

III. Shokuiku Initiatives by MAFF

12. Inheritance of Food Culture

Washoku Culture Designated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage



- On December 4, 2013, “Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese,” was designated as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- It is important to take this as an opportunity to raise people’s motivation for preserving Japanese food culture into the future.

Maintaining people’s interest in the Japanese food culture by ongoing PR efforts

Protection and inheritance of the Japanese food culture through shokuiku

In addition...

- Global attention to Japan after the designation
- Expo Milano 2015 (Theme: Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life)
- 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics

Great opportunity to spread Japanese food culture overseas

[What is UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage?]

- A UNESCO intangible cultural heritage is a nonphysical cultural heritage, like performing arts and traditional craft techniques, that is closely related to the land’s history and customs.
- In accordance with the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO keeps a list of intangible cultural heritage to safeguard and promote mutual respect for it.

What is Washoku? ➡

Japanese dietary customs built on respect for nature

Characteristics of Washoku (1):

Respect for diverse and fresh ingredients and their unique tastes

The islands of Japan stretching from north to south are blessed with abundant nature of the ocean, mountains, and rural areas. Different regions across the country have developed unique techniques and tools to bring out the taste of various local ingredients.



Characteristics of Washoku (2):

Nutritional balance that supports a healthy diet

A diet consisting of one soup and three side dishes allows us to ensure a good nutritional balance. Dishes tapping into the umami flavor of dashi (fish stock) and fermented food also help with cutting down on animal fat intake. Washoku has helped longevity and prevented obesity in Japan.

Characteristics of Washoku (3):

Expression of beauty of nature and the four seasons

Another characteristic of the washoku culture is that it expresses the beauty of nature and the four seasons, such as by decorating dishes with seasonal flowers and leaves and using seasonal furnishings and vessels.



(c) Masashi Kuma, 2006



Characteristics of Washoku (4):

Close relationship with New Year and other annual events

Japanese food culture has been nurtured in close association with events throughout the year. Sharing food that is the blessing of nature and enjoying it together have been the way for Japanese people to deepen their connection with families and communities.

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(1) Efforts Made in FY2018 for the Protection and Inheritance of Washoku

((i) Measures for Child-Raising Generation and Younger Generation)

- MAFF promoted measures to help the child-raising generation and younger generation, who tend to have a raised awareness of the improvement of their diet, to understand the benefits of the washoku culture.

Workshops for the child-raising generation and younger generation

- MAFF has held workshops to deepen the understanding of washoku culture since FY2016 for parents, young people, and administrative dietitians who have many opportunities to interact with the child-raising generation.



- Such workshops include, for example, panel discussions on washoku culture by nutrition experts and washoku cooks for parents, and demonstrations of washoku recipes that can be easily executed at home even when busy and that are loved by children.



MAFF also develop educational materials for parents and children to learn about Japanese food culture in a fun way.

These can be downloaded from the MAFF website.

<http://www.maff.go.jp/j/keikaku/syokubunka/culture/index.html>



Food culture promotion website for the child-raising generation

- MAFF opened a smartphone website titled “Ouchi De Washoku” on Washoku Day (November 24) in 2017 with the aim of helping the child-raising generation understand the benefits of washoku and practice it at home.
- This smartphone website shares washoku-related information featured on the MAFF website in a way that is easy to understand and practice.
- Videos of the workshops for the child-raising generation are also posted on the website to reach all people in living across Japan.



Food culture information site for the child-raising generation, “Ouchi De Washoku” (meaning washoku at home)
<http://ouchidewashoku.com/>

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(1) Efforts Made in FY2018 for the Protection and Inheritance of Washoku

((ii) Measures for Educational Institutions and Shokuiku Initiatives)

- In order to pass down washoku culture to the next generation, MAFF promotes projects to foster children’s interest and understanding of washoku culture.
- MAFF also promotes the preservation and inheritance of food culture through shokuiku, and supports initiatives conducted by prefectures.

