

*Join the virtual (online) symposium*

# **Is Rural Japan Sustainable? Past, Present and Future of Community-based Endeavors**

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*October 1, 2 and 3, 2021 (Japan Standard Time)*

We are a team of scholars who share a passion about the past, present, and future sustainability of Japanese society, with a particular interest in food, agriculture, fisheries, and forestry issues and how these intersect with Japanese rural communities. We are inviting you to a virtual symposium on October 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 2021 (Japan Standard Time). In five theme sessions, as listed below, scholars from around the world will present state-of-the-art insights from their research. The final session is dedicated to open discussion among all the participants to reflect on the presentations and open dialogues on the sustainable future of rural Japan.

## **Friday, October 1**

*Paper Session 1.* “The current reality of Japan’s agri-food system

*Paper Session 2.* “The future of the Japanese peasantry”

## **Saturday, October 2**

*Paper Session 3.* “Revitalization for changing rural societies.”

*Paper Session 4.* “Alternative producer-consumer linkages in the food system”

## **Sunday, October 3**

*Paper Session 5.* “Multiplicities of actors in agri-food systems”

*Open Discussion.* “What do we know and don’t know about the future of rural Japan?”

Program details are found below in this message, following the *Rationale Statement*.

All the sessions will be virtual and shared via Zoom. English will be the primary language for the symposium (no Japanese translation will be available). Everyone with interests in the symposium’s topics is welcome to participate.

There is no registration fee. Please sign-up through the Google form:

<https://forms.gle/na2tGjhcxo2M3BFG8>

***Upon confirmation of your registration, a zoom URL will be sent to you prior to the symposium.***

## **RATIONALE STATEMENT**

Japan is facing challenges that are similar to those being addressed by other countries around the world, although the constellation of these challenges in Japan poses unique difficulties and opportunities. For example, Japan’s astounding pace of aging, wherein 40 percent of its population will be 65 years of age or older by 2060, and heavy dependence on imported foods, with 60 percent of food calories consumed by the Japanese people coming from abroad, are

contributing to a sense that rural Japan may be facing a major sustainability crisis. The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011 and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 has aggravated this sense of “crisis” and leads to questions of how environmental, health and social risks might be mitigated. Analyses of how these challenges are being addressed in local Japanese communities could not only influence ongoing dialogues about how to improve in quality of life in Japan, but also contribute to illuminating common global challenges and possibilities for sustainable development in other parts of the world.

We are asking scholars who are conducting, or who have recently conducted empirical work in Japan on innovative community-based approaches to transforming food, agriculture, forestry, and fishery to submit abstracts on their work for consideration for presentation in a virtual symposium this fall. We are particularly interested in presentations that highlight how everyday people are approaching local development challenges and opportunities. Thematically, these empirical studies could be framed within a variety of conceptual approaches, including, but not limited to:

- a loss of trust in the political economic system;
- issues of power and powerlessness;
- top -down versus bottom-up development strategies;
- concerns about the future viability of rural Japan;
- local conflicts about development strategies and future visions; and
- creative and innovative approaches to empowering communities, conflict resolutions within the community, and addressing challenges.

## PROGRAM

*(All times listed are **Japan Standard Time**)*

### Friday, October 1st, 2021

**8:20am – 8:30am**

#### ***Welcome & Introduction to the Symposium***

Kiyohiko Sakamoto (Ryukoku University)

**8:30am – 10:10am**

#### ***Paper Session 1. Materialities in the reality of Japan’s agri-food system***

- *Grief, refugia and response-ability in the aftermath of a nuclear disaster: Why the open deliberation of food safety matters to wider debates on sustainability.* Karly Burch (University of Otago)
- *Sustainable living and agriculture woven by the link of "forests, rivers, villages, and the lake" in Shiga Prefecture.* Takayuki Kawarabayashi (Norinchukin Research Institute), Satsuki Taguchi (Norinchukin Research Institute) and Takeshi Murata (Kyushu University)
- *Bridging the gap between the agroecological ideals and implemented practices: a look through current socioeconomic and political contexts of Japan.* Mai Kobayashi and Antoinette Dumont

