domestic product.

The main manufacturing facilities of the feed blend is located in ports of Hachinohe, Kamaishi, Ishinomaki, Shiogama and Sendai which were all devastated by the earthquake and the tsunami. All activities in the plants were temporarily shut down.

The earthquake damaged Kamaishi Plants but has since resumed manufacturing and shipping, although it is not fully recovered yet.

For the Kamaishi plant that has a capacity of about 20,000 tons per month, restart of full operation is expected in September for the simplest feed production. Deputy Director of production department explains "the restoration of the mechanical recovery of the plant is more necessary to mix the ingredients to suit the special needs of sub-contractors for each poultry".

Call on Co-op members nationwide to conserve power

The nuclear power plant accident and the accompanying power shortages will redefine the ways in which life and society must go without the over-dependence on electricity.

This summer the government has announced electricity rationing which will not only affect East Japan but the whole nation.

Two Power Companies in the eastern Japan have put restriction to the maximum use of electric power. The percentage of reduction is set uniform at 15% for both household and companies.

Co-op is calling on its members across the nation to promote energy saving initiatives. JCCU will provide energy-saving advice by proposing concrete actions such as turning off lights in rooms where no one is there, stop the use of electric kettle, rice warming, toilet seat warming, unplug to eliminate standby power and the replacement of bulbs for LED illumination.

JCCU will also ensure that consumer co-ops nationwide execute the electricity shortage measures carry out in eastern Japan.

Cutting back on electricity use must be very difficult since the condition falls short to our previous energy savings measures and requires drastic measures in all our business areas. We will advance it while promoting understanding with our members regarding any inconvenience to them.

Member's power even in the time of emergency

Shoichi Nemoto
Store support department

I left for Iwate on March 15, for support activities. At the time that I went, the most important task was to send relief supplies to the victims.

Some local governments in the coastal area had gotten such huge damages that they were unable to provide their normal services. With lack of communication tools, Iwate Co-op's headquarters in the midland (Takizawa) was unable to gain accurate information from the coastal area. Therefore we visited the damaged area to map where the evacuation centers were. Though we couldn't specify the location of all of the evacuation centers, the mapping was a great help to deliver relief supplies.

Other than food, the most welcomed supplies were fuels. Iwate is one of the biggest prefectures in Japan. Sometimes it takes a couple of hours to deliver goods from Iwate Co-op headquarters to the coastal area. Many evacuees welcomed delivery of fuels. Though it pains me that the fuel also helped cremation of the people killed by the disaster.

Co-op members made a significant contribution to support victims. Everyday early in the morning 3000 rice balls were made for the evacuees staying in the evacuation centers. The regional committee members gathered information from the local government about changing situation of the evacuation centers.

Iwate Co-op became famous by offering a grocery van business. A member's opinion triggered the service to start. While the evacuation centers received many relief supplies, there were many people staying in their home without enough to eat. We want to help these people too. Our members' power is always helpful, even in such time of emergency.

Co-op members show support and warm wishes to earthquake-devastated city "Asahi" through rice planting

About 170 years ago one Oohara Yugaku devoted himself to the reform of agricultural technology and improvement of farm village life. With this connection, ninety-six family members of co-op participated and transplanted rice seedlings traditionally on Wednesday May 4 at a rice paddy.

The objective of this event was to promote exchange between farming villages and cities through rice planting, and was sponsored by the "rice-making exchange committee" of the Asahi city Urban Agriculture Fishing Exchange Council in cooperation with Chiba Co-op and other organizations.

In all, four projects were implemented, from planting to harvesting, enabling participants to experience the "importance of agriculture" and richness of nature" and deepening their understanding of food.



Rice planting scene



Participants pose in group photograph



Cheering up Asahi city through rice planting

On the day of the event, 220 people including Chiba Co-op and the general public participated.

At the beginning, the participants received instructions about how to plant the seedling and immediately after that the actual planting in the rice paddy began.

It was a funny feeling for most of them to have put their feet into the mud for the first time. Some of them slipped into the mud and got dirty while others shouted for help.

