

Collection of Best Practices on Acceptance of Specified Skilled Workers in the Agricultural Field

FY2024 edition



National Chamber of Agriculture

Introduction

Six years have passed since the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker” was established under the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice,” which went into effect on April 1, 2019.

The Specified Skilled Worker System is designed to accept foreign human resources who can work immediately in industrial fields where there is a serious labor shortage. In the agricultural field, “Specified Skilled Worker (i),” which allows workers to stay in Japan for a total of up to five years” has been applied. Furthermore, on August 31, 2023, “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” started operation in 11 specified industrial fields, including agriculture.

Since then, the system has steadily expanded and the number of Specified Skilled Workers in all fields has exceeded 260,000 (as of the end of August 2024), and the number of organizations that accept Specified Skilled Workers has exceeded 10,000 (as of the end of October 2024).

Under these circumstances, the National Chamber of Agriculture conducted a survey for farmers who have accepted Specified Skilled Workers in the agricultural field as part of a project of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in FY2024 “Support project to properly accept foreigners for agricultural support” and has created the collection of best practices for five years since FY2020.

Specifically, it conducted a questionnaire survey on the following items for farmers who have accepted Specified Skilled Workers and are members of the Specified Agricultural Skilled Worker Council, and compiled the results based on the survey, as well as individual interviews and surveys.

- (1) Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system
- (2) Employment contract and support
- (3) Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment of foreign human resources
- (4) Effects of acceptance and future views on accepting new countries
- (5) Voices of Specified Skilled Workers, etc.

In particular, the surveys after FY2021 introduce examples that can be model cases, such as working on the career advancement of foreign human resources, including the promotion of Specified Skilled Workers to certain positions, etc.

The surveys also introduce useful references, such as how to support Specified Skilled Workers, how to prepare for accepting them, and how to divide roles in the workplace.

This collection of best practices was created so that farmers, etc. who have accepted or are thinking of accepting Specified Skilled Workers can utilize this system appropriately and smoothly, while also aiming to further improve the working environment for foreign human resources.

December 2024

National Chamber of Agriculture

*The year, month, and number of people in the case examples are as of the date of the survey.

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Case 01

Creating a stable workplace through year-round employment in vegetable production and primary processing
Welcoming multinational human resources and providing a career advancement opportunity for foreign human resources!

Accepting organization

Mikita Co., Ltd.

(Naganuma-cho, Yubari-gun, Hokkaido)
 (In 1987, the founder took over the family farming business;
 in 2007, Mikita Co., Ltd. was established; and in 2017, the
 current president took office)

Registered support organization

Takehara LLC



1 Basic information

■ Scale of management

- **Main crops** Japanese leek, sweet corn, broccoli, tomato, wheat, soybeans, etc.
- **Business description** **Vegetable production, primary vegetable processing (Onion, processed pumpkin, burdock)**, farm inn, **contract farming**
- **Arable land area** 55 ha
- **Sales** 400 million yen/FY2023
- **Employees** Japanese nationals: 20 (Full-time: 8, Part-time: 12)
Non-Japanese nationals: 22 (Men: 14, Women: 8)



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 5 (Chinese: 2, Mongolian: 2, Indonesian: 1; employment started in January 2022; Men: 4, Women: 1)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 17 (Vietnamese, Mongolian, Indonesian)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- Solving a labor shortage was the first priority. Since three Technical Intern Trainees (who have completed Technical Intern Training (iii)) at our company wished to continue working, we decided

to introduce the Specified Skilled Worker System to hire them continuously as Specified Skilled Workers.

- Besides them, two people have been working at our company (a person who has completed Technical Intern Training (iii) at another company, and a person who studied in his home country and passed the exam after being sent from a temp agency to our company).
- **For foreign human resources, the attractions of our company are that they can work in a pleasant environment, and work and earn an income throughout the year.**

■ Recruitment methods

- Other than recruitment by ourselves, we are introduced by the supervising organization and registered support organization.
- **We use our company's Instagram to introduce its work, travel, and exchange programs to overseas readers** and solicit applicants.
A Mongolian Specified Skilled Worker who returned his country temporarily came back to Japan after seeing our Instagram.
- **We also have a vision of establishing a Japanese language school in Indonesia, mainly for those who have returned to Indonesia after working at Mikita Co., Ltd., and cultivating people who want to work in Japan. We would like to consider recruiting through this route in the future.**

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- About 10 years ago, we began accepting Chinese Technical Intern Trainees. Their contract period was six months from spring to autumn, excluding winter, which is agricultural off-season.
- **Currently, they are able to work year-round, such as cultivating and processing various items, so they are hired for three consecutive years under a one-year contract.**
- They also wish to stay in Japan at least for three years, anticipating two or three years ahead.

■ Support plan

- We ask the registered support organization to prepare support plans.
- Preliminary guidance is provided mainly by the registered support organization, with our company also present.
- We clearly explain salary deductions and other related items.
- We tell them not to use unknown websites because there was a case in which a payment was made with a prepaid card but the product was not delivered.

■ Living environment

- **We provide accommodation at four locations by renting detached houses.** We also lend bicycles for commuting. The commuting time from each dormitory is about the same.
- Dormitory assignments are determined based on the country of origin of Specified Skilled Workers. There are cases where workers from different countries share the same dormitory, but there has been no problem because they can talk to each other in Japanese.



- The dormitories are as follows: a men's dormitory (one Chinese Specified Skilled Worker, two Mongolian Specified Skilled Workers, and one Vietnamese Technical Intern Trainee (iii)); a women's dormitory (eight workers including Chinese, Mongolian, Vietnamese, and Indonesian nationals); an Indonesian dormitory; and a Vietnamese dormitory. The women's dormitory provides private rooms for all workers.
- There is no trouble with the neighborhood. Since there are few foreign residents in the district, we tell them to greet their neighbors properly. The neighbors are rather warm to them.

■ Communication, complaint handling, etc

- We do not have regular meetings. Specified Skilled Workers have been working in our company for a long time, so we have almost no communication problems.
- As for the living environment, there are requests for daily necessities, such as futons and refrigerators, but there are no complaints about work.
- Workers who want to work overtime are encouraged to do so, while those who do not wish to are not required to work overtime. Currently, Specified Skilled Workers want to work more than 40 hours a week.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The salary is **185,467 yen per month**.
- The daily working hours are 7.5 hours, starting at 8:00 and ending at 17:00.
- Breaks are 15 minutes from 10:00, 60 minutes from 12:00, and 15 minutes from 15:00. Juice is provided during the breaks at 10:00 and 15:00.
- The bonus is up to 62,000 yen. We make a difference based on their performance. Special pay is also provided.
- A housing allowance of 20,000 yen per person per month is provided to Specified Skilled Workers and certain intern trainees.
- **During the busy season for four months in summer, company meals (lunch) are provided at low prices.** Some of the workers have quick lunches because they are busy, but **we are making efforts to ensure they have proper meals.**



■ Health and safety and labor management

- Both on the farm and in the collection area, machines and equipment are used. If there are any precautions, Japanese employees, who are leaders of each work area, provide warnings in advance.

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **Regardless of whether they are Japanese or non-Japanese, if they demonstrate the necessary abilities, we consider promoting them to leadership positions.**
- **As support for skill development, we provide a 100% subsidy for obtaining a driver's license.** So far, two workers have acquired driver's license. (Of them, one worker had a license in Mongolia, so he switched his license to an international license.)
- **For those who pass the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, we provide a 100% subsidy for the cost necessary to pass the test.** So far, one worker has N2, two have N3, and one has N4. **One worker is trying to obtain N1.**
- If a worker becomes a factory manager in the future, we would like the worker to obtain a license for heavy machinery.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- There is a pay raise system based on annual evaluation.

■ Benefits

- We participate in the local autumn festival (Kuriyama Festival) and hold a dinner party (eating out) once every two months.
- At the end of each year, we organize an overnight trip to Sapporo or other places.
- A Mongolian Specified Skilled Worker has a driver's license and uses a company car to take other workers to a shopping mall in Iwamizawa City about twice a month.



5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- Sales have doubled since we began accepting Specified Skilled Workers in 2017.
- Although the cultivation area and crops have not changed, we can work throughout the year (harvesting Japanese leeks grown by other farmers and primary processing of onions in winter, etc.), which leads to the scale expansion. The hardest work is the harvesting of Japanese leeks. As the number of farmers is decreasing due to aging, we have a lot of requests from farmers for harvesting because many foreign workers, including trainees, are working at our company.
- The acceptance of foreign human resources has also been effective in revitalizing the workplace. Japanese employees who are much older than intern trainees and Specified Skilled Workers treat them like their grandchildren. They communicate well.

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- After returning to their countries, we would like them to revitalize agriculture, but it is difficult to do farming in the same way as in Japan due to differences in tractors and other machinery.
- As a practical matter, we would like to create a system in which the workers will make use of the Japanese language they have learned to ask their juniors, friends, and colleagues who are interested in Japan and want to work in Japan to come to Japan, and would like them to be engaged in the operation of the system. We are envisioning something like a Japanese language school or language classes. The workers say that the cost of studying Japanese locally is about the equivalent of one month's salary. Our future vision is to create a system where people can learn Japanese at low prices and choose our company as their workplace.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We want to hire more Specified Skilled Workers in the future. We also want to hire Technical Intern Trainees who are currently working at our company as Specified Skilled Workers if they wish.
- **We do not think transfer of personnel is a bad thing. This means that foreign human resources can change their jobs and join a better company. This also means that we will have a chance to hire them.** At present, those who have left our company are only those who wish to return to their home countries. There are many workers who have moved to our company from other farms.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- We have not decided yet, but we intend to use them.

