

JCCU Submits Opinion on the "Consumer Master Plan"

Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU), submitted opinion on reexamination of the "Consumer Master Plan" to the Consumer Affairs Agency on May 26, 2014.

The consumer master plan is a comprehensive description of fundamental principles written in the interest of consumers, which serves as guideline information for the formulation of national consumer policy by the government.

The present "consumer master plan", was designed for 5 years from 2010 to 2014 ,however, review is done every year according to the needs of the time.

This year, a review and evaluation of implementation of the 2013 master plan has been made and based on that, a revised draft of the plan is written and was officially announced in May 9, 2014. Opinion collection has since started.

In order that better measures be taken towards the formation of "consumer civil society", JCCU submitted opinion focusing on "display and food safety," "promotion of business activities and consumer behavior that are friendly to environment", "consumer administration and legal system", "consumer education" and "public utility charges".

Through this and several other co-op member activities, JCCU continues to play a leading role in social and economic development of Japan.



JCCU Solar power performance - 2013

JCCU has articulated energy policy with the cooperation of its member societies since 2012, by starting a new business, generating natural energy including solar power.

Following the accident of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant after the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11 2011, public interest in energy issues like power-saving and disputes over restarting nuclear plants became a top agenda for public discussion.

An opinion poll by members conducted by JCCU revealed members quest for denuclearization and new energy.

Now, solar power generation is being advanced by many consumer co-ops in Japan following JCCU's call on co-ops nationwide to generate about 20% of its electricity consumption by 2020.

Besides each member co-op's individual initiative in the energy business, JCCU has also advanced an installation of solar panels on the roof of its seven logistic facilities.

Picture above is Onomichi frozen distribution center.

Co-op detergent environmental donation campaign

JCCU aims at contributing to environmental protection activities while spreading the visibility of co-op laundry detergent through this campaign.

In 2011, "Co-op Environmental Campaign Fund" was established by Japanese consumer co-ops and every year donation campaign is organized through the sale of Co-op detergent to raise funds to support environmental activities.

This year, the campaign is conducted between May 21 to November 20 2014, where for every purchase of a particular laundry detergent, one

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Amount of power generated by the solar panels in the fiscal 2013 (April 2013 to March 2014) is 4.51 million kWh. This is equivalent to annual usage of power by 977 households.

Reference to the National Agency for Natural Resources and Energy manual in FY2010, the actual energy consumption per household is calculated as 4,618 kWh / year.

The amount of CO₂ emitted in making fossil fuel power of 4.51 million kWh is about 1,895 tons. By solar power, we contributed to the reduction of CO₂ emissions at this rate which is equivalent to 0.423kg (CO₂/kWh).

In fiscal 2014, JCCU plans to put in place additional solar power generation facilities with capacities 287kW and 389kW in two logistics centers, Tosu frozen foods distribution center and Onomichi dry groceries distribution center respectively in July and November.

With the aim of a sustainable society, JCCU is making efforts now and in the future, in the field of energy and environment along with the Co-op members across the country.

yen will be donated to the fund.

The amount will be donated to environmental groups in and outside Japan such as the NPO Borneo Conservation Trust (BCT) Japan for biodiversity conservation activities in Borneo.

Borneo has oil palm plantations where JCCU gets its raw materials for the production of laundry detergent.

In 2013, the campaign was organized between April 21 to October 20, with the participation of 117 co-ops across the country, donating about 4.89 million JPY.

Pal system Ibaraki, receives the Prime Minister's Commendation Award

The Prime Minister's commendation award is an honor given to organizations, individuals or a group with distinguished services remarkable in consumer support service for the purpose of Consumer Affairs Agency aiming at protecting and improving consumer interests.

This year's award targeted individuals and organizations who greatly contributed to watching activities for children, people with disabilities and the elderly, as well as the reconstruction efforts of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Pal system Ibaraki (consumer co-op) together with "NPO consumers Kyoto" which is Kyoto National Liaison Committee of Consumer Organizations and the Consumer Support Network which is an NGO whose activities are being supported by Osaka Consumers Co-operative Union, Co-op Kyoritsusha (Yamagata), Niigata Prefecture Consumers' Co-operative Union, Hokkaido Consumers' Co-operative Union and Co-op Sapporo were the three organizations honored in this year's ceremony.

The award ceremony was held in the Prime Minister's official residence on May 26, 2014.



Ms. KOIZUMI Chieko (Pal system Ibaraki, Chairperson of the board of directors) offering greetings during a symposium that followed the award ceremony.

