

# The New Action to Grow the Population of Farmers

## - Balcony Foster Project- SGHN 038 Junten High School

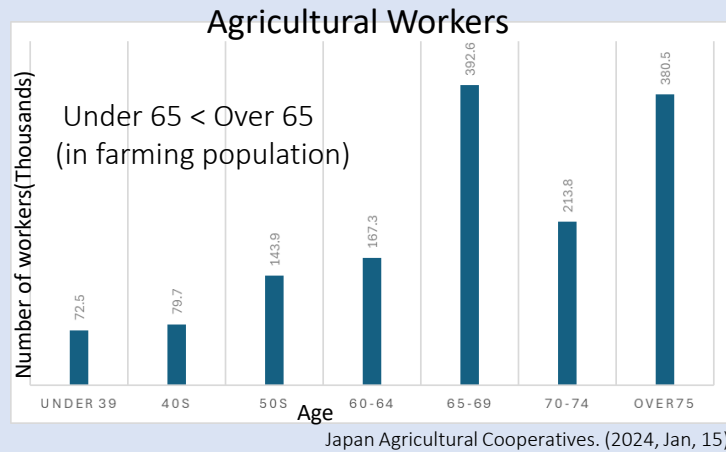
### Introduction

Currently, agriculture in Japan has been facing a low food self-sufficiency rate, an aging population and a serious lack of farmers. This research project aims to address the stated problems by exploring ways to increase the number of farmers in Iwata City, Shizuoka Prefecture.

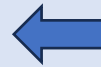
### Present Situation

- Food Self-Sufficiency Rate (Production value):86%(1970)→61%(2023)
- Aging population of farmers

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (n.d.)



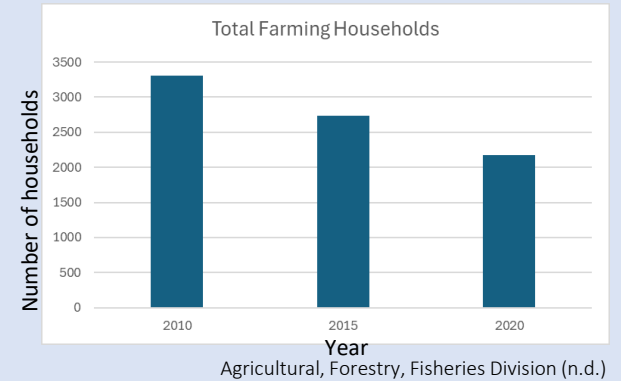
Iwata City (Shizuoka Prefecture)



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**POKKA Sapporo**



順天高等学校



Iwata City has experienced a decline in its farming population. Junten High School is collaborating with Pokka Sapporo to revitalize agriculture in Iwata City. I have visited there 5 times over the past 1.5 years and experienced farming, interviewed agricultural workers, the mayor of Iwata City, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Iwata City, Board of education of Iwata City, and Japanese Agricultural Cooperatives (JA).

### Research (Survey)

About the interest of city dwellers in farming

Total:219 people (ages 6-91)

Students in our school (School Festival):126 people (ages 6-59)

City dwellers (Toshima 5-chome apartment complex)

:93 people (ages 6-91)

The number of questions:34

e.g.,

Do you think farming is appealing?

Do you think farming is a job with bad working conditions?

Do you think farming is not suitable for young people?

Similar data was obtained from age of 10-19 and 40-49, which means that children and their parents have similar ideas / opinions. From the result, I made a hypothesis that parents teach their own ideas / opinions to children so they have similar ideas. That is, both parents & children will be a target of Project 1, and then the images of farming they have can change and raise their interest in farming.

### Interview

Quotes of 25 farmers in Iwata City about farming

- “Farming is not only growing crops”
- “Allowing some invasive plants to grow can enrich the environment of fields and organisms that eat insect pests.”
- “Starting farming at a young age can provide young people with longer experiences and knowledge of farming, leading to high-income farmers.”
- “Farmers are flexible because they can work when they want to.”

### Results & Discussion

Project 1

- 20 lemon seedlings have already been provided
- Positive feedback from people growing seedlings
- This project is being carried out only in our school, so it should be spread to people outside school

Project 2

- The categorization of collected data needs to be reviewed
- The evaluation is limited, so a survey comparing existing posts should be conducted for other city-dwellers

### Conclusion

To address a farmer shortage, I will proceed with two projects. Continuing these two projects will lead people in urban areas to get interested in farming and boost agriculture in rural areas. In addition, the projects can positively affect those who use social media. I want to keep working on these projects and improve Japan's agriculture.

Reference

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### Project 1

Approaching teenagers and their parents in urban areas

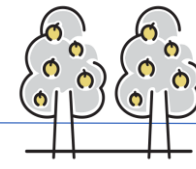
#### Balcony Foster Project

Growing seedlings in cities



Hand out a seedling to teenagers & parents in urban areas to grow on their balcony

Cultivate in Iwata,  
See the real agriculture



- Transport their own grown seedling to Iwata City
- Visit to see the seedling they grew
- Enjoy local events / agricultural activities

Start Farming



Start working as a farmer

### Project 2

Presenting farming attractively in social media

From the interview, I have found out that posting farmers' unique thoughts could bring out the interest in farming from people using social media. I have been collecting categorizing data of existing posts by farmers and rating each account on a scale of 1 to 10 based on how much I like them. After rating the accounts, I will start analyzing what kind of elements are needed to make attractive posts. I'm going to suggest to farmers that they incorporate appealing elements into their posts.