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- We have workers from various countries, so we tell applicants about the details of our work system at the time of interview. At present, there are no religious issues, such as prayer times, to be addressed.
- We would like to continue to accept workers from various countries.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- In the past, we participated in weeding activities, but today there are no particular joint activities in the community.
- We are the only company in this area that employs foreign human resources, **so the community people treat the workers kindly. They sometimes give us rice for the workers.**
- **Our company's basketball team (a multinational team consisting mainly of Mongolian) plays games with high school student teams** at a local school gym.



■ Training and employment system

- We are thinking of using the system as a structure that allows foreign human resources to continue to work until they become a Specified Skilled Worker (i).



Ms. Cho Tan

- I am from Jilin Province, China. It's been **six years since I came to Japan.** I joined the company **in April this year (2024) as a Specified Skilled Worker (i).**
- Before joining the company, I worked in a sewing factory in Mie. Since I want to experience various things and am interested in agriculture, I changed my job.
- I studied Japanese by reading books. It is sometimes difficult to talk to Japanese people at work, so **I think studying is the most important thing for me.**
- I love Japanese food. My favorite food is sushi and sashimi. There is no food I don't like so far.
- I grow vegetables to eat by myself, such as Chinese cabbage, lettuce, and onion.
- **I would like to continue to work in Japan for a long time.**

Case 02

Development and cultivation of cold-resistant Japanese grass with parent company Delegating core work to Specified Skilled Workers!

Accepting organization

Marutomi Research Farm Co., Ltd.
(Yakumo-cho, Futami-gun, Hokkaido)
(The parent company, Marutomi Co., Ltd., has been recognized as an excellent construction company by Hokkaido Construction Administration Department)

Registered support organization

Employment Creation Support Organization (ECS)



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Grass, flowers
- **Arable land area** Grass: 60 ha, Greenhouse: 35 a (5 houses)
▶ Producing flowers (Marigold, Begonia) in the greenhouses
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 2
Non-Japanese nationals: 3



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 1 (Male Vietnamese, Technical Intern Trainee since October 2018, became a Specified Skilled Worker three years later)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 2 (Male Vietnamese)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- We began accepting Specified Skilled Workers in order to solve a labor shortage (through continuous employment) and to provide job opportunities for those who wish to continue working.
- About three years have passed since we began accepting the Specified Skilled Worker. In 2018, we accepted him as a Technical Intern Trainee, and in 2021 he became a Specified Skilled Worker.
- The main reason for hiring Vietnamese is that they understand Japanese people's character and

have good compatibility with Japanese people.

- The foreign human resources expected high wages in Japan.
- The management of Technical Intern Trainees has been entrusted to a supervising organization, the Innovative Organization for Human Resource Cultivation and Encouragement (iforce).
- The current Technical Intern Trainees are in their second year. Basically, most of the intern trainees we accepted are from northern Vietnam.
- Since we are currently experiencing a labor shortage, we try to offer favorable conditions for Technical Intern Trainees.
- At present, we do not feel a labor shortage as we have accepted Technical Intern Trainees.

■ Recruitment methods

- Continued employment from Technical Intern Trainee (ii) at the company.
- One of the reasons for accepting trainees from Vietnam is that the president had an acquaintance in Vietnam and had opportunities to travel Vietnam on a regular basis. In addition, he had visited a sending organization in Vietnam, and thought about introducing Technical Intern Trainees through that organization, which led to the introduction of the system.
- Since we had to choose the supervising organization from among three to five companies with which the sending organization collaborated, we chose the Innovative Organization for Human Resource Cultivation and Encouragement (iforce), which met the requirements.
- We have no complaints about the registered support organization or problems with the system as a whole. We have never had difficulties in preparing documents. The Employment Creation Support Organization (ECS) visits us once every three months and provides online support when needed. We communicate with the organization on a regular basis.



3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- We have concluded a five-year contract. The period of employment is determined by the foreign worker based on his own preference.
- **After completing the Technical Intern Training, the worker returned to his country temporarily for two months and signed an employment contract as a Specified Skilled Worker.**

■ Support plan

- We ask the registered support organization to prepare support plans.
- In the preliminary guidance, we explained mainly about the pension and tax systems. We did not have any difficulty in gaining an understanding because the tax system in Japan is similar to that in Vietnam.

■ Living environment

- A total of six workers, who are from Marutomi Co., Ltd., the parent company, and Marutomi Research Farm Co., Ltd., live in two secondhand houses we purchased. At present, all the accepted workers are men, so we do not decide their houses according to gender. They find the accommodations comfortable and are satisfied with them.
- Foreign workers understand how to separate garbage and take out garbage according to the rules.
- They enjoy activities such as playing soccer and gardening in the spacious yard.



■ Communication

- They do not have any problem in communicating with us at work.
- They are also familiar with the **Donan** dialect and seem to be more familiar with it than the standard language.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The salary is 220,000 yen per month, including overtime pay. **Basically, as we try not to make a difference between the salaries of foreign workers and Japanese workers, the salary of foreign workers is at the same level as Japanese workers.**
- The daily working hours are from 7:30 to 16:00. Seven-hour work is standard and remains consistent throughout the year.

■ Health and safety and labor management

- The work using the agricultural tractor may involve danger, so we advise them to be careful.
- There have been no accidents or injuries.
- The trainees also have a driver's license. They only drive during work and use a company car.

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **The Specified Skilled Worker is already a leader and plays a central role.**
- The Specified Skilled Worker did not have a driver's license, but attended a driving school at his own request. He had no problems with his practical skills, but kanji and Japanese language were difficult for him, and it took him about a year to graduate. The fee for a driver's license test was paid by the company.

A Vietnamese international driver's license cannot be used in Japan and must be switched to a Japanese one.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- Wages are not regularly raised, but they are evaluated and raised appropriately according to performance.
- The parent company has a leader allowance system, but Marutomi Research Farm does not have the system because it does not have a construction site. However, the workers play the central role in their work.

■ Benefits

- At the end of the year, we went sightseeing in Noboribetsu for a company year-end party and stayed at a hot spring hotel.
- When we did not have many Technical Intern Trainees, we went sightseeing frequently, but we have had less opportunities since the number of trainees we accepted increased. In the past, we went see fireworks and strawberry picking.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- There is no doubt that the acceptance has led to an improvement in the labor force.

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- We think communication will mainly take place through social media. If we have a chance, we want to visit Vietnam.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We would like to respect the intention of each Technical Intern Trainees regarding whether they transfer to Specified Skilled Workers.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- We are concerned about the high hurdle of the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- As wages are rising in Vietnam and other countries, we are concerned that trainees will not come even if we are willing to accept them. There are cases where trainees go to other countries than Japan, such as Taiwan and Korea, for work.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- We have no particular request for the support of local governments to Specified Skilled Workers.
- As the training and employment system has not been finalized, we cannot decide whether or not to use it. However, we are positively considering its utilization, as we would face difficulties if we no longer had foreign employees.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Mr. Nguyen Hung Phi

- **I came to Japan as part of the first batch of foreign intern trainees.** I have many friends who are working as Technical Intern Trainees in Japan. I have the perception that Specified Skilled Workers are highly paid. I continue to work hard during the remaining contract period.

Case 03

The senary industrialization of Iburigakko (smoked pickled radish) from the production to sales of Daikon radish, learning Akita culture and Japanese language, and aiming to be an active leader

Accepting organization

Iburinosato Co., Ltd.
(Daisen City, Akita)

(Since 2013 after the Great East Japan Earthquake, we have restored and supported famous products in Tohoku, and we succeeded the business from Inoue Nosan Co., Ltd. in 2015 and Inoue Nosan in 2023.)

Registered support organization

Smart One Co., Ltd.



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Daikon radish (240,000 tons sold annually)
- **Arable land area** 35 ha, 5 greenhouses
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 11 (Directors: 2, Full-time employees: 9)
 - ▶ The company was managed as Inoue Nosan Co., Ltd.
 - ▶ It became a joint-stock company on January 5, 2023, as a result of business succession and was renamed Iburinosato Co., Ltd.



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 4 (2 male Vietnamese (since 2021), 2 female Vietnamese (since 2023 and 2024))
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 1 (Vietnamese)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system, etc.

- Against the backdrop of a labor shortage, we decided to accept foreign human resources. We had accepted Japanese applicants, but they could not work for a long time.
- At first, we accepted two Vietnamese men as Technical Intern Trainees. One returned to Vietnam, while the other has been working as a Specified Skilled Worker for three years.
- Since the Specified Skilled Workers we have accepted had received training at a hospital of

the National Welfare Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, they have been hired as Specified Skilled Workers since they started working. Although they had returned to Vietnam due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we notified them of our employment conditions, and on September 15, 2021, two women came back to Japan as Specified Skilled Workers.