Promotion of activities to pass down washoku to children who will lead the next generation

○ National Washoku Championship for Children

- Since FY2016, MAFF has held the National Washoku Championship for Children with cooperation of nutrition teachers, in order to provide children who will lead the next generation with an opportunity to learn about holiday and event foods, local dishes, and other things related to the washoku culture. The washoku champions are decided by an illustration competition for children in lower grades, and a competition of presentations of local dishes or a bean transferring game (using chopsticks) for children in higher grades.
- The FY2018 Championship was held at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan) on Sunday, December 16, 2018.



[Washoku Championship] Champion
“Hamo-chau!?”
Kyoto Elementary and Junior High School attached to Kyoto University of Education

[Washoku Illustration Competition]

National Gold Prize



“Kabusu and Grated Daikon for Grilled Pacific Saury!”
Kanagawa Prefecture
Keio Gijyuku Yokohama Elementary School
2nd grade Kirari Murayama

National Silver Prize



“Connect and Continue the Circle of Thank-You”
Nara Prefecture
Nara City Fushimi Elementary School
2nd year Keishi Okugaki

National Bronze Prize



“Tokushima Dish ‘Dekomawashi’”
Tokushima Prefecture
Atelier ENDO / Kamiita Town
Kan-yake Elementary School
Third grade Yūga Otani

Promotion of Measures for the Protection and Inheritance of Local Food Culture through Shokuiku

- MAFF supports activities to promote the inheritance of food culture conducted by prefectures, municipalities, private organizations, etc., such as agriculture, forestry and fishery experience opportunities and cooking classes teaching local dish recipes.
- Childhood is a particularly important time to learn about the importance of food, and school lunches play a vital role as a place to convey washoku culture.
- In order to expand the incorporation of washoku in school lunches, MAFF also develops and provides washoku school lunch menus as part of its support for regional shokuiku activities. In addition, it also provides washoku classes and cooking experiences for children and school lunch staff.



Miso making experience



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(2) Other Measures (PR)

- In order to raise public interest in washoku, MAFF widely distributes pamphlets summarizing the characteristics of washoku.
In addition, MAFF publishes on its website information on the background to the designation of washoku as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well as information on washoku-related events held by MAFF.

Pamphlets on Washoku

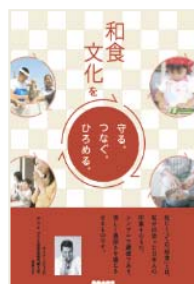
○ Washoku Guidebook

MAFF created a pamphlet that summarizes the characteristics and history of washoku and distributes it nationwide.



○ Protect Washoku Culture: Connect and Spread.

This report by the Study Group for the Protection and Inheritance of Washoku (September 2015 to February 2016) summarizes the results of a questionnaire survey on eating habits and means for the effective inheritance of washoku.



○ Pamphlets for the child-raising generation

MAFF created pamphlets for administrative dietitians and other professionals, and for parents, which introduces examples of washoku culture promotion projects for the child-raising generation conducted in FY2017. These pamphlets were distributed through local governments across Japan.



For professionals



For parents

○ Pamphlet on Washoku School Lunches

MAFF created a pamphlet that summarizes examples of projects to promote washoku school lunches conducted from FY2014 to FY2016. This pamphlet was distributed to nutrition teachers at elementary schools nationwide.

2014



2015



2016



PR of Washoku through the MAFF Website

○ Washoku as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

The MAFF website publishes background information on the designation of washoku as an Intangible Cultural Heritage and information on various events held by MAFF.



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(3) Overview of Initiatives for the Protection and Inheritance of Washoku to Be Conducted in FY2020

Initiatives for the Protection and Inheritance of Washoku

Protection and inheritance of local food culture

- Establish a system to protect and pass down various local food cultures unique to each region; and investigate, record, and spread information on local foods.
- Support activities to pass on local food culture, such as cooking classes to teach local cuisine and creating collections of local dish recipes



- Project to promote washoku and local food culture
- Food industry and sixth industrialization grants

Development of human resources to pass on washoku culture

- Develop core human resources to spread washoku culture in each prefecture
Such human resources will pass on washoku culture to nursery schools and elementary schools, and promote washoku culture at various workshops for nutritionists, nursery teachers, etc.



- Project to promote washoku and local food culture

Passing down to children who will lead the next generation

- Hold the National Washoku Championships for Children in order to help children who will lead the next generation become familiar with holiday and event foods and washoku culture (the National Championship is to be held on Sunday, November 24, 2020)
- Support activities to pass on food culture, such as the spread of washoku school lunches
- Dispatch coordinators and commend best practices in order to promote local production for local consumption in school lunches, etc.



