

# Fruit Cultivation System In Kyoutou Region, Yamanashi, JAPAN

## 峡東地域の扇状地に適応した果樹農業システム



### The fruit cultivation system—land use adapted to alluvial fan terrain

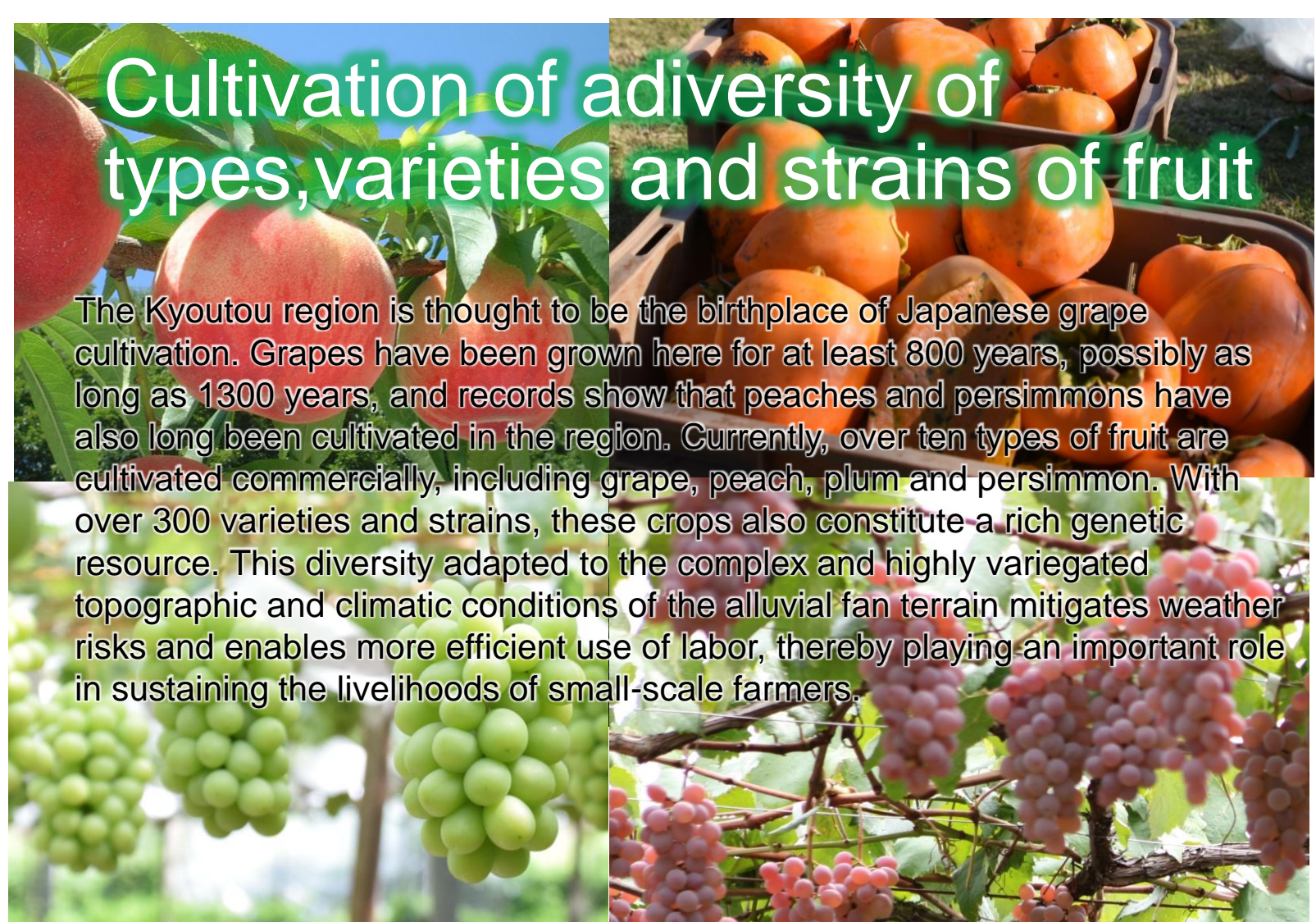
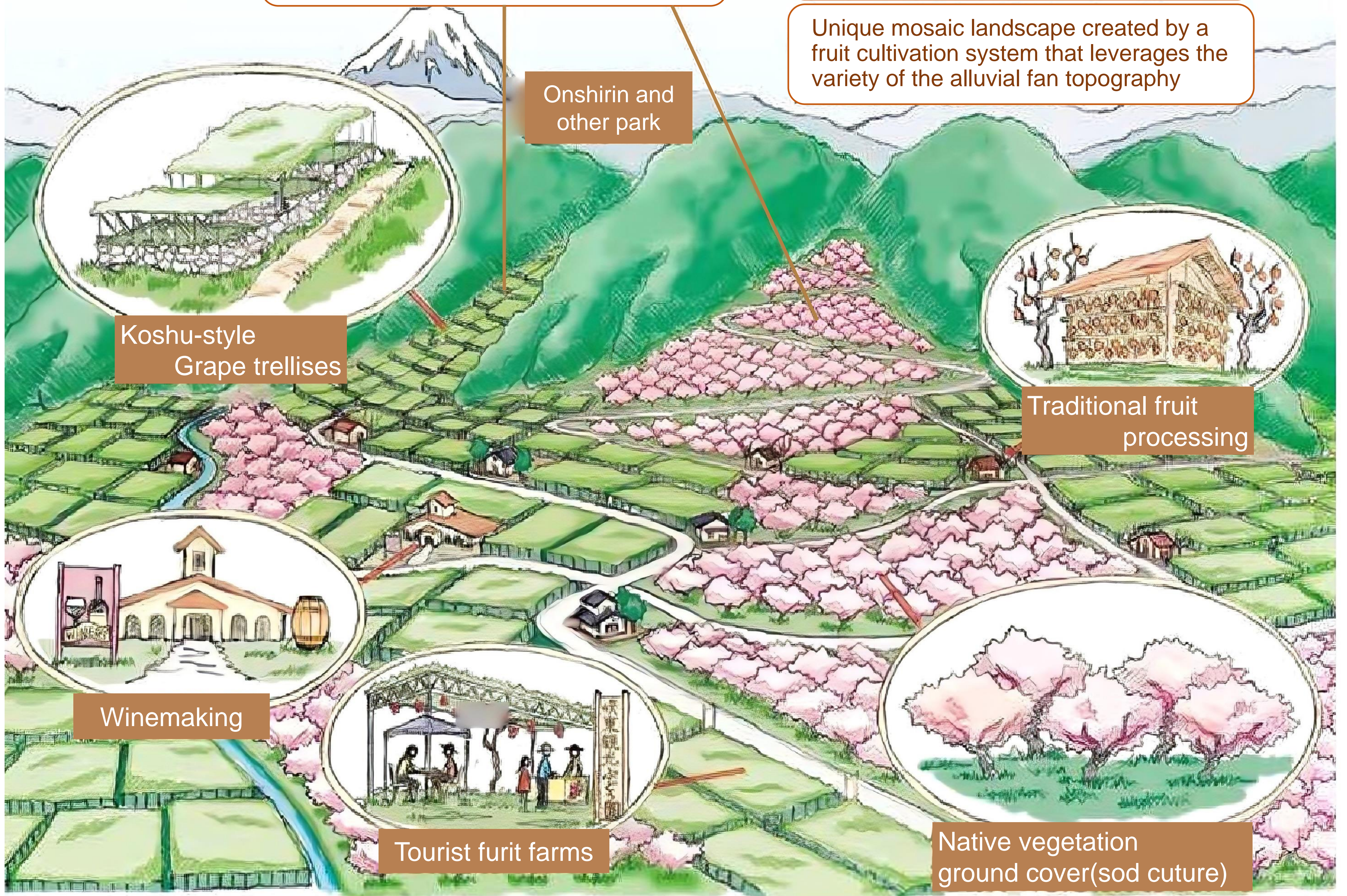
Most of the agricultural land of the Kyoutou region is located on alluvial fan terrain, with individual plots tending to be small and irregularly shaped, and soil and other conditions varying according to location. Farmers in this region have long grown grape, peach, and other deciduous fruit species as crops adapted to the alluvial fan topography and Japan's rainy, humid climate.