- Specified Skilled Workers can perform tasks efficiently due to the lack of language barriers and their familiarity with the work.
- **At first, they had difficulty in communicating because they did not understand the Akita dialect.** Due to language problems, **we asked them to repeat themselves over and over and communicated with gestures.**

■ Recruitment methods

- The four Specified Skilled Workers include **one worker who has completed Technical Intern Training (ii) at our company and three workers who have completed Technical Intern Training (ii) at other companies** (including referrals from foreign employees at our company).
- High wages and the availability to work overtime are good for foreign human resources. It is considered that wages are three times higher than in Vietnam.
- The registered support organization of Specified Skilled Workers is Smart One Co., Ltd., and the supervising organization of Technical Intern Trainees is Tohoku Sangyo.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- We are introduced to foreign human resources by Smart One Co., Ltd. and directly employ them at Iburinosato. The procedures for the residence card are handled by Smart One Co., Ltd.
- **The employment contract is for a period of two years** and continues thereafter by mutual agreement. **The period is set at two years by the request of the workers.**

■ Support plan

- Support from the registered support organization is adequate.
- **The points of assistance we explained in the pre-entry guidance were crime prevention and the characteristics of Japanese culture.**
- Since we have young workers, **we always call their attention to crime prevention just in case.**
- On holidays, **we create opportunities to experience Japanese culture, such as visiting shrines and festivals.**
- When workers need a reexamination as a result of a medical checkup, we make sure that they go to the hospital. At present, a worker who needs to go to the hospital has a driver's license and drives to the hospital.

■ Living environment

- It takes about 2-3 minutes by car from the factory.
- Regarding the housing environment, **a room of 12 square meters (6 tatami mats) is offered to each person. We rent two houses for men and women (two men and two women each).**

- They separate the garbage by themselves, bring it to the company, and dispose of it at the company collectively.
- There is no trouble with the neighborhood. We always instruct them to be careful. We have not heard of any problems at other companies in Daisen City that accept foreign human resources.

■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- As a way of communication, **we try to do something that makes foreign workers happy. We have dinner at a restaurant together several times a month.** It is mainly on holidays.
- We make a company trip several times a year to see cherry blossoms and local festivals. In the past, we went to Kamakura, the Oga Peninsula, a cherry blossom festival in Hirosaki, and Wanko soba experience in Iwate.
- Foreign workers ask for more overtime work, **and all of them work overtime.**
- We get busy in the harvest season of Daikon radish, so they work overtime for about two hours a day.



4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- **The salary is** basically **at least 192,000 yen (1,000 yen/hour x 24 days/month).** **Overtime allowance is provided** when working overtime.
- **The annual bonus is about 200,000 yen, which is paid before the long holidays (Bon and New Year holidays).**
- Overtime allowance is about 200,000 to 500,000 yen/year. In the age when people can easily access information through social media, **we try to offer the same salary with that in the Kanto region where salaries are relatively high. The foreign workers at our company are satisfied with it.**
- **We believe that paying a fair salary will lead to long-term work motivation.**
- The daily working hours are from 8:00 to 17:00. Breaks are 30 minutes each in the morning and afternoon and a lunch break is one hour.
- Even if they finish work early, they are deemed to have worked until 17:00.
- In accordance with the Labor Standards Act, we pay 25% extra for overtime work, the same as for Japanese workers. **Basically, we do not have them work on a holiday.**
- Japanese workers do not work overtime, but foreign workers wish to work overtime, so we ask them to work in the morning. They work from 5:00 to 7:00, and 3,000 yen is provided per hour. In terms of labor and management, we are helped by the increased labor force.

■ Health and safety and labor management

- There is basically no dangerous work. When they use machines such as slicers for processing, we instruct them to be careful.
- **We ensure that workers can perform tasks in any department. The work varies depending on the day.**
- **The name “Iburigakko” has been branded as an authentic Japanese product in the GI registration of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.**

■ Support for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **We expect all the foreign workers we currently employ to work as leaders.**
- **If they can work for a long time, we would like to provide them with a post such as a site supervisor.**
We want them to work for a long time, but we give priority to their wishes.
- **Three** of the four workers **(one man and two women) have a driver’s license** and can also drive a truck in their work. **We have a company car that they can use freely.**
- One male Specified Skilled Worker bought a car, and we paid half of the cost. We also covered the cost for obtaining a driver’s license.
- **Two workers (one woman and one man) are married.**
- They returned to their country for about a month. When workers return to their countries for a long period of time, they can use their paid vacation.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- **Their salaries are rising as their skills are improving.** There is not a big difference in their salaries because the pay increase is based on the evaluation system, but the amount varies depending on worker. We are not sure if they are aware of the difference in their salaries.
- A worker who is fluent in Japanese is **given an allowance as a leader. The worker works as an interpreter when we want to communicate.** When the worker’s interpretation is necessary, we pay qualification and skill allowance.
- As a housing allowance, **we give 10,000 yen per person out of 20,000 yen of housing expense.** We get paid 10,000 yen (as utilities, etc.) per month.

■ Benefits

- We actively plan company trips.
- We are trying to have more workers participate in local events. We would also like them to see the autumn leaves, but they may be busy due to the work schedule.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- They are especially helpful in heavy work such as harvesting daikon radish. Japanese workers were in charge of the production and harvesting of daikon radish, but it was difficult due to the aging of the workers. **The introduction of foreign human resources improved work speed by two to three times.**
- We harvest daikon radish using a combine. **Foreign human resources are engaged in all processes, such as smoking and pickling.** Among the processes, harvesting is particularly hard. Since harvesting becomes difficult when it snows, it is a race against time.
- **It takes at least three months from production to shipment. The process is mostly done manually, requiring significant labor.**
- **Operation teams** have been formed, and **both Japanese and foreign workers work based on the same level and treatment.** **The operations include cultivation, harvesting, processing, sterilization, and packing.**
- **Smoking is technically the most difficult. Foreign human resources** are helpful as they are in charge of smoking. **They also serve as a model for Japanese employees.**
- One of the difficulties in accepting foreign workers is that they may not adapt to the environment. In the past, we had some workers return to their countries.
- There are no problems related to crimes, such as theft, which can be considered as a concern of farmers considering accepting foreign workers.



■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- It depends on worker, but we want to keep in touch.
- We would like to ask the returned trainees to work again at our company and introduce people who wish to work in Japan.

■ Increase in hiring

- We would like to continue hiring foreign workers. It will also help solve problems, such as the lack of Japanese workers.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- We are interested in utilizing the system, but we are concerned about the restrictions that come with the Specified Skilled Worker status.

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- In the future, we would like to accept foreign workers from countries other than Vietnam, but we need to be mindful of the challenges of managing a multinational workforce.
- We feel that the way of thinking of the Vietnamese is close to that of the Japanese.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- We participate in community gatherings and yakiniku (grilled meat) parties to interact with community people.
- Foreign human resources also seem to be interested in exchanges with Japanese. **Specified Skilled Workers politely greet their neighbors and have no trouble.**
- Since there are few foreigners in the area, we request the local government to develop an environment where a foreign community can be created in the city. We heard that an event to climb mountains is held for foreign residents in other regions.
- We regularly receive questionnaires about foreign human resources from the local government, but we have not been introduced to human resources.

7 Voices of female Specified Skilled Workers



Ms. Nguyen Teihoa (Specified Skilled Worker, also have obtained an engineer visa), 38 years old

- **Before I came to Japan, I had studied Japanese for about six months.** After coming to Japan, I have been working and **studying Japanese using smartphone apps. Especially, it is difficult to use kanji and the Akita dialect.**
- However, Japanese workers kindly teach me during work, which is helpful. I am also satisfied with my salary, which is twice as much as in Vietnam.

- I am married and communicate with my two children via smartphone.
- I brought Iburigakko as a souvenir and it was appreciated by everyone.

Ms. Ding Thi Jet Phong (Specified Skilled Worker), 28 years old

- I came to Japan from northern Vietnam. I want to study Japanese more and become a Japanese teacher when I return to my country. I am learning Japanese while working, but it is difficult because the Japanese in the textbooks and the actual Japanese (dialects and Kanji) are different. I often have a chat with my colleague after work.
- Another reason why I came to Japan is that I want to see snow because there is no snow in Vietnam.

Case 04

Five years have passed since the introduction of the Specified Skilled Worker System, and four workers have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii)! Six foreign couples have formed, which brought a new dimension to the workplace

Accepting organization

Yachimata Sanchokukai Co., Ltd.
(Yachimata City, Chiba)
(Established 42 years ago, became a limited company in 1998, and became a joint-stock company in 2004.)

Registered support organization

Hokusou Agriculture Management Support Business Cooperative Association



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** **Vegetables** (Broccoli, carrot, cabbage, Daikon radish, tomato, taro, peanuts, eggplant, and green pepper)
We create an annual calendar of seasonal vegetables so that we can harvest them throughout the year. We grow many varieties and ship them to agricultural cooperatives, mass retailers, and processors.
- **Arable land area** 23 ha (**approximately 100 contract farmers, 300 ha**), 25 greenhouses
- **Employees** Japanese nationals: 16
Non-Japanese nationals: 39

■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker (i)** 27 (**started acceptance six months after the establishment of the Specified Skilled Worker System in 2019**; Vietnamese, Thai, Mongolian)
Of them, **two men and two women passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii)** (Vietnamese)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 12 (Vietnamese, Thai, Mongolian, Cambodian)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system, etc.

