

What is the Hyogo Rice Campaign?

The Hyogo Rice Campaign, active since 1997 as a joint effort among related organizations, was started to promote healthy, rice-based diets and create opportunities for people to think about rice and consider ideal eating habits, the roles of agriculture and agricultural villages, and global food problems as familiar issues.

The Hyogo Rice Campaign Promotion Council was established in July 1999 as the nucleus of the campaign, following 260 meetings in various places within the prefecture during the two years of 1997 and 1998 to form a consensus among Hyogo citizens regarding the campaign.

Charter of the Hyogo Rice Campaign Promotion Council

It is often said in Japan that we are living in “the era of food satiation.” Japan enjoys an abundant and varied diet of the highest standard in the world. On the other hand, Japan has one of the lowest food self-sufficiency rates among major advanced nations. Approximately 800 million people on earth now suffer chronic malnutrition, and it is said that we may face a global food crisis in the 21st century due to rapid increase in the world’s population and deterioration of the global environment.

We need to make efforts to become as self-sufficient as possible in the food items we consume daily, not only for our own sakes but also for our children and the following generations.

Thankfully, we have a unique food culture passed down over generations featuring side dishes made of abundant seasonal harvests and centered around rice—the only grain that we are able to supply for ourselves here in Japan—as our staple food. We have a duty to have broad perspectives regarding food/agriculture, health and the environment, to renew our recognition of the advantages of rice and rice-based meals, and to pass down to the next generation our rice-based food culture that we can boast of to the world, the paddy fields from which this rich blessing comes, and the agricultural villages that are our “spiritual home.”

Keeping this duty in our minds, we must consider the food/agricultural issue as a problem related to each of us, and widely publicize the Hyogo Rice Campaign to help rediscover the diverse roles of rice, the only grain we can supply for ourselves here in Japan.

In light of the above, we, seeking wide approval and active participation, hereby suggest the establishment of the Hyogo Rice Campaign Promotion Council in order to run this campaign as an all-out effort involving consumers, producers, academic experts, companies and other organizations as well as the prefectural and municipal governments, among other parties.

April 1, 1999

[The four objectives of the campaign]

1. Healthy lives (Awareness-raising of healthy diets to prevent lifestyle diseases)
2. Future food security (Improvement of the domestic self-sufficiency rate)
3. Environmental conservation (Maintenance of paddy fields’ functions for environmental conservation and disaster risk reduction)
4. Crisis management (Revitalization of agriculture/agricultural villages based on the lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake)