

JCCU donates to Earthquake Victims

Soon after the Kumamoto earthquake JCCU called on member co-ops to organize fund-raising to support the victims and help with the reconstruction exercise.

Co-op members responded generously towards the fund-raising through the store and home delivery outlets from the period April to August 31.

On June 27 2016, the primary aggregate from 97 member co-ops and business federation was 860 million JPY of which 840 million JPY has been donated to Kumamoto prefecture and the remaining 20 million JPY donated to Oita Prefecture.

On July 7 2016, Mr. YOSHINAGA Akira the chairperson of the Kumamoto Consumer Co-operative Union and Mr. SHIMADA Hiroyuki, Managing Director/CEO of JCCU visited the Kumamoto Prefectural Government and presented an amount of 840 million JPY to the Governor of the prefecture, Mr. KABASHIMA Ikuo for the reconstruction of victims life.

During the ceremony Mr. Kabashima mentioned that the donation would be used to minimize the pain of the victims.

Mr. Shimada also mentioned that the donation is an expression of love and compassion from both the members and co-op staff towards the victims and that co-op will continue to provide human support and help with the victims mental health care now and in the future.



International Day of Co-operatives held in Tokyo

The International Day of Co-operatives is an annual celebration of the cooperative movement observed on the first Saturday of July each year.

Among others, the day is set to promote peace and to increase awareness on co-operatives, as well as strengthen and extend partnerships between the international co-operative movement and other related organizations.

The slogan for 2016 International Day of Cooperatives was "Cooperatives: The power to act for a sustainable future".

To celebrate this international anniversary, Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives (JJC) and Cooperatives Japan held the 94th International Day of Co-operative Forum on July 27 in Tokyo. About 300 participants consisting of co-operative staff and members nationwide, academics and the press attended the rally.

After the opening remarks given by Mr. OKUNO Choe, Committee Chairman of JJC, the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) video message entitled "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," was introduced.

Thereafter, Mr. NISHIOKA Tatsushi of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave a summary of the Japanese Government's efforts towards "2030 Agenda" and the expectations of the role of cooperatives.

A keynote lecture was given by Mr. OKUDA Tomoshi, Chairman of an NPO under the theme "expectations from Co-op in respect of Earthquake reconstruction and a sustainable future, breaking away from poverty and embracing peace".

He mentioned that the two major issues that have been visible through the victim support of Kumamoto earthquake is the economic distress and social isolation and raised questions as to

how co-operatives could address those problems.

It was followed by a panel discussion under the theme, "Sustainable future created by Co-ops-thinking about the Great East Japan Earthquake after 5 years of happening".

Panelists from Kamaishi Local Forestry Co-operative, Mr. TAKAHASHI Yukio, Councilor, Japan Workers Cooperative Federation, TANAKA Yoko, Managing Director and JC Research Institute, Ms. ATAKA Aya Deputy Chief Scientist with Mr. MAEDA Kenki Cooperative Research Department acting as coordinator.

While demonstrating their respective organizations practical case examples of earthquake reconstruction effort, opinions were exchanged as to how community development and networking could be expanded.

The occasion was also an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between co-operatives nationwide, and sharing common views regarding cooperatives contribution towards the sustainability of the region.



Keynote speech by Mr. OKUDA Kazushi

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Fukushima Children's Recreation Project

Consumer Co-ops nationwide have been offering special summer vacation program to children in Fukushima area as part of the disaster area reconstruction assistance activities since 2011, aiming at helping school children and parents spend weekends and school vacations in areas remote from the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant.

This year also JCCU and the Fukushima Prefecture Consumers' Co-operative Union will cooperate in a special summer vacation program nationwide in 10 locations, in the period of July 16 to August 20, 2016.

Since the start of this program 78,439 people including children and their parents have participated in the Fukushima Children's Recreation Program (until March 31 2016).

In the fiscal 2015 (April 1 2015 to March 31 2016), the amount of funding from JCCU and member co-ops, the Japan UNICEF Association and others for this project are respectively 50 million JPY, 22 million JPY and 6 million JPY, totaling approximately 78 million JPY.

In the fiscal 2014 the total funding from JCCU and member co-ops and the UNICEF was approximately 71 million JPY.



State of last year's summer vacation program

JCCU acquires "Resilience Authentication"

The National Resilience Promotion Office, Cabinet Secretariat, in February 2016, established an authentication guidelines and started its operation from fiscal 2016 with the aim of promoting and spreading the business continuity efforts by companies and organizations that will lead to the strengthening of national resilience in the event of any disaster.

On July 29 2016, JCCU acquired resilience authentication through a recommendation by the cabinet office as an organization having put in place a comprehensive business continuity plan (BCP) that will sustain its business in event of a large scale disaster.

From the experience of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, JCCU, in cooperation with member co-ops developed and promoted a business continuity plan (BCP) for co-ops nationwide. The plan urges JCCU to get prepared ahead of future catastrophic natural disaster.

Besides, JCCU has called on Co-ops across the nation to have their staff get certified with

disaster prevention. Over 300 co-op staff nationwide have been certified with sufficient knowledge and skills to advance improvement in regional disaster prevention and damage reduction.

Through recognition of these efforts JCCU was awarded the resilience authentication by the cabinet office.