- In order to continuously employ Technical Intern Trainees, we use the Specified Skilled Worker System **to enable long-term employment.**
- We also constantly recruit human resources overseas. It is relatively easier to recruit in Vietnam.
- Of the 27 Specified Skilled Workers, half have been employed continuously from Technical Intern Trainees.
- The reasons why they came to Japan are that there were not many jobs in their counties and **had a desire to deepen their knowledge on agriculture in Japan. Other reasons include safe, livable, and delicious food in Japan.**

- Since we have been accepting the workers since the system's inception, we initially struggled with paperwork and other preparations.

■ Recruitment methods

- Continued employment from intern trainees
- Acceptance of 10 returned trainees through overseas sending organizations.
- **Friends of our employees. Introduction of the friends.**
- Wages are rising in Vietnam, but it does not have a significant impact on our company.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- Direct employment and **annual renewal. Currently, we have experienced workers, including 1 fifth-year worker, 6 fourth-year workers, and 5 third-year workers.**
- **There are six foreign couples** who are working at Yachimata Sanchokukai, **and there are many workers who want to continue working.**

■ Support plan

- Support plans are prepared by the registered support organization.
- Specified Skilled Workers already understand the tax system and the national pension system. As they get used to life, we tell them to pay attention to invitation to crimes and illegal gambling.



■ Living environment

- **We have rented separate houses for men and women, and secure private rooms for each worker.**
- Each worker pays 20,000 yen, and the other expenses are covered by Yachimata Sanchokukai.
- We instruct them to clean common areas in rotation once a week. We explain separation of garbage using the city calendar, and there is no trouble with the neighbors.
- **There are six foreign couples** who are working at our company, **each living in a two-bedroom apartment.** Since they cannot rent houses, we sign the contract.
- We lend bicycles for commuting, but some of the workers have their driver's licenses and **bought their own cars.**

■ Communication

- We have a morning meeting every Friday. We mainly explain the details of work, such as checking packages before shipment, etc.
- There are more foreign workers than Japanese workers, **but we try to communicate with each other** regardless of nationality.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The wages range from 1,024 yen to 1,350 yen per hour. **The salaries differ based on the evaluation (performance, etc.) and how well they can handle and operate machines.**
- The daily working hours are 7.5 hours plus additional time as needed.

■ Health and safety management

- Break time is basically the same throughout the year, but additional breaks are added during work in summer in consideration of heatstroke.
- There was an incident where a worker, who just started working at the company, got injured when using a vegetable packaging machine. So we urge foreign workers to pay special attention to operations and places where injuries are likely to occur, and display posters in such places.

■ Career advancement and capacity improvement

- **Of the 27 workers, six are team leaders (holders of a driver's license). They are divided into groups and work with Technical Intern Trainees.**
- **We provide 50,000 yen as a subsidy for obtaining a driver's license.** There are some workers who want to obtain a driver's license for large machinery.

■ Pay raises

- We have a **pay raise system based on the evaluation system.**
- **A Japanese farm manager prepares an evaluation report (evaluation of work attitude, ability, and Japanese language proficiency) for all 27 Specified Skilled Workers and** Technical Intern Trainees, **and evaluation is made based on the point system.**
- Workers who have a license for heavy vehicles and special vehicles receive a qualification and skill allowance.
- **Workers who have a regular driver's license have an increased base wage.**

■ Benefits

- We hold social gatherings and dinner parties once every three to four months for all workers, including Technical Intern Trainees and regular employees.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- **Elimination of abandoned farmland in the region. Currently, we rent about 10 ha of land.**
- It has become easier for employees to take days off. The employees have been able to coordinate their work pace and make long-term plans easier.
- **As a result of expansion**, the area increased from 10 ha in 2012 to 23 ha after the establishment of the Specified Skilled Worker System. **It is increasing by 1 ha to 1.5 ha every year.**
- Since the foreign workers can do heavy lifting, they are helpful for the ten Japanese part-timers who are in their 70s.

■ Challenges and advice after acceptance

- In rare cases, Specified Skilled Workers enter Japan to change their jobs. One of the challenges is that they may change jobs to high-paid jobs, such as nursing care or factory worker.

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- We have not had any Specified Skilled Workers who have returned to their countries, but we are communicating with returned Technical Intern Trainees via Facebook, etc.

■ Plan of increasing personnel and new countries

- We will hire Technical Intern Trainees who are currently working at our company as Specified Skilled Workers if they wish.
- **Four workers have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), and several more are scheduled to take the exam in the future.**
- **Once they have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), they will be treated equally with Japanese workers. So we would like them to obtain licenses, and if they want to work for a long time, we will employ them continuously.**

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence and the training and employment system

- We encourage the foreign workers to participate in local festivals and Bon Dance.
- They are also eager to actively participate.
- We will study the training and employment system and are thinking positively about utilizing the system with the aim of training human resources having skills equivalent to Specified Skilled Workers (i).
- We think that job transfer is an issue even if the training and employment system is adopted.

6 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Ms. Le Thi Ain

- Since 2019, I have been working at Yachimata Sanchokukai as a Specified Skilled Worker.
- I am from near Hanoi, Vietnam. My family is a farmer, growing chickens, pigs, coconuts, bananas, and rice.
- I received technical training at a chrysanthemum farm in Nagasaki. I was introduced to this company by a company in Vietnam.
- I am married to a Vietnamese who are working in the company. I want to work in Japan for a long time, so I took the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).
- I studied about vegetables using textbooks, watched news programs, and looked up things I did not understand on my own. The most difficult part was kanji. There are many ways to read characters, and it took time to find how to read them.
- Japan is a comfortable place to live in and convenient. For shopping, I go to supermarkets and Vietnamese shops.
- To those who are coming to Japan, I want to say, "First, do your best at work. Then, study Japanese hard so that you can use Japanese at work and in your daily life."

Case
05

Working in tandem with the registered support organization to secure excellent human resources Aiming for stable production at the bean sprout factory where foreign human resources can work all year round

Accepting organization

Ibigawa Food Business Office, Sanbo Chemical Industry Incorporated Co., Ltd.
(Ibigawa-cho, Ibi-gun, Gifu)
(Established in 1980)

Registered support organization

LIFE VISION Cooperative Association



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Bean sprouts (production and sale at facilities)
We disseminated “fat bean sprouts” in the Chubu region and have produced and sold as “Ibuki bean sprouts.”
- **Facility and factory area** 8,800 m²
- **Sales** 900 million yen/FY2023
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 25
Non-Japanese nationals: 23



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 5 (Men: 1, Women: 4) (Indonesian: 4, Vietnamese: 1; employment started in December 2022)
* Two of them transferred from Technical Intern Trainee to Specified Skilled Worker (i), and three passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (i).
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 16 (Men: 6, Women: 10) (Indonesian: 7, Vietnamese: 7; employment started in 2009)
- **Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/ International Services** 2 (Filipino: 2)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- In order to solve a labor shortage and expand the business scale, we have been accepting Specified Skilled Workers since they were Technical Intern Trainees.
- Through a referral from the registered support organization, we accepted a person who could not continue working at another company due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The person was highly evaluated at the interview and had a very good working attitude after being hired. We are actively recruiting foreign human resources for securing talented workers.
- **Foreign workers aim to deepen their knowledge and experience in agriculture through working in Japan and to start up a business after returning to their countries.** They fully enjoy living in Japan and try to have a fulfilling life by disseminating the attractions of Japan through social media.
- **The attractions of the work at our company are that it is not affected by the season or weather because we work in the facilities, and workers can have a stable income throughout the year.** Because of this, **the way of work at our company matches well with that desired by foreign workers.**



■ Recruitment methods

- We accept our Technical Intern Trainees, former intern trainees who have returned to their countries, and those who have passed exams in Japan and overseas.
- We hired an Indonesian worker first, and now hire Vietnamese workers as well.
- Through referrals from the registered support organization, we hire workers who have passed exams.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- The period of employment contract is three to five consecutive years.
- We determine the length of employment in consultation with the registered support organization so that workers can work with peace of mind.

■ Support plan

- Support plans for Specified Skilled Workers are prepared and supported by the registered support organization.
- In the pre-entry guidance, we provide detailed explanation on employment conditions, tax obligations and systems, living conditions, living expenses, and Japanese language education

based on the support plan.

- **We and the registered support organization visit the site for interviews, provide the company's information using the company brochure written in the local language and photos, and conduct an IQ test.** So, there is no difference in perception between foreign workers and our company after the workers come to Japan.

■ Living environment

- We rent apartments for male workers and female workers. Workers from the same country live in the same apartment (a two-bedroom apartment, shared kitchen and bath). Private rooms are six tatami mats in size and shared by two people.
- Foreign workers pay 5,000–10,000 yen for rent. However, we have a system to exempt foreign workers who have been working for a long time from paying rent. Water and utility expenses are borne by foreign workers.
- Wi-Fi and bicycles are available for all the workers. The dormitory is within a few minutes from the company by bicycle.
- **We prepare documents in their native language regarding garbage separation and rules in the dormitory.** In particular, we instruct them not to make noise.



