

地域住民による意図しない農業遺産保全の実践：「にし阿波の傾斜地農耕システム」認定地域における雑穀組合の活動を事例に

Unintended Practices lead to Conservation of GIAHS by Local Residents: A Case Study of Millet Products Association in Nishi-Awa GIAHS

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【Background and Objective】

• Consider the process that unintended practices by local residents lead to the preservation of GIAHS.

【Methods】

• Analyze the process that Iya Millet Products Association was formed and the membership in Higashi-Iya in Nishi-Awa GIAHS.
• Identify the activities of Iya Millet Products Association and the condition of producing, processing, and selling.

【Conclusion】

● From “commodity” to “Social Material”

• Iya Millet Products Association was formed by local people during the process of applying for the GIAHS.
• The purpose of the association is ① to preserve indigenous millets which are in danger of extinction, ② Community development with the millets
• In recent years, the association has been exploring the development, production, and distribution of new “commodity” with indigenous millets based on collaboration with the Slow Food movement.

● Farming as optimal experience

• Association members regard the the association as a “club”.
• They cherish their own pace and the joy of gathering.
• The production of indigenous millets creates opportunities to gather with friends and occasionally have fun drinking and eating together.
• This atmosphere makes the association sustainable.

1. Overview of Nishi-Awa GIAHS site

■ Steep Slope Land Agriculture System in Nishi-Awa

- This site is Located in western part of Tokushima prefecture.
- Nishi-Awa GIAHS was designated as GIAHS in 2018.
- The designated area contains of 2 cities and 2 towns (Mima city, Miyoshi city, Tsurugi town, Higashi-Miyoshi town)

■ Landscape of Nishi-Awa

- The villages are distributed across the mountainside.
- The elevation of these villages is approx. 300–700 m.
- The slope gradient is 30–40°.
- The area’s inhabitants have employed steep-slope agriculture instead of terrace farming.
- Using Kaya straw into fields prevents soil erosion and works as natural fertilizer.
- To dry and store Kaya, it is gathered into a conical shape. This is called a “Koeguro”.
- The inhabitants of the lowlands call this mountainous area “sora”, meaning “sky”.
- Unique Farming tools to Cultivate in the steep slope area.

■ History of Higashi-Iya

- Tobacco production had been flourished in This area for about 400 years (cf. Naito2024)
- Around 1965, Agriculture mainly Tobacco production decreased and construction industry flourished due to increase in public works.
- From 2005, More than half of the workers are engaged in the tertiary industry.

Map1. Higashi-Iya, Miyoshi-city, Tokushima

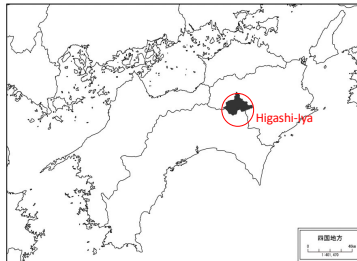


Photo1. Farming in steep slope area, Higashi-Iya(right), Photo2. Koeguro(upper left)



Photo3. Processing tea picked from home garden(lower left)

Photo4. Tsuchi-age (returning soil upward with a traditional tool)

2. Process of establishing the association and membership

■ History of Iya Millet Products Association

- The association was formed with 9 members in 2016.
- The number of members is 24 in 2023
- The average age is 69, nowadays some people aged around 30-50 start joining this activity.
- Regular work of the members is construction, forestry, civil service, carpentry etc.

Photo5. Using machines which modified to suit the slope of the field (Higashi-Iya)



■ The process of establishing Iya Millet Products Association

- When a various surveys were conducted in preparation for GIAHS designation, people quickly realized that local varieties of millet were an important genetic and cultural resource.
- Some felt that they had to take action to preserve the indigenous millets in their community.
- They inherited the seed from the couple who kept cultivating for their own consumption.

3. Activities of the association

■ Activities of the association

- This association maintains three communal land covering an area of 25 Ares. At first, it maintained a field of 10a.
- 3 of the members own their own fields which is planted indigenous millets. 16 members own their own fields which are planted with various kinds of vegetables.
- Harvest of Yatsumata is increasing every year. Yatsumata is a symbol for the association.
- In 2020, the association renovated an closed school to use it as a processing facility.
- Total sales of their millet products in FY2022 were 910,000 JPY.
- They organize a harvest festival with local residents every November.
- They regard the practice of cropping the millets as a “club”. Put much value on enjoyment than selling. Their motto for this association activity is “決して無理をせず、みんな楽しんで” (Take it easy, and have fun together)

Variety of indigenous millets	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)	Area (a)	Yield (kg)
Yatsumata	4.0	43.7	5.0	64.5	12.0	50.0	15.0	100.0	19.0	90.0	17.5	77.8	18.0	138.0
Pearl millet	1.2	14.3	1.5	17.0	0.5	6.0	1.0	8.0	1.0	4.0	4.0	20.0	6.0	28.0
Common millet	1.4	9.9	0.5	5.0	0.5	3.0	0.5	3.0	3.0	13.0	2.0	5.0	2.0	13.0
Japanese millet	1.9	30.7	1.5	30.0	0.5	10.0	5.0	40.0	4.0	20.0	2.0	30.0	4.0	38.0
Foxtail millet	2.3	1.9	0.5	8.5	6.0	10.0	6.0	20.0	1.0	4.0	2.0	20.0	4.0	27.0
Subtotal	10.8	100.5	9.0	125.0	19.5	79.0	27.5	171.0	28.0	131.0	27.5	152.8	34.0	244.0
Buckwheat			80.0	380.0	56.0	140.0	90.0	390.0	103.0	780.0	103.0	550.0	110.0	405.0
Total	10.8	100.5	89.0	485.0	75.5	219.0	117.5	561.0	131.0	911.0	130.5	702.8	144.0	649.0

Table1. Production Trends in Indigenous Millets in Higashi-Iya

■ Collaboration with Slow Food Movement

- Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization, founded in 1989 to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions.
- Slow Food catalogs unique foods that are at risk of extinction due to industrial agriculture, environmental degradation, and cultural homogenization: **The Ark of Taste**.
- In 2021, 6 varieties of indigenous millets have been registered as the Ark of Taste.
- In 2024, 2 members of the association are going to participate in Terra Madre, a food festival held by Slow International every other year in Italy. They plan to exchange the knowledge and suffering through continuing their activities with small-scale producers from around the world.



Photo6-7. Harvesting Festival, Oku-Iya Marche

Photo8-9. The local women's association is creating sweets with Yatsumata

>Local residents pursue what they consider the 'Nishi-Awa landscape' through their activities they regard as a kind of hobbies. In recent years, they have been collaborating with an international organization that promotes grassroots movements."

【Discussion】

- Association members regard the the association as a “club”.
- They cherish their own pace and the joy of gathering.
- The needs to consider how to support such activities as “hobby” or “club activities” which lead to conserve GIAHS.