

JCCU gives a lecture on Co-op

As a part of post-IYC activities, ITO Jiro, manager of the Public Relations Division of JCCU gave a lecture on Co-operative at the law faculty of Kanagawa University on June 5 2013.

200 students attended the lecture and eagerly listened to various topics of co-op model of business including history, values and principles, business types and co-ops social role in community development. The lecture also emphasized on the role co-op nationwide played during the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The students were surprised to know the size of consumer co-operatives in Japan, having over 25 million individual members, the fact that there are co-operatives in other foreign countries, and the involvement of co-op members in business and co-op activities.

The students expressed their appreciation towards the lectures and some commented that they now know and understand the difference between joint-stock company and co-operative. Besides, some of the students mentioned their interest to work with co-op in the future.

The lecture was organized as part of the post-IYC programs to increase co-ops visibility to the younger generation.



ITO Jiro (Manager PR Division)



International Day of Co-operatives held in Tokyo

International Co-operative Day is an anniversary for the co-operative movement, observed on the first Saturday of July, with the goal of promoting peace and a better world. This year, it was celebrated on July 6, with the theme "Co-operative Enterprise Remains Strong in Time of Crisis".

To celebrate this international anniversary, Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives (JJC) and Co-operatives Japan (National Co-operatives Alliance replacing the Japan National Planning Committee for IYC 2012) held the 91st International Day of Co-operatives Commemorative Forum on July 26 at the Nikkei Conference Room in Tokyo.

The theme of the Forum was "Reconstruction Efforts by Japanese Co-operatives after the Great East Japan Earthquake".

Approximately 250 participants from co-operative and other organizations, academicians and the press attended the event.

At the 91st Forum, Mr. BANZAI Akira, President of the Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA ZENCHU), Chairman of the JJC and Representative of the Co-operatives Japan, made his opening remarks, followed by a message from Dame Pauline Green, President of ICA.

Prof. KOYAMA Ryota, the associate professor of Fukushima University, also gave a keynote speech entitled "Report on Support Activities for the Reconstruction of Fukushima after the Earthquake and How Co-operatives Can Contribute".

It was followed by a panel discussion. Panelists from consumer, agricultural, workers and fisheries co-operatives presented their activities concerning the reconstruction and revival of the communities in Tohoku area after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Ms. NUMAKURA Yuko, Vice Chairperson of Miyagi Consumer Co-op, represented consumer co-op sector as a panelist, and made a brief speech on

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Miyagi Co-op's contribution to the recovery from the earthquake and what they learned from the support activities.

Then, Prof. Koyama also acted as a facilitator at a panel discussion where the panelists exchanged their views on how co-operatives can collaborate in time of crisis.

Finally members of JJC and Co-operatives Japan formally agreed to strengthen their collaboration and partnerships in implementing concrete measures for the reconstruction, taking this event as the starting point.

The Forum was closed with the ending remarks extended by Mr. ASADA Katsumi (President of Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union), Vice Chairman of the JJC and Vice Representative of the Co-operatives Japan. This forum gave Japanese cooperators an opportunity to recognize the importance of social responsibility of co-operatives and a need to further strengthen their collaboration for the development of the community.



ASADA Katsumi, President JCCU



Scene of the panel discussion

Co-op Mirai embarks on the construction of senior housing

Co-op Mirai (HQ Saitama-shi) has started housing business for senior individuals.

The construction of the first senior housing with care service started on July 4. It is scheduled to be opened in August next year.

This is the first senior housing business of the Co-op, which has engaged in care and welfare businesses such as home-help service and day-care service.

The new housing business is in response to senior members request for a place to live with a feeling of security.

The former site of a delivery center is used for the construction.

With the gross floor space of about 3,300 square meters, the total number of individual rooms will be 60.

It is estimated that the project would cost 700 million yen.

Co-op Mirai is positive about further expansion of the business in other areas in which it operates.

The building will have a home nursing station, a care center, and a day service center.

The facility will be opened to the community through its club activities that will allow both residents and the community members to participate.

It will provide services unique to Co-op such as prepared meals using Co-op products and home delivery service.



Image of the senior housing upon completion. Site location is Yotsukaido.

300 Co-op staff certifies disaster prevention in Co-op Nationwide

As a part of its disaster prevention measures, since September 2012, JCCU has called on Co-ops across the nation to have their staff get certified with disaster prevention.

300 or more persons are likely to acquire this qualification during the first half of the 2013 fiscal year.

A disaster prevention officer is an individual who has sufficient knowledge and skills to advance improvement in regional disaster prevention and damage reduction.

To be certified, one must attend a class and pass an examination given by an NPO (Japan Disaster Prevention Officer Organization).

Certification in this discipline started in 2003 and by the end of June 2013, 65,740 individuals have been certified.

The purpose of the disaster prevention officer certification is to reduce damages caused by a natural disaster.

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, JCCU, in corporation with member co-ops have promoted business continuity plan (BCP) for co-ops nationwide. The plan urges JCCU to get prepared ahead of future catastrophic natural disaster.

The development of BCP necessitates the training of human resources (disaster prevention officers) to play a central role in disaster control.

Three measures underline the purpose of promoting disaster prevention certification.

- ✓ To strengthen each co-op's power of defense and damage reduction.
- ✓ To contribute to the regional power of defense and damage reduction and to exert Co-op's power in the region.
- ✓ To raise the level of mobility of Co-op BCP



The state of the workshop (Photo by: Disaster workers Training Center)

Co-op Kobe expands local fishery products

In collaboration with the prefectural fishermen's cooperative association, Co-op Kobe had started 'Hyogo local fish promotion project' from July 2013.