■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- **At regular meetings every morning, we explain the details of work.** Regardless of whether they are Japanese or foreign workers, we tell them clearly what we should tell. **When we give instructions to foreign workers, we try to use words, not sentences, speak simply in a comprehensible way, and talk over and over.**
- Both Japanese and foreign workers discuss their health, work-related concerns, and personal matters. Additionally, we try to foster a communicative environment by planning barbecue parties and comfort trips. The foreign workers sometimes cook meals of their home countries for us.
- Foreign leaders often take care of their juniors from the same country. When they do not understand Japanese instructions, the leaders translate them into their native language to ensure the juniors understand correctly.
- However, the strong ties among workers from the same country sometimes lead to issues being resolved within their own community, which may decline their Japanese comprehension. Also, as

there are communities within the same country, they sometimes become confused by information of other regions. Japanese employees and the registered support organization repeatedly explain things to help them understand.

- Immediately after the start of acceptance, **foreign workers could not understand common sense in Japan** due to cultural differences. There was a case in which foreign workers went out barefoot in the garden, and we needed to clean the floor of the dormitory. **We explained many times, and they gradually understood.**
- Due to the weak yen, we are sometimes asked to increase overtime and increase wages. In addition, due to change in the way of thinking about privacy, many of the workers request us to prepare private rooms.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The wage is 1,011 yen per hour.
- The Specified Skilled Workers are appointed as leaders, and 5,000 yen is provided per month as a living supervisor allowance.
- The basic daily working hours are 7.5 hours, and there are eight days off a month. As a general rule, working hours are from 9:00 to 17:30.
- **In accordance with laws and regulations, we conclude the 36 Agreement and manage overtime hours to ensure fair, uniform work shifts.**
- Breaks are 60 minutes for lunch and 15 minutes in the afternoon (afternoon break is included in working hours).
- **At the morning meeting, we make sure to check and record whether they are in good physical condition.** If a worker is found to be in poor physical condition, we change the work schedule or have the worker be absent from work.
- During breaks, we check their physical condition and serve tea. Additionally, the prices of drinks in the company's vending machines are set at cost to encourage easy access to hydration.

■ Health and safety and labor management

- **We hold safety and health seminars once a year to raise awareness.**
- Because we work in facilities and factory, **we pay special attention to safety and health. We display more than 10 kinds of posters and documents in their native languages to call for attention.**
We print the manga version of the health and safety brochure for food factories provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and distribute to the foreign workers.
- In the new employee training, we distribute a work checklist to foreign workers and ask them to write circles (for capable), triangles (for moderate), and crosses (for unable) to indicate what they can do and what they cannot do. **The training continues until all the items are marked with circles. One-on-one training, including safety guidance, is conducted for several weeks.**

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **We have an ability-based career advancement system. We delegate overall work to Specified Skilled Workers.** In addition to the provision of supervisor allowance, workers who have long-

term work experience and the intention and ability to continue working **may receive** the same **fixed salary** as Japanese employees.

- For those who passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, we pay the full test fee of 6,500 yen per test, which boosts their motivation.
- We also support the fee for forklift driving lesson. We pay the full test fee of 80,000 yen for obtaining a license.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- We increase hourly wages when transferring from Technical Intern Trainee to Specified Skilled Worker.
- **There is room to consider a system for further wage increases based on ability and years of experience.**
- We give explanation to deserved foreign workers individually.

■ Benefits

- We hold a BBQ event and a day trip (to USJ, etc.) once a year.



A seminar conducted by the registered support organization at the company



5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- The acceptance has been effective in increasing the labor force and revitalizing the workplace. It has also led to a stable production.
- **There are many J-GAP rules** for operating a facility and factory, **but Specified Skilled Workers have a high level of awareness and strive to follow the rules. They serve as models for intern trainees.** This has also led to the improvement in the Japanese language skills of the foreign workers as a whole, and to the stable working environment.
- The quality of foreign workers can vary greatly depending on nationality, gender, time, and circumstances.
- **If there is a lack of communication with** foreign workers, **they become isolated and tend to think about bad things,** so we try to **increase positive communication,** such as praising and thanking them for their efforts.

- Focusing solely on the benefits of inexpensive labor can lead to significant burdens for the company when unforeseen disadvantages, such as cultural and religious differences, arise. **It is necessary to consider whether a well-balanced working and living environment can be established to ensure stable employment for the planned duration before proceeding with implementation.**
- Cultural differences always occur no matter how we make preparation, so it is necessary to anticipate them. It is also important not to discriminate between Japanese workers and foreign workers.

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- We have contact with returned foreign workers through social media, etc. We receive updates on life events, such as marriage and childbirth.
- In some cases, returning employees contact the registered support organization to inquire about reemployment opportunities.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We are not sure if we increase foreign human resources. We want to secure a stable number of workers.
- Like Japanese employees, foreign workers may leave due to marriage or family business responsibilities, but we feel that positive experiences at the company tend to increase employee retention.
- One concern is that they may be attracted by high wages they find on social media and be caught by a bad broker and change their job.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- We have not decided yet because we have just started employment of Specified Skilled Workers. If foreign workers want to work in Japan for a long time, we will consider using them.

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- At this stage, we do not consider hiring workers from new countries. We would like to continue hiring from Indonesia and Vietnam.
- While a multinational workforce may bring concerns related to national characteristics and religious views, we will make a careful decision in consultation with the registered support organization.

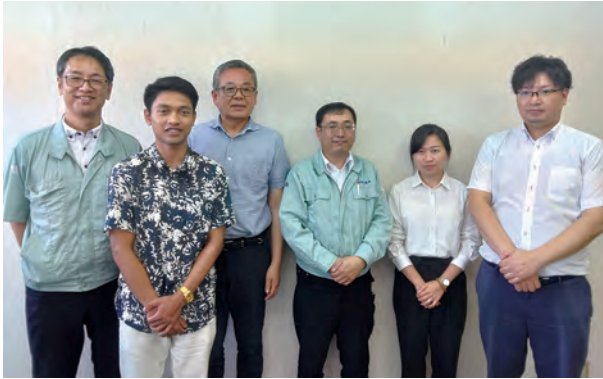
■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- In the past, they actively participated in local events and festivals, but now they give priority to communities of their countries. We can go to the events with them if they want, but they are busy with work, daily life, and studying Japanese, so we respect their personal choices regarding how they spend their holidays.

■ Initiatives for the training and employment system

- Since it is difficult to judge whether the information in the media is the latest, we will gather information in consultation with the registered support organization and take appropriate measures.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Mr. Roni, a Specified Skilled Worker of Sanbo Chemical Industry Incorporated Co., Ltd., and staff of the registered support organization



A house in his home country built with money he earned (a building that enshrines God)

Mr. Lee Made Roni Doijah Putra (from Indonesia, 28 years old)

- Technical Intern Trainee since August 2018; Specified Skilled Worker since December 2022
- **I serve as a manager at work. I take care of all the foreign workers.**
- I have no problems in my life in Japan. I do not have any problem. When I am in trouble, I consult with the staff of my company or registered support organization.
- I started working in this company because I originally wanted to work at a factory.
- I send money I earned in Japan to my family. **I built a house in my home country and a building that enshrines God in the house. All of my family members are happy.**
- It is hot in summer in Japan, but I have got used to it. I have no problems even in winter.
- **I want to start a business in my home country in the future.**

Case 06

Growing cherry tomatoes and selling them at the parent company's supermarket All foreign human resources are Cambodian women and can be leaders in each work process

Accepting organization

V Farm Kaizu, Chubu Agri Co., Ltd.
(Kaizu City, Gifu)
(Established in 2013, current structure since 2018)

Registered support organization

Registered support organization
General Incorporated Foundation
International Club



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Cherry tomato (cultivation, production, and sale at facilities)
Sold at Valor, the parent company's supermarket in the Tokai region
- **Arable land area** 2.3 ha, 4 greenhouses
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 25
Non-Japanese nationals: 11

■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 5 (All women) (Cambodian; since April 2022)
* All of the workers transferred from Technical Intern Trainees
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 5 (All women, Technical Intern Trainee (ii)) (Cambodian)
- **Employee** 1 (Chinese, Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- The main reason to accept Specified Skilled Workers is **to solve a labor shortage. They transferred from Technical Intern Trainees of our company and are highly competent as they understand the work contents and work arrangements. They are expected to serve as a model for future Technical Intern Trainees to be accepted.**
- We have decided to use the Specified Skilled Worker System, in addition to the Technical Intern Trainee System, so that the employees can take holidays during the year-end and Obon holidays. It is also expected that the workplace will be revitalized through exchanges with Japanese workers.
- The foreign workers came to Japan because they want to **send money they earned to their parents and children, and save money in a short period of time to start their own business after returning to their countries.**
- **The security in Japan is also important.** Parents of foreign human resources can send their children to Japan with a sense of security.
- Since the Specified Skilled Workers are used to living in Japan, we would like them to support the daily lives of the Technical Intern Trainees (such as taking out garbage and shopping).

■ Recruitment methods

- All of the Specified Skilled Workers employed at our company transferred from Technical Intern Trainees of our company. Based on their working attitude, wishes, and intentions when they were Technical Intern Trainees, we recommended them to transfer to Specified Skilled Workers.
- In the past, through the registered support organization, we interviewed with a former trainee who had returned to their country and employed them again as a Specified Skilled Worker according to their wishes.
- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we visited foreign countries to recruit Technical Intern Trainees. Now, we recruit them online.
- Our company has three other business locations (Gujo Mushroom Farm, Toho Sangyo, and Kitashinshu Mushroom Farm), each employing foreign workers from different countries.
- **All of the foreign human resources at V Farm Kaizu are women from Cambodia. This is because there is a lot of detailed work involved and Cambodian women work very diligently.**

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- The employment contract is for one year in line with the renewal of the resident status.
- **According to the workers' wishes, we can employ them for a long term if they transfer to Specified Skilled Worker (ii).**

■ Support plan and complaint handling, etc.

- **The registered support organization prepares support plans** for Specified Skilled Workers. **V Farm Kaizu supports the workers' daily lives.**
- We are often asked by foreign workers about the tax system and insurance premiums. The amount varies from person to person, so we explain each time. When we talk about difficult things, we sometimes speak through an interpreter.
- In terms of living, there are few places they can go by bicycle, such as supermarkets and hospitals, so we pick them up and drop them off by car upon request.
- In winter, electricity and gas costs for showers and air conditioning become high, so they often ask about utility bills.

■ Living environment

- We rent an apartment that is large enough to live in.
- The company covers the rents, and each worker is charged 10,000 yen. However, utilities are paid by the workers. The utility fees are set at a fixed rate rather than being divided by the number of residents.
- Wi-Fi and bicycles are available for all the workers. The dormitory is within about five minutes from the company by bicycle.
- At first, they did not understand how to separate garbage, and we were sometimes asked by the management company. However, **we instructed them how to dispose of garbage, and we have them bring cardboard boxes and other recyclable garbage to the company when they need to dispose of it.** So no trouble has occurred.

■ Communication

- At the morning meeting, we explain the details of work. **They are used to their work since they have been working as Technical Intern Trainees, but when there are things to pay attention, we explain individually as needed.** Especially in summer, accidents and injuries may occur during cleaning up the site, so we give explanation in easy-to-understand Japanese.
- During breaks, they try to communicate with the Japanese staff by talking about things other than work.
- **We heard that foreign workers study Japanese using YouTube and other services. We think that they are very diligent.**



4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The wage for a Technical Intern Trainee is 1,000 yen per hour. The wage increases at the time of transferring to a Specified Skilled Worker. Then, just like Japanese workers, the wage increases based on the length of service and ability.
- During year end and new-year holidays, an allowance of 6,000 yen is given in addition to the regular wage.
- The work hours are from 7:30 to 16:00 during the off season, with an additional 30 minutes to 1 hour during the busy season. Breaks are 60 minutes for lunch, 15 minutes in the morning, and 15 minutes in the afternoon.
- We try to meet the demands of the foreign workers who want to work more by having them work six days a week during the busy season.
- **Basically, we give the foreign workers Sundays off at their request.** In addition, when doing physically strenuous work, such as spraying agricultural chemicals, the following day is set as a holiday.

■ Health and safety and labor management

- Since they work in facilities, **we pay attention to their physical conditions. For example, we provide sports drinks and ice candies in summer.**
- Especially in the summer, we have them return to their homes to take a break from 11:00 to 16:00, and work in cooler hours in the evening and night.

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **Regardless of whether they are Japanese or non-Japanese, if they have the ability, we consider career advancement to leadership or instructor positions. They can be team leaders in each work process, such as field work, shipping, and sorting.**
- **We will support capable workers so that they can become Specified Skilled Worker (ii).** For this, Japanese language ability is an important factor.
- We also have a support system for capacity building. We subsidize all the costs for training and obtaining a license to drive an automobile, heavy machinery, forklift, etc. If they get a license, their salary will increase.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- The wage is 1,000 to 1,150 yen per hour, **and there is a company-wide format that allows workers to get a raise based on the length of service and ability.**
- We provide a leader allowance of 10,000 yen and a deputy leader allowance of 5,000 yen, but there is no Specified Skilled Worker who are provided with such allowance. We consider the introduction of the forklift allowance if it becomes necessary in future.
- We lend air-conditioning suits for work in the facilities in summer.

■ Benefits

- We hold a Christmas party and BBQ event once a year and sometimes take the foreign workers to the company's recreation facilities.
- Basically, all the workers participate in these events.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- There is no doubt that productivity has improved as a result of the transition of our Technical Intern Trainees to Specified Skilled Workers.
- **They work cheerfully and energetically** with Japanese workers, **so we feel that the workplace has been revitalized.** We think this is because **Cambodian people are cheerful.**
- In addition, foreign human resources have high work motivation and can work independently, making it easier for Japanese workers to take holidays during the year-end and New Year holidays.

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- There is basically no way to contact returned workers, so we have not interacted with them, but we hear from our company's foreign workers that they are doing well.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We do not intend to increase foreign workers, but we will continue to hire foreign workers when we have a vacancy in order to secure the labor force.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- Two of the foreign workers say that they want to continue working, **so if they pass the exam, we would like to establish a system to accept them for a long period of time.**

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- We are not planning to hire workers from new countries because the Japanese workers' efforts are required if we hire multinational human resources.
- We feel that the cultural difference between Cambodia and Japan is that Cambodian people do not have a strong sense of sharing.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- We, as a company, do not participate in local festivals or other events. We give foreign workers information on events and they decide whether or not to participate.

■ Initiatives for the training and employment system

- Under the training and employment system, employment transfer may be allowed. We request that appropriate requirements are set. For foreigners, salary is more important than the job content. So, even if we create an acceptance system, more people may leave.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Ms. Kian Long Lun

- I'm from Cambodia, **and came to Japan in 2017.**
- **I enjoy living in Japan** and cooking meals by myself. I enjoy working because **co-workers are kind.**
- I study Japanese by talking with my teacher.
- I have a mother in Cambodia, so I want to see her.

Case 07

Two Bhutanese friends came to Japan and contribute to the improvement of the labor force
Staying in Japan for a long period of time and aiming to pass the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii)!

Accepting organization

Agricultural Producers' Co-operative Corporation Kamo Farm
(Seiyo City, Ehime)

(Formed in 1982, established as an agricultural producers' co-operative corporation in 2005, and started agricultural and livestock collaboration in 2008)

Registered support organization

Yuzuki Administrative Scrivener Office



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Paddy rice, feed rice, wheat, soybeans, vegetables, etc.
 - ▶ 12 ha is for feed rice, which is the largest.
 - ▶ Started taro cultivation this season. **The foreign workers had experience growing taro at an agricultural corporation where they previously worked.**
- **Arable land area** 40 ha (total cultivation area)
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 5
Non-Japanese nationals: 2



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker (i)** 2 (began accepting Bhutanese in April 2023)
 - ▶ Their working history is as follows:
 - 2017 to 2019: Attended a Japanese language school as foreign students and worked part-time at a bento factory.
 - 2019 to 2020: Vocational school
 - 2020 to 2021: Worked part-time at a bento factory on a designated activities visa.
 - 2021 to 2023: Worked at an agricultural corporation (as Technical Intern Trainee)
 - 2023 to 2024: Working at the current company (as Specified Skilled Worker)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- We experienced a labor shortage due to the resignation of an older executive.
- We decided to accept Specified Skilled Workers **because an agricultural cooperative**, which had originally hired the workers, **closed operation at the same time as we faced the labor shortage.**
- In the past, we had accepted foreign workers as temporary workers, but due to high turnover rates and a lack of skill development, we believe it would be better to hire foreign workers directly, allowing them to learn and work.

■ Recruitment methods

- An agricultural corporation, which had connections with a former executive, closed their business due to infrastructure development and was looking for a company where foreign workers could be employed. It was the right time for us as we looked for human resources.
- The foreign workers also looked for job because the agricultural corporation they had worked for had closed its business. As they are young, they did not want to return to their country and wanted to continue working in Japan.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- Direct employment and annual renewal.
- If we employ them through an agent, an intermediate margin will be charged, so we would like to hire directly and give the benefits back to the workers.

■ Support plan

- We focused on the explanation of our employment conditions and consultation system. We are given the support mainly from the registered support organization.
- Before making a decision on formal employment, we negotiated the employment conditions with prospective workers. **In consultation with the administrative scrivener, we clarified the conditions so that problems do not occur at the time of acceptance.**

■ Living environment

- We currently rent a vacant house that has two rooms: one is 8 tatami mats in size, and the other is 4 tatami mats. It is located near the village and within walking distance of the company.
- In the past, we set up a TV, but since most information is now accessed via smartphones, we got permission from the landlord to set up Wi-Fi.
- **The rent is 10,000 yen (per worker), and the electricity, gas, and water costs are split between the two workers.**
- We made a preparation in advance so that the workers can use a single-story detached house as their residence.

