

Local Innovation Through Food

Ehime Prefectural Imabari West High School

Abstract

We are conducting research to enhance the appeal of our local area and solve regional challenges. By working with a local farmers' market and its café, we develop products using locally grown vegetables, focusing on two key themes. One is "Revitalizing the community by creating and marketing a new food item unique to our region." The other is "Reducing food loss and waste through food education and sustainable eating."

Regional Revitalization Starting from Food

Hypothesis

Locally grown products

⇒ More tourists & Economic benefits!

Eye-catching sweets

⇒ Buzz & SNS appeal

⇒ More customers at the local farmers' market!

⇒ More visitors from outside the city!

Method

Product Development and Sales

Imabari sweet potato & Setouchi lemon

Ship shaped design representing shipbuilding

& Seto Inland Sea

Shio-kaze Sweet Potato



Fig.1 Image of the product we created

Activities

- Flyers & posters
- Instagram promotion
- Customer surveys

Results

1. Instagram reach (Oct. 16—Nov. 10)

⇒ **367,382 views**

2. Units sold (Oct. 18—Nov. 10)

⇒ **120 pieces**

Discussion

From the number of Instagram viewers

- Sent information to more people

From the units sold

- Sales increased significantly on direct promotion days (Oct. 18, Nov. 3)

From customer surveys

- Positive feedback: ⇒ Many customers found the product attractive.
- Most buyers were local residents ⇒ Limited immediate impact on regional revitalization

Delicious Food Loss and Waste Reduction

Background

Food Loss

- Farming
- Manufacturing
- Processing
- Wholesale
- Distribution

Food Waste

- Retail
- Restaurants
- Households

We want to work to reduce food loss and waste!

We want to learn more: How can we reduce food loss and waste?

Hidden Treasure in "Inedible" Parts

Overview : Percentage of Inedible parts

Fruit : 20-40%

(e.g., banana peels, watermelon rind/seeds)

Vegetables : 10-30%

(e.g., radish peels, carrot tops)

Pumpkin : about 10%

(e.g., pulp, seeds, ends)



Hypothesis

Preconception : "Pumpkin seeds can't be eaten!"

↓

Inedible waste remains high

Method

Product

Cozy Pumpkin Cookies



Fig.2 Image of the product

Activities

- Cookie sales
- Customer surveys
- Promoting awareness :

"Pumpkin seeds are edible, nutritious and delicious!"



Fig.3 Steps to prepare pumpkin seeds for eating

Results

1. 100% said "Seeds are delicious!"
2. Many wanted to try roasting and eating seeds themselves
3. Seeds from about 6.2 medium-sized pumpkins consumed in one day

Discussion

- Simpler products using pumpkin seeds
- Simplified steps to make pumpkin seeds edible

➔ Food Loss and waste reduction

Food Loss and Waste Reduction with Imabari specialities

Overview : Japan

5.22 million tons annually (FY 2020)

2-2.5 million tons of vegetables discarded yearly largely due to being non-standard

Overview : Ehime

About 51,000 tons (FY 2020)

Hypothesis

Develop products using Imabari-grown vegetables

Use oversupplied vegetables

↓

Promotes local production & consumption
Reduces food loss and waste

Method

Product Development and Sales

Seasonal Summer Vegetable Furikake



Fig.4 Image of the product we created

Results

Demonstration Day Sales

Assorted Mix-flavor Furikake

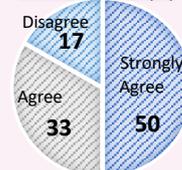
(Carrot & Pumpkin & Okra) **61 bottles/96**

Amanaga chili pepper flavor Furikake

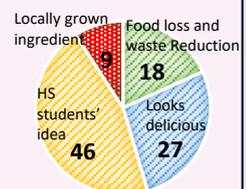
50 bottles/96

Questionnaire (n=6)

Does Furikake contribute to reducing Food loss and waste (%)



Why did you buy Furikake?(%)



Discussion

Easy and delicious Furikake

➔ Food Loss and waste reduction

➔ Local production and Local consumption

Conclusion and Future Prospect

Since most buyers were local residents, it was difficult to achieve regional revitalization through this activity alone. However, long-term product sales and increased media exposure could potentially lead to local revitalization. Working together with the local farmers' market and the community, we need to not only raise awareness, but also continue appeals for practical food loss and waste reduction.

References

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