Substantial benefits are achievable through unique and highly efficient land use tailored to the various environments of the alluvial fan topography, and through crop management techniques that prioritize quality and added value to produce fruit on par with the best worldwide. The knowledge, ingenuity, and tireless efforts of the farmers of the Kyoutou region have over many generations created an outstanding fruit cultivation system capable of supporting the livelihoods of small-scale family farms.

Adaptation to the alluvial fan topography and environment by leveraging the characteristics of various fruit species

Cultivation and preservation of a diversity of varieties and strains of grape, peach, plum, persimmon, and other fruits

Unique mosaic landscape created by a fruit cultivation system that leverages the variety of the alluvial fan topography



### Cultivation of a diversity of types, varieties and strains of fruit

The Kyoutou region is thought to be the birthplace of Japanese grape cultivation. Grapes have been grown here for at least 800 years, possibly as long as 1300 years, and records show that peaches and persimmons have also long been cultivated in the region. Currently, over ten types of fruit are cultivated commercially, including grape, peach, plum and persimmon. With over 300 varieties and strains, these crops also constitute a rich genetic resource. This diversity adapted to the complex and highly variegated topographic and climatic conditions of the alluvial fan terrain mitigates weather risks and enables more efficient use of labor, thereby playing an important role in sustaining the livelihoods of small-scale farmers.



### Koshu-style grape trellises

Many techniques were developed for ensuring reliable fruit production on limited land as the fruit cultivation system of the Kyoutou region evolved. Of particular note is the growing of grapes on trellises suspended high above the ground. Developed over 400 years ago to counter Japan's wet, humid climate and ensure stable grape production, this unique adaptation technique is now the standard throughout the country.



### Fruit processing and tourism

Winemaking, a key component of the Kyoutou region's fruit cultivation system, has been practiced for about 140 years, and wineries and grape producers have cooperated closely to grow the region's wine industry. Wine production in the Kyoutou region is characterized by the use of 'Koshu' and other varieties of table grapes and an abundance even today of small-scale wineries spawned by grape farmers who tried their hand at winemaking.