- *Development of Learning Program about Sustainable Agriculture to Cultivate Food, Literacy among Elementary School Students.* Katsura Omori (Yamagata University), Hiroyuki Yamada (Omori Public Elementary School) and Toru Watanabe (Yamagata University)

**Chair & Discussant:** Norie Tamura (Research Institute for Humanity & Nature)

**10:30am – 12:10am**

***Paper Session 2. The future of peasantry in Japan***

- *Will the New Peasantries Revitalize Rural Japan? Focusing on Rural Communities, Agricultural Land Institutions and Agricultural Cooperatives.* Atsushi Horibe (Tokyo University of Agriculture)
- *Analyzing Japanese strategy for a sustainable food system from the Perspective of sustaining Agriculture and Rural Communities.* Naoya Matsudaira (Kyoto University)
- *Hyakusho-Hyappin Group ” , which takes place to local activation in Seiyo City, Ehime Prefecture.* Atsushi Yamafuji and Toshitaka Katsuki (Ehime University)
- *Challenge of the “Community Association Muchachaen”: Putting the FEC-Self-Sufficiency Theory into Practice.* Takeshi Murata (Kyushu University) and Atsushi Yamafuji (Ehime University)

**Chair & Discussant:** TBA

## **Saturday, October 2nd, 2021**

**8:20am – 8:30am**

***Introduction to the second day of the Symposium***

Midori Hiraga, Kyoto Tachibana University

**8:30am – 10:10am**

***Paper Session 3. Revitalizing revitalization for changing rural societies.***

- *Investigating the disappearance of family homogeneity in rural communities and the changes in principles of community management.* Haruhiko Iba (Kyoto University)
- *Regional management organizations, furusato nozei, and the process of sub-municipal decentralization in rural Japan.* Hanno Jentzsch (University of Vienna)
- *Is Rural Japan Sustainable? Possibilities created by social innovation initiatives.* Lu Yang (Kyoto University)
- *Urban-to-rural migration and lifestyle entrepreneurship: opening spaces of possibilities for resilient rural communities and local agri-food systems.* Simona Zollet and Emi Makino (Hiroshima University)

**Chair & Discussant:** Tomiko Tanaka (James Madison University)

**10:30am - 12:10pm**

***Paper Session 4. Alternative producer-consumer linkages in the food system***

- *Connecting with Rural Organic Farmers: A Case Study of a Teikei Consumer Group’s Four Decades of Experiences.* Kazumi Kondoh (Chuo University)

- *Alternative vs Mainstream: Distribution Challenges in Connecting Small Scale Farmers and Local Consumers.* Chika Kondo and Atsushi Suzuki (Kyoto University)
- *Degrowing Japan through food- lifestyles, lunches, and local policy.* Steven R. McGreevy and Christoph D. D. Rupprecht (Research Institute for Humanity and Nature)

**Chair & Discussant:** Hart N. Feuer (Kyoto University)

## **Sunday, October 3rd, 2021**

**8:20am - 8:30am**

### ***Introduction to the day three of the Symposium***

Raymond Jussaume (Michigan State University)

**8:30am - 10:10am**

### ***Paper Session 5. Multiplicities of actors in agri-food systems***

- *Using traditional vegetables as a way for agricultural revitalization: a case study of Kyoto vegetables.* Aya H. Kimura (University of Hawaii) and Shuji Hisano (Kyoto University)
- *The Future of Japanese Fishing Communities: Economic Revitalization through 'Stealth' Privatization.* Alayna Ynacay-Nye (Kyoto University)
- *Can 'Agro-Medico-Polis' Give New Meanings to Rural Japan?* Koichi Ikegami (Kindai University)
- *Glocalization with Paradigm Shift from Fordism to Nichism and University Social Responsibility for Japanese Sustainable Agricultural/Rural Development in Globalizing Economy.* Yoshio Kawamura (Ryukoku University)

**Chair & Discussant:** Masashi Tachikawa (Nagoya University)

**10:30am - 12:10pm**

### ***Open Discussion. What do we know and don't know about the future of rural Japan?***

Keiko Tanaka (University of Kentucky)

**12:10 - 12:30pm**

### ***Conclusion and our next steps.***

Kiyohiko Sakamoto (Ryukoku University) and Midori Hiraga (Kyoto Tachibana University)

## **Contact for Information**

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