



Community Agriculture



Last updated:
2020-07-02
A newer version might be available. Click or scan the code to get it!

📍 Japan - Nagano

Work side by side with local farmers and learn from them how to plant and harvest crops, protect them from animals and preserve them for winter time.

The population in and around the village of Otaki is aging while young Japanese are leaving, pursuing a life and work in one of the big cities. The older population, staying in Otaki, appreciates a helping hand in their daily tasks. But even more so, they enjoy the company and the chance to share their knowledge and experience.



Program Description

Farming in Japan is different from farming in North America or the US. The mountainous Japanese landscape doesn't allow for big, stretched out fields. Instead many people run their own little farms, tugged into the hills.

The village of Otaki is no different. Many of its inhabitants are growing vegetables and crops, some have animals. They sell their harvest on local markets or in regional supermarkets. But while the younger generation leaves the countryside, the work is getting harder for the ones who stay.

Most people in and around Otaki follow a rather traditional Japanese lifestyle. Their houses merge western elements with traditional Japanese architecture. But with the young generation leaving the countryside, many of the elders are increasingly afraid of their customs dying with them. More than you helping them in their daily work, they appreciate the chance to teach you about their work and their culture.

For Japanese farmers the day typically starts with sunrise. You may be asked to get up early to do some first chores before breakfast. Throughout the rest of the day more work awaits. Depending on the season and weather, expect about 2-5 hours of work per day. During spring, summer and autumn, the work will be mostly outdoors. Tasks e.g. could be:

- Fertilizing fields
- Plowing fields
- Planting / harvesting
- Maintaining fences to keep out the monkeys and wild boars
- Maintaining the water supply system

During late autumn and winter most work would be done inside. This is when Japanese farmers process their harvest to conserve it throughout the winter or dedicate themselves to local handicraft. Tasks could e.g. be:

- Processing the harvest to conserve it
- Preparing conserved meals
- Local handicraft
- Preparations for the upcoming spring
- Scraping snow

Besides your work on the farm, you will join other participants in Otaki to learn about local culture and explore the surroundings.

Please note that during the months of January and February participants will assist the elders in the community with snow removal and can engage in winter sports such as sledding or snow trekking as well as the other weather permitting activities described.

Program Duration & Availability

Min duration (weeks): 1

Aims & Objectives

- Give the locals company and a chance to share their culture and experience
- Support them in their farming tasks

Schedule

Monday to Friday

- You may be asked to help out on the farm in the early morning
- Breakfast
- Perform a variety of outdoor or indoor tasks
- Lunch
- Cultural or outdoor activities together will all participants in Otaki
- Complete additional tasks on the farm
- Dinner
- Cultural or outdoor activities together will all participants in Otaki

This schedule can be changed and/or amended depending on weather conditions, local conditions and unforeseen circumstances.

Starting Dates

During 2019

Jan 7th	Jan 14th	Jan 21st	Jan 28th	Feb 4th	Feb 11th	Feb 18th
Feb 25th	Mar 4th	Mar 11th	Mar 18th	Mar 25th	Apr 1st	Apr 8th
Apr 15th	Apr 22nd	Apr 29th	May 6th	May 13th	May 20th	May 27th
Jun 3rd	Jun 10th	Jun 17th	Jun 24th	Jul 1st	Jul 8th	Jul 15th
Jul 22nd	Jul 29th	Aug 5th	Aug 12th	Aug 19th	Aug 26th	Sep 2nd
Sep 9th	Sep 16th	Sep 23rd	Sep 30th	Oct 7th	Oct 14th	Oct 21st
Oct 28th	Nov 4th	Nov 11th	Nov 18th	Nov 25th	Dec 2nd	Dec 9th
Dec 16th	Dec 23rd					

During 2020

Jan 13th	Jan 20th	Jan 27th	Feb 3rd	Feb 10th	Feb 17th	Feb 24th
Apr 20th	Apr 27th	May 11th	May 18th	May 25th	Jun 1st	Jun 8th
Jun 15th	Jun 22nd	Jun 29th	Jul 6th	Jul 13th	Jul 20th	Jul 27th
Aug 3rd	Aug 17th	Aug 24th	Aug 31st	Sep 7th	Sep 14th	Sep 21st
Sep 28th	Oct 5th	Oct 12th	Oct 19th	Oct 26th		

Participant Criteria & Requirements

Minimum age:	-
Maximum age:	-
Minimum English level:	Basic
CRB required:	On Signup
Passport copy required:	No
Resume copy required:	No
Required qualification:	None

Additional Requirements

There are no further requirements for this program.

Additional Equipment

There are no further requirements for this program.