In all, it took about an hour to do the hand planting. After that, they all had lunch together with smiles indicating their satisfaction for the day's event.

Finally, the participants expressed their gratitude and support to Asahi city which was devastated by the East Japan Great Earthquake on March 11, by handing to the organizers a colored paper on which they've written "Fight Asahi".

The event was brought to an end with great satisfaction.

Power UP! East Japan (CO-OP Product campaign)

Period: 2011 - 2012 fiscal year

JCCU launches this campaign with the cooperation of member co-ops to promote business continuity and to support job security at the earthquake stricken area.

Co-op facilities such as product manufacturing plants and some of co-op suppliers have suffered damages and this campaign form part of the restoration exercise. Through the campaign co-op expresses its sympathy to victims of the stricken area, affected co-op and the manufacturing plants.

The campaign will also serve as a means to disseminate information regarding the resumption of production of CO-OP products and others to co-op members.

The proceeds of the promotion will be used as a relief fund to support the activities at the stricken area.

Government Reconstruction effort at the stricken area

A rehabilitation planning committee has been established as an advisory body of the Prime Minister and a proposal for the rehabilitation of the local community and industry is being put together which would be submitted by the end of June.

In addition, a basic fundamental bill for the rehabilitation exercise is being prepared which would be passed sooner or later.

At the beginning of May, the first supplementary budget for infrastructure restoration, processing of rubble and for the construction of the temporary housing totaling four trillion yen was approved.

Two months have passed since the earthquake but still more than 99,000 people are pressing for a shelter life.

Moreover, many survivors have lost their job since there is no prospect of recovery of some of the companies and factories in the stricken area.

The reconstruction effort must be intensified and as early as possible to remove the anxiety from many people who have been rendered homeless and without job as a result of this catastrophe.

Announcement:

The 61st Annual General Assembly of the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) will be held in Tokyo on June 17.

Major agenda includes:

1. The endorsement of the first bill detailing Co-op Vision for 2020.
2. The endorsement of the 11th mid-term plan
3. The endorsement of JCCU's plan for the Great Tohoku Earthquake.

Request to the Government for the strengthening of the food pollution problem by the radioactive material

Mr. Toshifumi Yamashita, President of JCCU on April 27, paid a visit to the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr. Tetsuro Fukuyama to request for Government directions on the issue about food contamination caused by the release of radioactive materials following the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident.

Mr. Yamashita disclosed that the nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Plant should be tackled at its early stages in order to prevent rumor of the food contamination by the radioactive material. Immediate action will dissolve the anxiety of consumers refusing to eat food items produced from the stricken area. To prevent damage to the reputation of food from the area, the following requirements were made:

1. Strengthen the inspection and the monitoring of food.
2. Take appropriate measures such as restrictions and monitoring of shipment
3. Comprehensive and accurate dissemination of information to the consumer and the general public

Furthermore, Mr. Yamashita, requested that shipping restrictions and other measures be taken under adequate communication with producers, so that the food circulated in the market would be eaten at ease.



Mr. Yamashita (second right) handed the request book to Mr. Fukuyama, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary (left).

The Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary mentioned that the government has instituted a policy that embraces most of the measures that Mr. Yamashita has requested.

The policy includes, the inspection and monitoring studies that are dedicated to providing accurate information.

The secretary requests the cooperation of various groups and organizations in the future and pledges his support and continuing work with co-op in areas of common interest.

Miyagi Co-op, Hebita store starts activity at the child friendly space

Consumer Co-ops promote child-friendly society through organizing child-raising circles by member volunteer groups at the member meeting rooms in the co-op store. Since the March 11 earthquake the activity could not be carried on at the stricken areas because of the damages impacted on the stores.

From April 20, the child-raising saloon in the city of Ishinomaki Hebita stores started.

Volunteer "Nursery staffs" were able to meet kids after more than a month break. Participating in this circle activity removes the psychological impacts that the horrific disaster may bear on children.



Scene at the child-raising salon

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>