■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- They can basically communicate without any problems, **but we are always careful check if they have any issues.**
- They make efforts to avoid trouble with local residents and have had no trouble so far. They have been supported by the community.
- They participate in community events (festivals), mowing the banks, and social events. The daily allowance is paid for mowing activities by the community.



4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- Basically, the salary is 180,000 yen per month. The annual bonus equivalent of 2.5 months' salary is paid.
- **We are always considering ways to raise wages. Bonuses are provided on the same basis as for Japanese employees.**
 - ▶ Also, with the exception of the busy season, workers can basically choose their days off.
 - ▶ Since they work efficiently, they rarely work overtime.
- The working hours are 7.5 hours. The working hours are basically from 8:00 to 17:00.
 - ▶ Breaks are from 10:00 to 10:15, 15:00 to 15:15, and 12:00 to 13:00. We ensure that they take breaks and stay hydrated. For summer work hours, we consider adjusting break times in case of prolonged extreme heat to prevent heatstroke.
 - ▶ During a season when we are busy planting rice, an extra allowance is provided as overtime pay. We ask foreign workers to work as early as 7:00 and finish by 19:00 at the latest.
- **There were no formal work regulations in place previously, but considering the inclusion of foreign workers, we created regulations in consultation with the Labor and Social Security Attorney to ensure a stable and comfortable work environment.**

■ Health and safety and labor management

- Although they have experience with agricultural work, we make sure they are cautious when performing new tasks by providing safety guidance and safety equipment.
- For example, it is mandatory to wear gloves and glasses when mowing, and when the equipment has a problem, it can be replaced immediately.



■ Support for career advancement and capacity improvement

- We have not prepared specific positions for them, but we aim to give workers responsibility over certain crops in the future to align with their preferences. **We want to create an environment where foreign workers can challenge themselves by growing crops they have never grown before, while also allowing Japanese workers to learn from them. We hope to foster mutual advice and learning.**
- As for the driver's license, they had already obtained a regular driver's license, but they needed a license for special large size vehicles at work, so we provided financial support for obtaining it. We are also considering helping them obtain other heavy equipment licenses, such as for forklifts and backhoes.
- **We hold study sessions and support the necessary expenses to acquire the status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker (ii).** Since there is no community for foreigners in the region, we would like to hold meal gatherings.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- We are considering a regular pay raise every fiscal year. **In the future, we would like Specified Skilled Workers to be in charge of crops, and provide allowance according to their ability.**

■ Benefits

- We encourage foreign workers to actively participate in meal gatherings and other events held voluntarily by our executives. The workers can participate in such events free of charge.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- **The workers have made a great contribution to an increase in the labor force, as they are proactive in their tasks. We sometimes receive requests from other regions for cultivation management,** and we can respond to them thanks to the two foreign workers. This has led to an increase in our company's cultivation area. This has also made it easier for employees to take days off.
- We did not have time to prepare for acceptance because it was decided in haste. Less than a week after the inquiry, we conducted interviews and decided acceptance.
- We promptly prepared documents, such as employment regulations and notices of working conditions, and took steps to ensure proper visa applications and proof of employment. However, due to a change in registration at the end of the fiscal year, there was a two-week period during

which the application for a copy of a registration certificate, needed for the visa application, could not be made.

- We hope there will be a guidebook for accepting foreign workers in the future.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- The main purpose of our business is to maintain the farmland. We would like to hire a few more workers if productivity increases and we can afford to do so.
- In addition, we currently rent only one vacant house, which is insufficient if workers increase. As vacant houses are being demolished in the surrounding area, it is necessary to secure houses when we accept additional workers.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- **We want the workers to acquire Specified Skilled Worker (ii) and work for a long time.**
- The workers are studying to acquire Specified Skilled Worker (ii). The exam is difficult, so it would be helpful to learn how to study by, for example, using example questions.

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- The Bhutanese workers currently accepted are familiar with Japan due to having lived here for a long time, so they were accustomed to the culture from the start. As a result, there are no noticeable cultural differences at this time.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- Whenever there are community gatherings, we confirm the workers' intentions and encourage them to participate if possible.
- Since there are few young people in the community, **we, as a company, want to actively contribute to the community**, such as by participating in mowing activities, **together with foreign workers. If the workers participate in activities that do not provide daily wages, the company will pay them, and we consider it as part of their workday.** If a mower is needed, we are considering renting it.
- As for the support from the local government, the city's public relations magazine provides information on social gatherings for foreigners. We have never heard of recruitment support.

■ Training and employment system

- The details of the system will be determined in the future, so we do not know about the system at present.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



28 years old: **Mr. Purpa**



33 years old: **Mr. Pajo**

- **I came to Japan with my friend from Bhutan as we longed for Japan. I feel close to Japan** as we have animated TV programs in Bhutan, and I have friends who can speak Japanese.
- I am getting used to living in Japan and have no problems with Japanese food, but when I first came to Japan, I did not get used to Japanese food. Now, I cook for myself in the morning and lunch, and eat out together with my Bhutanese colleague at night.
- **It is difficult to write Japanese, but I continue studying for acquiring Specified Skilled Worker (ii). I want to do farming in my home country after return.**

Case 08

Specified Skilled Workers are managers of intern trainees and the farm Proactively participating in local events and fostering deeper exchanges

Accepting organization

Glowble Noubito Co., Ltd.
(Kanonji City, Kagawa)
(Incorporated in 2013; Named from "Global," "Grow up," and "Vegetable")

Registered support organization

Kagawa Hounan Cooperative Association



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** Lettuce, broccoli, onion, green onion, paddy rice, etc.
- **Cultivation area** 40 ha
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 7
Non-Japanese nationals: 9

■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 3 (Men: 2, Women: 1) (Indonesian, Thai; employment started in May 2022)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 5 (Indonesian)
- **Spouse visa** 1 (Turkish)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- **We grow and harvest** lettuce, broccoli, and green onions, etc. **throughout the year by changing cultivation period. We have accepted foreign workers to solve a labor shortage.**
- Foreign human resources who have transferred from Technical Intern Trainees to Specified Skilled Workers are young and talented.
- In order to reduce overtime, it is necessary to raise productivity, and hiring talented people leads to shorter working hours.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, we scaled down our business by discontinuing the cultivation of wheat on 10 ha. We plan to expand our business in the future.

■ Recruitment methods

- Transfer from our company's Technical Intern Trainees and recruitment from other companies in the agricultural sector. One applied through Hello Work (job placement office).
- When a Technical Intern Trainee (i) becomes a Technical Intern Trainee (ii), we ask the trainee if he/she intends to transfer to a Specified Skilled Worker. It is difficult to be honest in formal situations, so we often talk during breaks or during transportation.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- Because we want them to stay at the company for at least three years, we employ them directly, and the period of contract is basically three years. However, the period may be a year according to the request of the worker. In fact, there are workers who have three-year contract and those who have a one-year contract.

■ Support plan

- Kagawa Hounan Cooperative Association, the registered support organization (hereinafter the Association), prepares support plans and gives pre-entry guidance.
- We request the Association to focus on Japanese language support.

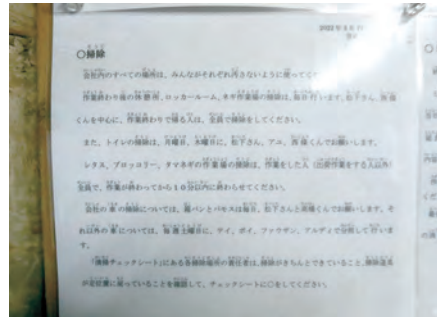
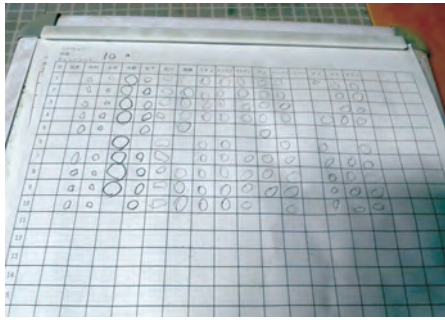
■ Living environment

- **Two of the Specified Skilled Workers are a husband and wife.** They rent a three-bedroom apartment. The apartment is about five minutes away from the company by bicycle.
- **The Association rents an apartment building for Technical Intern Trainees in the region.** Specified Skilled Workers can also live in the apartment if they wish.
- We tell them to be careful about garbage separation. Since there is a duty to take out the garbage in the apartment, they cooperate.
- We lend one bicycle per person. Specified Skilled Workers can commute by car if they have a driver's license and a car.



■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- **We explain details of work not only orally but also in writing. We sometimes use translation apps to communicate.** We try to explain difficult Japanese words using the apps.
- **Every morning, Japanese and foreign workers fill out physical check sheets that are placed next to their time cards.** Based on the definition of poor physical conditions, such as fever and stomachache, we conduct interviews if a worker experiences any of these conditions. If there is a health issue, work is suspended, and if necessary, the worker is taken to a hospital.
- Specified Skilled Workers serve as managers and provide guidance to the Technical Intern Trainees. They provide support when the trainees have difficulty in understanding Japanese.