Resilience certification mark

Co-op Mie organized study session on electricity liberalization

The Great east Japan Earthquake and the subsequent Tsunami that occurred on March 11 2011 revealed fundamental weakness, which now leads to restructuring and electricity liberalization.

On May 14 2016, Co-op Mie and a local NPO (a regional cooperation research center) held a learning session which was attended by 45 people including participants from the Gifu and Aichi Prefectures, co-op members, officers and employees.

The theme was "electricity liberalization" with Mr. NOBUHIRO Ishii as the resource person. Participants learned about electricity liberalization and how to consider switching electricity. Liberalization of electricity for households began from April 2016, but there's little understanding by the

citizenry about how it works, the impact it has on living, the prospect of new power and retail electricity business, how rate plans differ and the problems in switching power. Mr. Ishii in his lectures provided answers to the stated questions.

He stated that the problems associated with nuclear power plant and global warming cannot be said to be solved with the power liberalization, however knowing the content of the electricity, producing new electric power that is more environmentally-friendly and switching to new power using renewable energy by companies and local governments is very important and highly recommendable.

"Parenting support CLUB" inauguration

On June 20, the Co-op Net Business Federation (Co-op Net) launched "Furefure parenting club" which is run by the home delivery service (Co-op Deli) to offer child-rearing assistance to child-rearing families. A dedicated site for the activity has been opened.

Until now Co-op Net has instituted child-care support for expecting mothers and for families with children up to elementary school enrollment.

The package include home delivery fees reduction and discount system, parenting home catalog, and the provision of baby food recipes through smartphone application. The newly established "Furefure Parenting CLUB" aims to improve the

convenience by integrate the services that have been performed up to now and to actively disseminate information through the dedicated site.

Member users (households, 6 co-ops affiliated to Co-op Net) at the time of inauguration was 347,000 people but Co-op Net aims to expand users to 560,000 in five years.

There is always a feeling of worries associated with parenting and consumer co-ops nationwide are providing solutions to these problems through mutual assistance.

iCOOP Delegation visit

On June 22, a delegation of 15 board members from the member co-ops of iCOOP Korea paid a short visit to Co-op Shimane in the Shimane Prefecture of Japan to learn about community development and community contribution activities of the co-op as part of a training program for the directors.

Twelve officials from Co-op Shimane including the vice-president Ms. ISHIHARA Junko, and the Managing Director Mr. OKI Takayuki, greeted the South Korean delegates with a warm reception.

The delegates received explanation of Co-op Shimane's "Otagaisama" initiatives, a system that serves as consultation center for people in the community who need help and coordinates activities between "users" and "support person". The delegates exchanged views with the host regarding the operation of the system and management of the facility.

The delegates expressed concern that the South Korean population is rapidly aging in which there is an increasing demand of a network to ensure safety and security of the region and that the "Otagaisama" system could be replicated.



News in Brief

JCCU Releases Business Summary

JCCU summarizes the June 2016 business turnover of 66 community-based co-ops nationwide operating stores and home delivery service. For 15 consecutive months the turnover for both the store and the home delivery had exceeded the previous years.

The total turnover in June is 218.53 billion JPY which is just a minimal increase of 0.5% compared with the value recorded in the same month last year.

The store and the home delivery turnovers also

had a marginal increase of 1.4% and 0.7% respectively. The amount of the home delivery sales was 137.06 billion JPY accounting for about 62.7% of the total turnover of the 66 community-based co-ops.

The store turnover was 76.72 billion JPY accounting for 35.1% of the total turnover.

While in June the number of customers showed variation from week to week, the average spending per customer in any week surpassed the previous year.

Policy recommendation

- JCCU on July 14 2016, submitted an opinion to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry towards the amendment of the "Renewal energy act (FIT Law)" in April 2017. In order for consumers to think and choose their preferred utility company, JCCU has submitted an opinion seeking to amend part of the rules for the procurement of renewable energy by electric utilities.

Similarly, on June 30 2016, JCCU submitted an opinion on the "Guidelines for power retail sales" to the electric power and gas trading surveillance committee of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry suggesting not only the encouragement of healthy and fair competition in the electricity and gas market but also the stable supply of electricity and city gas to consumers. Especially mandating the display of the power structure and the like, and the display of amount of generated radioactive waste per 1kwh power.

Social initiatives

- Consumer Co-operative U Co-op donated "school bag cover" and "road crossing flags" to the new first grade pupils of 789 elementary schools in Kanagawa, Shizuoka and Yamanashi Prefectures as part of the co-ops children's traffic safety initiatives.
- Okayama Co-op on May 23 2016, donated 200 thousand yen realized from the "Co-op detergent environment donation campaign to the director of Okayama Prefectural Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries business towards the activities of the "seaweed beds environmental research" of the prefecture.
- Co-op Sapporo is promoting environmental activities as part of its social contribution activities. Image character of the home delivery system Todokku is designed as a polar bear. The Co-op is cooperating with four zoos in Hokkaido to offer support to the "Polar Bear support project" to deepen understanding of members and the local citizen that the polar bear is an endangered species for the purpose to enhance the environmental awareness. In order to promote the project, the co-op plans to donate sponsorship money of 2 million yen.

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