

FUKUSHIMA DESK NEWS

Sendai Diocesan Support Center
No.18—October 2015

“Scientific Communication”

Between General Public and Research Organization

At 1.5 km off the coast of Fukushima #1 Atomic Plant, there is a group of people who meet once a month to gather some earth from the bottom of the sea and catch some fish. The earth and fish are carried to the aquarium in Iwaki City. The skillful fingers of the well-informed veterinarian dissects the fish. He talks to the children while separating



the flesh from the bones: “You know it is in the flesh that radioactive Cesium accumulates more than any other place.” “You can tell the age of a fish by the annual growth of its ear stone. See this fish is three years old. How old are *you*?” He asks a boy as he measures the result of his own work. These children, with this kind of correct knowledge, are fortunately free from disturbing images of uncertainty as well as from deliberate indifference.

“Fukushima Vegetable Field” Starts Out with a New Hope for Development

In July 2011, four months after the Atomic Plant accident, Fukushima Vegetable Field launched out in action, strengthened by the prayers of the parishioners of Nihonmatsu Catholic Church, and first started with selling farm products of Fukushima at some Catholic churches in the capital area. In April 2012, the small group of the “Vegetable Field” became an independent NPO project.

We are now in the fifth year after the Earthquake, but only 70 % of the

farmers who left Fukushima after the earthquake have returned. The number of our customers as well as our income is getting gradually decreasing. The damage caused by a rumor is not helping the situation. However, we are convinced that Fukushima is not defeated. “We shall overcome!”

New houses are being built, and the evacuees who had moved out to temporary houses are gradually returning. These people have to restart, building again their own but new community. Some families have fallen apart, divided according to generations. Many families consist of elderly people.

Fukushima Vegetable Field is searching to find the means to help such families with their new activities as following.

1) “Food on Wheels” for the elderly people who find it difficult to go shopping is being planned.

Our appeal by “24 hours TV” for the donation of a refrigeration car received a positive response last September, and now we can carry not only vegetables but tofu, and natto, as well as other different kinds of food, which are much appreciated by our elderly friends.

Also, apart from the Earthquake, there is a general tendency toward the aging society. We intend to visit such people and offer to help them face to face.



2) We are planning to start a Food Bank as of next year.

This means that this organization collects from various companies, food with a limited time and date for selling, to be given to those who are financially poor.

3) Hydroelectric generation for vinyl houses is hoped to be introduced for heating. One of our members runs a company to produce precision instruments, and aims at the realization of this plan.

At present, Fukushima Vegetable Field is an NPO, but we are applying for its official recognition. When that is realized, the benefactors of donations

will be partially exempt from the income tax. “Fukushima Vegetable Field” will be announced to our readers, too.

(by Chikako Yaginuma,

President of Fukushima Vegetable Field, Reconstruction Project)

Fukushima Prefecture Searches for Means to Overcome Rumor Damage

The editorial of Fukushima Mimpo Newspaper reported in its editorial on October 12, 2015, that the national convention of Mass Communication Ethics took up the problem of the damage caused by rumors. The fishing and agricultural products of Fukushima have to submit to strict inspections before shipment. Many of the participants of the meeting had never known that such strict checking was being imposed on Fukushima. In today’s distribution structure, the presence of many substituting objects and people’s sensitive desire for safety do not help those who suffer from rumor damage. The number of the schools which sent their students for educational trips from outside Fukushima Prefecture has shown the change as follows:

Year - 2009 :	4779	schools,	556205	students
2010 :	4381	”	509431	”
2011 :	760	”	78699	” (The year of the Earthquake)
2012 :	1592	”	149663	”
2013 :	2293	”	212971	”
2014 :	2770	”	251850	”

The number of the students gives only those who stayed over one-or-more nights.

You see a big drop in the number right after the Earthquake. However, the teachers and parents of the schools outside Fukushima are showing their increase of interest in and understanding of our Prefecture.

Fukushima Desk

<http://fukushimadesk.blogspot.jp/>

No. 18 - October 2015