

2014 FY Business Statistics of Consumer Co-ops

The fiscal 2014 business financial highlight was released by JCCU on September 29.

The nationwide consumer co-ops (571 co-ops, including Health and Welfare Co-ops and the University Co-ops) recorded a total business turnover of 2,704 billion JPY, an increase of 0.7% compared to the previous year. The net profit also increased by 36.6% to a value of 46.7 billion JPY recording the growth in both the turnover and the profit for two consecutive years.

Consumer Co-op membership nationwide became 27.8 million (101.7% compared with the previous year). Among them, the membership of the community-based co-ops became 20.58 million (102.3% compared with the previous year), and household subscription rate came to 36.5 percent (0.5 point increase).

The home delivery business sales which account for approximately 60% of the total sales of the community-based co-ops recorded an increase of 1.5% (101.5% year-on-year) to a value 1.69 trillion JPY. The individual delivery sales alone increased by 4.0% to a value of 1.19 trillion JPY.

The total turnover of the community-based store business, with 978 store outlets and a total sales floor area of 1.25 million square meters, was 873.5 billion JPY (99.2% compared with the previous year).

On the other hand the sales for the welfare business continued to expand to a value 19.3 billion JPY (up 104.3% compared with the previous year).



Major CSR Activities of Consumer Co-ops in 2014

JCCU has issued 2015 CSR report summarizing the social initiatives of JCCU and its member co-ops across the country in the area of business and member activities in the fiscal 2014.

This section of the news introduces the initiatives that were carried out in fiscal 2014 to help realize a sustainable society.

Earthquake relief activities

Co-op continued the relief activities in the "East Japan Earthquake" reconstruction work. The "Co-op Action Campaign" launched in January 2012 to raise funds for specific issues concerning the reconstruction exercise realized an amount of 116 million JPY between the period April 2014 and March 2015 for supporting the Fukushima Children's Recreation Project and others. Approximately 1,955 people participated in the events of "Resort Project for Fukushima children".

Also the consumer co-ops engaged in business and activities in the affected areas wrestled for Diet petition signature for the expansion of the support system that matches the state of affairs of persons who suffered from the earthquake and tsunami.

Regional Protection activities

Consumer Co-ops expanded concluding watching agreement with the local governments for the elderly and community members living alone through the co-op home delivery business. As of March 2015, 83 Co-ops nationwide are watching a total of 26 prefectures and 745 city and district municipalities in the country.

Welfare activities

As part of co-ops life support and welfare activities a new business model has been launched that provides total management and support for home delivery meal operations, ranging from menu ordering to processing and delivery.

The dinner delivery service is now engaged by 48 co-ops in 44 prefectures with daily delivery of 100,000 meals nationwide in fiscal 2014.

Operating mobile shops are also responsible for regeneration of the local community.

The service is being provided in 16 municipalities with the participation of 29 co-ops and total use of 144 cars/vans as of September 2015.

Child rearing support

On child support, co-ops childcare support program such as salon for parents and children to encourage children's free activity and interchange as well as parent's spontaneous mutual learning and daycare nursery facilities provided by some consumer co-ops have been expanded.

In the fiscal 2014 "child rearing saloon" was held in 57 co-ops across the country with 150,000 parent-child participation.

On environment

Consumer Co-ops commitment in promoting enlightening activities to shift to alternative energy, while reducing environmental load from its operations have been advanced.

Topics that received high praise include Co-op Sapporo's carbon offsetting efforts through working together with the local government of Hokkaido and affiliates to create forests and the eco-center (recycling facility) efforts by some consumer co-ops. The waste generated by co-op business and in members' homes are collected, condensed and processed to be shipped to a recycler.

The eco-center provides facility tours, and has served a role in the total environmental education of members, school children and students, people related to vendors and local governments.

In 2014 there were 19 visits to Co-op Sapporo's eco-center by a total of 237 guests.

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Co-op Kobe wins "Environmental Award"

Co-op Kobe, won the semi-grand prize of "2015 fiscal Osaka Environmental Award" at the awards ceremony held at the Osaka Prefectural Government main building on September 14, 2015.

The Co-op was recognized for its comprehensive effort in recycling activities, including the "My Bag Campaign" a movement that aimed at the reduction of waste particularly the reduction of the use of plastic bags started in 1978.

The award recognized Co-op Kobe for having instituted measures to reduce the environmental burden resulting from its business activities through recycling, and having been organizing learning sessions for renewable energy as well as its forest preservation and biodiversity conservation activities in the co-op forest.

Co-op Kobe wins "Dietary Education Excellence Activity Commendation Award"

In a similar ceremony held on September 10, Co-op Kobe won the third "Dietary Education Excellence Activity Commendation Award" established by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, as an initiative to promote and boost consumption of domestic fresh produce.

Co-op Kobe was recognized for (1) promoting dietary exchanges, cooking classes and study meetings with the producers. (2) Practicing food education activities to promote and boost consumption of fish in the Hyogo Prefecture, through the food chain. (3) Promoting dietary education activities in the environmental symbiosis type farm "eco farm".

New release "CO-OP mixed nuts"

JCCU has released a milk flavored drink product "CO-OP mixed nuts" on October 1, 2015. The product is marked as being health-conscious.

In recent years, nuts is attracting more attention especially among our members having strong consciousness to health. To answer members quest for nut milk "CO OP mixed nuts" has been developed.

"CO OP mixed nuts" is a drink made mainly with four different types of nuts; almonds, cashew nuts, hazelnuts, and macadamia nuts, providing a feeling of vegetable milk flavored beverage.

Per one pack of 125 ml, approximately 3.7 g of nuts is roasted, grinded and emulsified by adding starch syrup into a paste. The fragrant flavor of the nuts gives it a good taste.

In addition, since milk and soybean has not been used as part of the raw materials, people with milk and soybean allergy can enjoy this milk-flavored drink.

Furthermore, since it is blended vitamin E8mg, it is recommended for those who want to take vitamin E.

The product has been put on sale at co-op stores and home delivery outlets.



JCCU extends support to WFP project in Ghana

In September 2014, Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and its member Co-ops in co-operation with the Japan Association for the World Food Program (JAWFP) launched the "CO-OP × Red Cup campaign" to extend support to the "school lunch program" in the Republic of Ghana. Red cup is the symbol of this program.

In this campaign one yen from the sale of target CO-OP products is donated to WFP for the WFP School meal program.

The first phase of the campaign was executed in September 2014 realizing an amount of 2.5 million JPY which supported about 70,000 meals for the School Meal program.

The school feeding project would run for three years till 2016.

The 2015 "Red Cup campaign" has just been started from October 1 to November 20 with 11 target items and an estimated donation target of 3.0 million JPY.

Through this campaign, JCCU anticipates nutritional improvement of children that will lead to the enhancement in the enrollment rate and the attendance rate of girls children.

Social contribution donation with products is an initiative of consumer co-ops to extend social services beyond Japan.



Campaign target products

So far JCCU has been advancing this initiative in three main themes of "education", "environment" and "food" in fulfillment of its social commitment as stated in co-ops vision 2020.

Currently, in addition to the "CO-OP × Red Cup campaign", JCCU is advancing initiatives, such as the "CO-OP CoreNon Smile School project" that aims to improve the education environment for school kids in Angola, the "Co-op Environmental Donation Campaign" that supports environmental groups engaged in preservation activities in and outside Japan.

Co-op Board Members Exchange Meeting Held

On September 18, 2015, an exchange meeting for 41 Co-op Board members were organized by the Nara Prefectural Consumer Co-operative Union to provide an opportunity for them to reconsider the value of co-op and co-operative movement in general.

This is the fifth time the exchange meeting has been held with the planning committee formed by the member co-ops in the prefecture.

Dr. TAKASHI Sugimoto, Professor at the Kansai University Faculty of Commerce was invited as the resource person.

He spoke on the title "Thinking about what Co-op is and its role in the community". Under this he mentioned the fact that many people do not know that co-operative is a non-profit organization while stressing the role required by co-op as stated in the co-operative principles.

This time board directors from 4 co-ops (Co-op Shizenha, Consumer Co-op Seikatsu club, Nara Co-op and the Nara prefectural health and welfare co-op) together with co-op staff actively participated in the meeting.

The second half was a workshop in which participants were divided into groups, sharing their impressions, the advantages of co-op in their personal lives and the community as a whole.

The board members reaffirmed their continuing effort to promote activities that would enhance the development of the social economy in the region.



Scene of the meeting

African Co-operative Leaders Study Tour to Japan

JCCU has been cooperating in the activities of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Office in Japan, since 2010 in organizing study tour to Japan for African Co-operative leaders with the aim to assist the human resource development of co-operatives in Africa.

This year, four senior co-operative leaders from four African countries, the Republics of Kenya, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Kingdom of Lesotho took part in the study tour for ten days from August 31 to September 9 2015.

The participants were Ms. Anne Nyawira Wanjohi, from 2NK Sacco Society Co. Ltd, Kenya, Ms. Farai Mtawa, from Municipality of Harare Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Ltd., National Association of Cooperative Savings and Credit Union of Zimbabwe (NACSCUZ), Zimbabwe, Ms. Marie Solange Uwanyirigira, from Control Committee of Tea Grower's Cooperative Federation, Rwanda and Mr. Thabo Edwin Shale, from Cooperative Lesotho Ltd., Lesotho.