- Project to promote washoku and local food culture
- Food industry and sixth industrialization grants
- Project to promote the national campaign to expand Japanese food consumption

Projects covered by the FY2020 budget

Public-private collaboration initiatives

Let's! 和ごはん Project <MAFF Public-Private Collaboration Project>

In this public-private collaboration project, the food-related industries and the government work together to provide children and the busy child-raising generation with more opportunities to eat healthy Wa-gohan (Japanese food) in an easy and convenient manner in the forms of meals at home, ready-made meals, and meals at restaurants. 151 companies are now project members (as of July 1, 2019).

Overseas washoku boom



Promotion of export of Japanese agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foods
Increase in foreign visitors to Japan

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(4) Public-Private Collaboration Initiative (Let's Wa-Gohan Project)

- The Let's Wa-Gohan Project was launched in FY2018, celebrating the fifth anniversary of designation of washoku as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage. It aims to ensure the protection and inheritance of washoku culture by increasing opportunities for infants to experience the taste of washoku and how to eat it, as people's food preference is shaped by food experiences during childhood.
- In this project, not only food manufacturers, distributors, ready-made food and restaurant businesses, but also washoku-related businesses, such as recipe publishers and home appliance manufacturers, and the government work together to promote measures to increase opportunities for children and the child-raising generation (who tend to be busy and think that washoku recipes take too much time and effort to cook) to have healthy “Wa-gohan” (Japanese food) in an easy and convenient way.

*Wa-gohan (Japanese food)... A type of meals that have been eaten in Japanese homes, which:

(1) consists of rice, soup, side dishes or a combination thereof, or

(2) uses dashi, soy sauce, miso and other seasonings that have been used in Japan for many years.

<Examples of initiatives by companies>

- Development and sales of products and recipes that make it easier to cook Wa-gohan, and home appliances for cooking Wa-gohan
- Development and sales of Wa-gohan side dishes and bento boxes
- Development of restaurant menus for children and menus using local ingredients; Wa-gohan fairs at employee cafeterias, etc.
- Posting easy-to-understand videos online to show how to cook Wa-gohan in less time
- Development and sales of related products and menus related to annual events (New Year's Day, Gosekku, etc.) and life rituals (okuizome, etc.)



<Government initiatives>

- Registration and announcement of project member companies, which conduct activities that contribute to the achievement of the project goals
- Provision of logos that project members can freely use for their products and promotional materials
- PR on the project and initiatives by member companies via social and various other media
- Holding events

Number of project members: 151 (as of July 1, 2019)

Promotion of Shokuiku in Communities Funded by the Food Industry and Sixth Industrialization Grants

[FY2020 budget (Food Industry and Sixth Industrialization Grants) 245 (314) million yen]

<Key points of this project>

MAFF promotes **shokuiku activities conducted by communities in an intensive and effective manner** in order to achieve the goals set out in the Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku, which are related to MAFF, such as the provision of agriculture, forestry and fisheries experience opportunities.

<Objective>

Achieve the goals set out in the Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku

<Project details>

○ Training leaders to promote shokuiku

MAFF supports the promotion of shokuiku, inheritance of food culture, and training and activities of agricultural experience leaders in communities.

○ Provision of agriculture, forestry and fishery experience opportunities

MAFF supports the holding of study meetings and the provision of agriculture, forestry and fishery experience opportunities to enhance understanding of food and the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industry.

○ Provision of places for kyōshoku in communities

MAFF supports the provision of places for kyōshoku by determining the needs of kyōshoku in communities and matching with producers.

○ Inheritance of local food culture

MAFF supports cooking classes and shokuiku classes for the inheritance of local food culture and the practice of Japanese-style eating habits.

○ Spread of washoku school lunches

MAFF supports the development of menus to spread washoku school lunches and the holding of shokuiku classes for children and school staff.

○ Reduction of food loss

MAFF supports consumer awareness surveys to reduce food loss, distribution of educational materials in cooperation with restaurants, and the holding of seminars.