Aiming at expanding the consumption of fish in the prefecture, Co-op Kobe has resulted in promoting fresh seasonal fish by attaching a uniform sticker to the product package together with a proposal of new cooking methods.

The government's white paper on fishery products indicates that the per-capita seafood consumption in 2001 was 94 grams per day. The figure decreased by 20% to 72.2 grams in 2011.

Since 2009, seafood consumption has been below meat and the difference is expanding.

The project is part of Co-op Kobe's effort to raise members' awareness about the daintiness of local fish and cooking method, which will lead to the promotion of local production for local consumption.

At present, 54 Co-op Kobe stores are involved in the project.

On the seafood shelves a sticker indicating clearly the fish of the season together with a fish-like symbol on the package promotes the local produce for local consumption.

Besides, 9 large stores of Co-op Kobe have sanchoku (direct delivery from the farm products) market every Tuesday.

The stores also organize lectures on cooking methods and recommend recipes to the members on specified days in the month.

The executive director of the prefectural fishermen's cooperative association Mr. YAMAGUCHI Tetsuo commented, "I expect that co-op stores would take over the role of local fish stores which have been giving information regarding seasonal fish and cooking methods to customers".

The managing director of Co-op Kobe Mr. TAKEHISA Hisato is with the view that through this advertising sale would be increased by 20%.



Scene of marketing fish produced in the prefecture

Consumer Co-operative "Seikatsu Club" introduces Co-op activities to African First Ladies

During the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) held from June 1 to 3, Ms. OGIWARA Taeko, the president of Seikatsu Club Kanagawa, introduced the Co-op's activities to some first ladies from African nations.

The meeting was hosted by the Japanese first lady Ms. ABE Akie, with the participation of Ms. KISHIDA Yuko, wife of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the wife of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and 50 first ladies from African nations.

Coordinated by Ms OWADA Junko (director of 'JKSK' Joshi Kyouiku Shourei Kai), four Japanese women made presentations on agriculture and women empowerment followed by opinion exchanges with the African first ladies.

Ms. Ogiwara introduced the outline of Seikatsu Club, the Co-op's commitment to fair-trade, agricultural standard, relationship between members (consumers) and producers, the workers collective and member participation in the local energy generation.

The presentation from the four Japanese women attracted the African ladies. Many of them asked for details of the activities.



12th ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop held in Singapore

12th ICA Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on "Management of Consumer Co-operatives" was held by ICA-AP Consumer Committee, in Singapore, 3-5th July 2013.

NTUC Fairprice (Singapore) hosted this workshop, which was attended by 18 co-operators from Vietnam, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Iran, and Indonesia.

The objectives of the workshop were to promote understanding of socio-economic role of consumer cooperatives, to study the successful cases of international business collaboration between consumer cooperatives and to establish an international network of consumer cooperative leaders and managers.

The workshop program started with a welcome speech by Mr. Poh Leong Sim, Director of Legal department, NTUC Fairprice, followed by an opening remark by Ms. MIYAZAWA Kanako Secretary, ICA-AP Consumer Committee.

On the first day, participants were given three lectures namely; "Supermarket Operations" from Mr. Gerry Lee, Managing Director of Business Group, Fairprice, "Purchasing, Merchandising and International Trading @ Fairprice" from Mr., Tng Ah Yiam, Managing Director of Group Purchasing, Merchandising and International Trading, Fairprice, and "Supply Chain Management" from Mr. Mark Teo, Senior Manager of Logistics, Fairprice.

Yume Co-op changes Energy Source

In July, 'Pal System Kanagawa Yume Co-op' changed its electricity source for four of its branches from TEPCO (Tokyo Electricity Power Company) to an energy company supplying regenerated energy.

To stress its commitment to anti-nuclear power movement, the Co-op changed its electricity source to a power generation by wood combustion in four of its branches offices and four of the ten distribution centers that supply products to individual homes.

The total electricity usage of the four branches is 1.5 million kilowatt per year, covering 40% of total usage in the Co-op.

Last year, the Co-op worked together with the other Co-ops to promote an introduction of regenerated energy, which discharges very little CO₂, which is the cause of global warming.

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On the second day, Mr. Alberto Marrassini, General Manager of Co-op Global Sourcing (China), gave a lecture about "Overview of Co-op Global Sourcing and Business Collaboration with European Consumer Co-operatives". Mr. HORI Hiroyuki, Senior Manager of New Business Development, Co-op Net Federation (Japan) also gave lecture about the Case study on Japanese Consumers' Co-operative "Dinner Delivery Service".

After group discussion and presentation session, Mr. Beng Lee Kao gave a closing speech. Participants discussed about "value of being a co-operative" and "co-operation among co-operatives".

A participant from Indonesia said; "We are happy to have a moment like this. I thank ICA and Fairprice for giving us insight and knowledge that we really need."



Participants pose for a group picture

The Co-op collected more than 90 thousand signatures to support an establishment of a law to promote regenerated energy in Kanagawa prefecture.

The new energy company is a PPS (power producer and supplier), 'Unakami no Daichi' in Asahi, Chiba.

The company provides electricity from wood generated in the biomass power station in Yamagata.

The Co-op's public relations department says, "Changing electricity source from TEPCO was the wish of their members".

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