Co-op Mirai receives award on its contribution towards employing the largest number of people with disabilities

Co-op Mirai was awarded a prize at a ceremony held on March 25 to honor companies who have contributed to the employment of people with disabilities.

The ceremony was organized by the Governor of Saitama Prefecture with the aim to encourage organizations to expand their room for disabled employment and to create a work place which is barrier free for the disabled employees.

At the ceremony, Co-op Mirai was honored as a company actively addressing the employment problems of people with disabilities and having the largest number of them employed in Saitama Prefecture.

In Co-op Mirai, employment of people with disabilities is positively advanced through the cooperation with the public institutions such as the local job placement office (Hello Work),

local NPOs who support employment of disabled persons and the local disabled person occupation center.

The co-op also accept work place training for school students who need special support.



The "Local Miyagi food and reconstruction project network" wins Award

This project network was launched just after the March 11 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and the subsequent tsunami that devastated the coastal areas of the Tohoku region, as an effort towards local agricultural recovery.

The project was pioneered by Miyagi Co-op with the cooperation of Agricultural Co-operative (JA) and the local food producers.

On March 27, at the 43rd Japan Agricultural Award ceremony that honors companies and organizations working on reforms, development of technology and farm management, the Local Miyagi Food and reconstruction network was awarded a prize for working as an agent of food production, connecting consumers with farmers leading to enrichment in life and regional development.

The award has been held annually by the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives and Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK) since 1971.

In this year's award ceremony the organizers received recommendations from 36 organizations out of which the Local Miyagi Food and reconstruction network was honored.

The certificate of commendation was awarded to Mr. MIYAMOTO Hiromu, Managing Director of Miyagi Co-op on behalf of the network.

The network was evaluated for not only reviving the area after the earthquake, but also having cultivated the tsunami-devastated coastal areas for the production of Chinese cabbage under a new brand name "Sendai cabbage".



Sendai cabbage



JCCU releases "Quality Assurance Report 2014"

The "Quality Assurance Report 2014" (available in Japanese) is a summary of the current situation and the efforts of safety and quality assurance of CO-OP products being practised by JCCU.

The contents include:

- 1) Because I like CO-OP products, I want to tell someone.
- 2) Safety risk management.
- 3) Product accident response.
- 4) Safety management and food defense measures of imported food.
- 5) Creating social mechanisms of food safety.



Co-op Kobe announces increase in sales for FY 2013

Co-op Kobe is one of the leading consumer co-ops in Japan. In the fiscal 2013 ending March 31, 2014, the Co-op recorded an increase in sales for the first time in 17 years.

While the competition environment was still severe, and in the absence of new store openings, the home delivery business was positioned as the pillar of its growth.

Promoting the expansion of local fishery products and the dissemination of information to members to raise awareness about the daintiness of local fish and cooking method, helped boost sales in the store business.

Also with the start of a new home delivery of food ingredients set the total business situation of Co-op Kobe has improved reflecting on the sales increase in the fiscal 2013.

Nara Co-op celebrates Earth Day 2014

On April 21, 2014, Nara Co-op celebrated the "Earth Day 2014" at the Asuka Historical National Government Park.

As part of Nara Co-op's efforts to counteract environmental problems associated with climate change, the Co-op has been holding Earth Day events since 1990. This year marks the 25th event since it started.

The day is set to think and act for the environment by raising awareness of the local people through booth exhibitions and lectures about the environmental protection initiatives being carried out by the Co-op and other environmental support organizations.

A total of 46 booths with various themes were provided by Nara Co-op, Asuka Village, the Yoshino area administration, environmental support organizations, the Nara Consumers' Co-operative Union, attracting about 1,200 participants.

Nara Co-op introduced its environmental protection activities under two major projects; "Yoshino Symbiosis Project" and "Field Mustard Eco Project" as themes in the booth to demonstrate the co-ops initiative to suppress the generation of greenhouse gases that are the cause of global warming.

There was a panel display of the history of the Co-op's 40th anniversary and also exhibition of solar panels, LED lighting and one-day eco-life check. There was also a panel demonstration of the collection of waste cooking *tempura* oil and its recycle to bio-diesel fuel (BDF).

There was also a walking event and in spite of unlucky rainy weather, about 160 people, divided into five groups of 30 each, participated in a course of about 5km.

A fund-raising presentation ceremony was also held where an amount of 980,156 JPY (in fiscal 2013) was donated for protecting the woods and water of Yoshino.

There was also a stage drumming by a group from Asuka village and performance by AKB48 musical group, rounding off an incredible earth day celebrations.