<Project scheme>

Goals (goals set out in Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku that are related to MAFF)

- Increase the number of volunteers engaging in the promotion of shokuiku
- Increase the number of citizens who have agriculture, forestry or fishery experience
- Increase the percentage of citizens participating in kyōshoku in communities as they hope to
- Increase the number of citizens having a balanced diet
- Increase the percentage of citizens who have received and pass on traditional cuisine and table manners from their communities or families
- Increase the number of citizens who take action to reduce food loss

Support local initiatives that contribute to achieving these goals

Supported projects (example)

Provision of agriculture, forestry and fishery experience opportunities



Providing a place for kyōshoku in the community



Inheritance of local food culture



- Improve eating habits and awareness of food culture
- Increase use of local ingredients

<Process>



Aim to achieve the goals of the Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku (2020)

[Contact] Consumer Affairs and Shokuiku (Food and Nutrition Education) Division, Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau (03-3502-5723)

Support Measures for Promoting the Use of Local Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Products (2) [FY2020 Budget]

[Food Industry and Sixth Industrialization Grants (2,534 million yen)]

○ Food Industry and Sixth Industrialization Grants

The Grants support sixth industrialization initiatives tapping into local resources that are conducted on the regional level.

<Various efforts to improve sales at direct sales outlets>

Holding of study meetings to strengthen the operation system of direct sales outlets; development of new products for inbound tourism and other demand; holding of consumer evaluation meetings; planning of tours with tourism companies; construction of collection and shipping systems, etc.

<Expansion of use of local agricultural, forestry and fishery products in facility lunches>

Development of menus and processed products using local ingredients and demonstration projects

<Grant rate: 1/3 (less than 1/2 for initiatives based on municipal strategies)>

(Project implementation bodies: private organizations, local governments, etc.)



(Menu and processed product development)



(New product development)

[Local Food Connection Enhancement Program as part of the project to promote the national campaign to expand Japanese food consumption (9 million yen)]

This project supports efforts to foster and dispatch professionals to promote local production for local consumption, including the use of local agricultural, forestry and fishery products in school lunches.

1. Coordinator training session

Training sessions to develop human resources with specialized knowledge are held, as a measure to promote efforts for local production for local consumption, such as expanding the use of local agricultural, forestry, and fishery products in schools and other facilities.

2. Dispatch of local production for local consumption coordinators

The project dispatches coordinators to support the establishment of a system for stably supplying local ingredients to schools and other facilities in the region.

<Grant ratio: Fixed amount>

(Project implementation bodies: private organizations, etc.)



(Holding training sessions)



Project for Promoting the Inheritance of Washoku and Local Food Culture as Part of the Project to Expand the Consumption of Domestically Produced Agricultural Products

[FY2020 budget
¥72 (72) million yen]

<Key points of this project>

In order to **protect and pass on washoku** as a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage to the next generation, **this project promotes the protection and inheritance of diverse food cultures unique to individual regions, while also developing core human resources who will carry out awareness activities for washoku for children and the child-raising generation.**

<Objective>

Increase the percentage of citizens who have received and pass on traditional cuisine and table manners from their communities or families from **41.6% in FY2015 to 50% by FY2020** (which is one of the goals set out in the Third Basic Plan for the Promotion of Shokuiku)

<Project details>

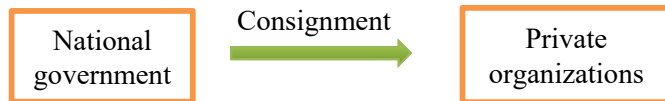
1. Project for the protection and inheritance of local food cultures

○ In order to **protect and pass on diverse food cultures unique to individual regions, a system for collaboration among local governments, research institutions such as universities, private organizations, educators, and private companies** has been **established in each prefecture**. Under this project, they investigate the history and origin of local cuisine selected by each region, related events, used ingredients and cooking methods, and create and publicize a database of such information.

2. Project to develop human resources to pass on washoku culture

○ In order to **develop core human resources to spread washoku culture to children and the child-rearing generation and to allocate them to each prefecture**, this project holds **training sessions for nutritionists and nursery teachers, etc.**, while also **providing practical workshops in line with washoku education programs for children.**

<Process>



<Project scheme>