They arrived on August 31 and the next day a short opening ceremony was organized at COOP PLAZA where the president of JCCU, Mr. ASADA Katsumi and the Director of the ILO Office in Tokyo, Ms. KAMIOKA Keiko welcomed them.

The study tour consisted of lectures, visits to cooperatives, institutions and discussion sessions.

The participants had lectures on the Japanese consumer co-operative movement including governance in Japanese consumer cooperatives.

They also visited variety of co-operatives in Tokyo and the Saitama prefectures such as the Workers Co-op, JA Saitama Hibikino (agricultural co-op), Co-op Net Business Federation (consumer co-op), the Ooizumi Hospital (healthcare co-op), the Norinchukin Research Institute Co. Ltd (JA group bank), the National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Co-operatives (Zenrosai, insurance co-op), National Association of Labor Banks and the Tokyo University Consumer Co-op.

As a part of the training, a public seminar was held in Co-op Plaza, JCCU Headquarters in Tokyo on September 8 which was attended by 35 people.

Participants gave a brief report about the status of co-operatives in their respective countries, and what they have learned through visits and training of this tour especially how the experience got will lead to the improvement of their organizational management and development of the business after returning home.



Picture of the 4 participants during debriefing of the program



Visit to Co-op Mirai Home delivery center



Visit to Co-op Mirai store in Saitama



Participants pose in a picture after the public seminar with, Mr. Ramoetsi Richard Ramoetsi the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho 5th from (R), Mr. WADA Toshiaki, Managing Director JCCU, 4th from (R), and Ms. KAMIOKA Keiko the Director of the ILO Office in Tokyo, 3rd from (R).

Okayama Co-op held Co-op Festa 2015

On September 26, Okayama Co-op held "Co-op Festa 2015", which is an event with a focus on food, in the Convex Okayama Exhibition Hall. It was crowded with about 20,000 visitors.

The event was held intending to promote the loyalty of members and non-members for CO-OP products. About 130 CO-OP Brand product manufacturing companies including "Sanchoku" producers took part in the exhibition.

A variety of events under different themes were organized in the booths. In the booth where food tasting and the sales of CO-OP products and "Sanchoku" products were held, visitors were given the chance to interact with the producers and listened to the commitment to safety and security being practiced by each producer at the production site.

In addition, there were other events such as collaboration booth with local governments which focused on "food education".

There were also events such as stamp rally, international cooperation and support activity through UNICEF donation, earthquake reconstruction support booth and a call for "the Kanto and Tohoku flood emergency fund-raising" by the typhoon No. 18.



Scene at the exhibition



News in Brief

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

On September 18, 2015, the Yamagata Consumers' Co-operative Union held the 2015 Co-operative lecture under the theme "Sustainable Regional Development".

The Chief Director of the Co-operative Research Institute, Mr. OKAYASU Kisaboro was the resource person.

While researching on the type of work that is helpful to the people and the community, he questioned the way work is done in the present age by making reference to the challenges of workers co-op. He mentioned that the history of workers co-op in Japan began from the trade union movement of the unemployed in the 1970's and 80's and now there are more than 500 offices nationwide with about 12,000 workers and business turnover of 30.4 billion JPY.

Making reference to the present socio-economic problems in Japan such as the declining birthrate and aging society, isolation of the elderly and the Japan's employment problem particularly with the increase in non-regular employment, makes workers co-op a unique organization required by the people and the community.

The role of workers co-ops in providing jobs is becoming increasingly important. He described a sustainable community development as one that involves multi-generational, and a variety of people creating together emphasizing on recognizing the diversity and creating an environment where all people can exert their power and influence by identifying the community task and researching the type of work that can support the living of the people in the community.

About 70 people, consisting of co-op members, co-op executives and employees took part in the lectures.



5ADAY food education experience tour

This year, as part of Miyagi Co-op's summer program, the co-op organized a "5ADAY food education experience tour" for elementary school children in three of its stores in Nagamachi, Ishinomaki and Sendai. The "5ADAY nutrition education program" encourages school children to eat at least five servings (350 grams) of vegetables and 200 grams of fruits every day.

The first tour which was held for three days (July 13, 14 and September 2) was participated by 98 students. The second tour also held for three days (September 7,9 and 10) attracted 116 student participants and the last one held on September 17 and 18 for two days was participated by 68 students bringing the total number of participation to 282 students.

In the beginning, the store manager explained the concept of Miyagi Co-op "Megumino" which is a social movement of local production for local consumption aiming at promoting healthy

dietary life of its members and assuring food security.

The dietary program appealed the importance of taking vegetables and fruits to make a healthy body. The students were also shown how to eat 350 grams vegetables in easy to understand ways through a shopping game.



Scene at the Ishinomaki tour

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