Joint peace rally held in Hiroshima

On May 23, six organizations within Hiroshima prefecture including the Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organization (Nihon Hidankyo) and Hiroshima Prefectural Consumers Co-operative Union staged a joint peace rally in Hiroshima.

About 160 people participated, including the A-bomb Sufferers Organization members, staff representatives from 17 cities and towns within the prefecture and co-op staff from eight prefectures including Tokyo, Nagasaki.

Activity strengthening that enlivens nuclear abolition momentum was mutually promised by the group towards the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

After receiving an explanation for the nuclear disarmament measures and conditions in the world given by representatives from Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and Hiroshima prefecture, the participants were divided into

13 groups where they received testimonies from the survivors. The testimonies showed clearly the devastation of August 6, and the health anxiety that is felt even now.

Ms. UEDA Junko board member of Hiroshima Co-op mentioned that the reality of the damage is still not known, however, learning from survivors will help hand down the story to the next generation. In addition, citizens appeal towards nuclear abolition was adopted and fund-raising to cover the expense of the dispatch of the A-bomb survivors to the review conference was held.



Co-op Yamaguchi opens the first convenience type store

On May 27, for the first time in the Eastern Prefecture, the first co-op store with a convenience store function was opened by Co-op Yamaguchi in the city of Hikari.

Last year Co-op Yamaguchi, celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding with the theme "Spreading relief in the community" with the advancement of various initiatives.

One of such initiatives was to launch a small convenience-type store in a small commercial area in the Yamaguchi prefecture with declining population and birthrate while longevity progresses, to support members foodlife.

The store has 165 m² sales area and it opens 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a store concept "near and convenient", "Co-op station where smiling faces spread".

The 165 m² sales area has both the merit of convenience stores and supermarkets.

In addition to shopping, parcel shipment and utility bills payment, ATM, etc. which are necessary in daily life is supported.

The store will handle about 3,500 items, including daily delivered goods and fresh products that are limited in general convenience store.

The Hikari store is a pilot project and the co-op aims at expanding the business to other regions.

The second store is scheduled to open in Sanyo Onoda Higashitakadomari on June 18.



News in Brief

University Co-op Introduces Halal food in cafeteria menu

University Co-op started the introduction of "halal food" in the university cafeteria in 2009 in response to the muslim students request. Since then university cafeterias serving halal foods are increasing in number.

Muslim students do not take alcohol or pork which is prohibited by the Muslim doctrine.

The Tokyo University Co-op Business Association, which provides food materials to universities in the Kanto region has introduced a new seasoning for halal that can be used in Japanese cooking, to promote the expansion of the menu.

According to the National Federation of University Co-op, halal foods are offered in co-op cafeteria of at least 19 schools, including the University of Tokyo, Kyoto University, Hokkaido University, and Kyushu University and has been spread into other private universities.

On May 26, a tasting event for two new menus of halal food; *zaru soba* (cold buckwheat noodle

with sweet soy sauce for dipping) and (udon noodle in bonito broth with deep-fried and stewed chicken) which were jointly developed by the National Federation of University Co-op and Tokyo University Co-op was held. Both menus adhere to strict halal requirements.

The muslim students showed their appreciation and satisfaction for the new menu with one saying "I feel easy about the new menu and can now enjoy soba and Japanese noodles."



Scene of tasting event

Co-op Kobe launches "home delivery food ingredients set"

Co-op Kobe started on May 26 a new home delivery business that delivers pre-arranged set of food ingredients to co-op members on a daily basis.

The main target customers are the double-income families who have little time in preparing dinner because of their tight work schedule.

The business was first started in mid-May in Amagasaki city in the Hyogo Prefecture and expansion plan is underway to Itami city in August.

Two daily items consisting of main dishes and side dishes for dinner will be delivered at a price of 1,188 JPY and 1,782 JPY for two and three people respectively.

A set package includes pre-cut vegetables, meat, marine products and a sauce and with reference to an enclosed recipe the purchaser prepares the dinner.

The expected sales for the fiscal 2014 is 140 million JPY and 1.3 billion JPY will be aimed at in the fiscal 2016.

In addition, the sale of consumer electronics goods will be strengthened in response to aging.

From April, expert consultants will visit homes to initiate the sales of the electronic goods by explaining the features and the use of the appliances.

According to Mr. HONDA Eiichi, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, the new business will not only strengthen the home delivery business or the store, but would also answer members problems in respect of time limitation in dinner preparation and the aging.

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