4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The salary is 210,000 yen per month. Technical Intern Trainees earn about 30 yen more than the minimum wage, so the salary of Specified Skilled Workers is significantly higher.
- The working hours are about 7 hours a day. The basic hours are from 6:00 to 15:00, with a 30-minute break in the morning, a 60-minute lunch break, and a 30-minute break in the afternoon. Occasionally, there may be about an hour of overtime, but we strive to ensure that work is completed within basic hours.

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **As managers, the Specified Skilled Workers manage the Technical Intern Trainees and the farm.**
- To boost foreign workers' motivation, we consider introducing an evaluation system that defines the requirements for becoming a manager and receiving higher salaries.
- We subsidize half the cost for obtaining a license for automobiles, forklift, etc.
- **We encourage Specified Skilled Workers to attend training sessions organized by the Japan Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) and the Center for Agricultural Improvement and Extension.**

■ Benefits

- Once a month, all employees gather for a social gathering. For example, we hold a BBQ event where participants bring ingredients. These events are held in a family atmosphere. They are not compulsory, but all the employees usually participate.
- Sports events and day trips had been held for foreign workers by the Association, but they have not been held since the COVID-19 pandemic.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- All the foreign human resources are young and they work hard. The increase in the cultivation area has led to an increase in sales. In recent years, the sales have been around 120 million yen.
- We were worried about communication in Japanese, but there were no problems since the foreign workers had received Japanese language education.
- There are times when they sometimes do not understand our instructions, **so it is important to prepare a schedule, clarify their roles, and give instructions.**

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We intend to increase foreign human resources. We would like to create a system in which Technical Intern Trainees work at the company for three years and transfer to Specified Skilled Workers.
- We have no choice but to use the training and employment system. It is not clear at this point whether the length of service is one year or two years, but we would like them to continue working as long as possible and move to Specified Skilled Worker (i).
- We keep in touch with returned foreign human resources via social media. There are also referrals for securing human resources, so we maintain a continuous relationship with good candidates.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- We expect that those who are currently working as the Specified Skilled Workers (i) will transfer to Specified Skilled Worker (ii). We will consider raising salaries for those who transfer to Specified Skilled Worker (ii).

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- We would like to prioritize people from Indonesia and Thailand, as these are the countries of the workers currently employed at our company. However, **we do not have strong resistance to hiring people of different nationalities.** In fact, if we hire personnel from the same nationality only, they tend to speak in their native language, which does not contribute to improving their Japanese language skills.
- Since the Association is considering accepting Myanmar nationals, Glowble Noubito may hire them.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- The foreign workers participate in a performing arts event in the region. They show Balinese and Sumatran dances to the community people and deepen exchanges. They actively participate in the event from the preparation stage.
- There is a shortage of Japanese workers and a growing need for foreign workers. We request the provision of subsidies and simplified employment procedures. It takes about six months to prepare for accepting new workers, so we cannot accept them immediately.

7

Voices of Specified Skilled Workers

**Mr. Junedi Hamonangan Rubis (from Indonesia)**

- I've been working at Glowble Noubito since 2015. I worked as a Technical Intern Trainee for three years, **and after spending time in my home country, I became a Specified Skilled Worker in 2022.**
- It was because **I wanted to study Japanese agriculture.** I enjoy working.
- Before working as an intern trainee, I studied Japanese at a school. I have no problems with Hiragana and Katakana, but Kanji is very difficult.
- On my days off, I go out by car and enjoy shopping.
- **I am thinking about taking the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).**

**Ms. Nurarma Ata (from Indonesia)**

- I've been working at Glowble Noubito for about two and a half years. I gathered information by myself and came to Japan because I wanted to work in Japan.
- Japanese is a difficult language. I think Kanji is especially difficult.
- In my daily life, I had difficulty with garbage separation rules in Japan. In Indonesia, we don't separate garbage.
- **I am thinking about taking the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii). I would like to work in Japan for a long time.**



Mr. Thawatchai Sonsri (from Thailand)

- **I have been staying in Japan for about five years with the status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker.**
- I've been working at Glowble Noubito for about one and a half years. Before I came to Japan, I was a farmer in my home country and grew rice and sugar cane.
- I have been studying Japanese agriculture **since I grew sweet potatoes and okra at my previous company.**
- When I first came to Japan, I did not get used to Japanese food. I'm used to it now.

Case
09

Aiming for safe and secure food production and increased self-sufficiency Business succession is also important for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence. Six workers have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii)!

Accepting organization

Shii Farm LLC.

(Kobayashi City, Miyazaki)

(Established in 1965, became a limited company in 1978, processing and sales of vegetables produced on directly managed farms since 2006)

Registered support organization

Asian Neighbor Co., Ltd.

(Shinjuku City, Tokyo)



1 Basic information

- **Main crops** **Vegetables** (Spinach, Japanese mustard spinach, green soybeans, burdock root, taro, tea (organic), etc.)
Acquired JAS organic certification, ISO22000, GLOBAL/GAP certification, etc.
- **Cultivation area** 250 ha, tea (34 ha, **including organic tea exported**)
- **Sales** 2.1 billion yen/FY2023
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 80
Non-Japanese nationals: 51 (Men: 15, Women: 36)



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** **31 (Vietnamese, Cambodian, etc.; employment started in 2020)**
Among them, **six workers have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii) (Men: 2, Women: 4)**
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 20 (Vietnamese, Myanmar)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- We decided to introduce foreign human resources to expand our business and address the labor shortage. **At Shii Farm, there are two sections: agriculture and freezing processing.** We started to employ Specified Skilled Workers because they can engage in a wide range of operations, the operations match our business, and there is no limit to the number of workers to be accepted.
- **As we have a close relationship with a Japanese language institution in Nam Dinh, Vietnam,** we cooperated in the establishment of an agricultural high school in Vietnam. Students who studied at this school will come to Japan to work. The students have basic ideas and enthusiasm for food and agricultural production.
- We have acquired ISO22000 and other certifications **for safe and secure food production.** This is just a passing point. **We aim for world agricultural standards.**

■ Recruitment methods

- **Around 60% of the workers are former Technical Intern Trainees of our company.** We also recruit trainees from other companies and through introduction by the registered support organization, etc.
- In the past, we accepted foreign human resources who were unable to travel and work during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, some of them were not of the desired quality. We felt that we should not hire people based only on their resumes, **but hire them by meeting them and communicating our enthusiasm.**
- **Foreign workers who previously worked at Shii Farm have returned to their home countries and achieved significant success.** Some of them are engaged in the administration of their home countries, while others have started agricultural companies.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- **Direct employment and annual renewal.** Some of the foreign workers return to work after a temporary stay in their home country.
- **We give extra wages if they work overtime** regardless of Technical Intern Trainees or Specified Skilled Workers. **We invest properly in compensation.** Poor working conditions would lead to talent leaving.

■ Support plan

- We explain the social insurance premium deduction in detail, but sometimes foreign workers may not fully accept them. We also explain general social morals and manners.
- **We tell them that we treat them equally, but we make some distinction in salaries according to their abilities.**
- To prevent illegal activities, we pay close attention to extended absences and visitors from outside.

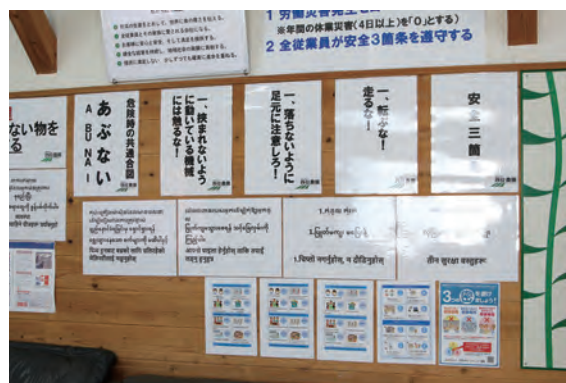
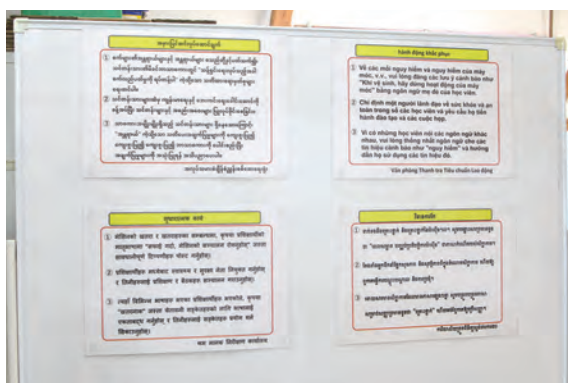
■ Living environment

- **Men's and women's dormitories are separated. There are dormitories for Vietnamese and Indian and for Nepalese and Cambodian because of differences in their meals.** They basically cook for themselves.
- **We prepare large rooms for Specified Skilled Workers, and almost all the rooms are private rooms.** Because the room is large, some of the workers say that it can be shared between two workers.
- We prepare a private garden for them near their dormitories. They grow and produce good vegetables using the techniques they have learned at Shii Farm.
- **The rent is uniformly set at about 5,000 yen per month for both Technical Intern Trainees and Specified Skilled Workers. We pay the rest in order to reduce the burden of foreign human resources.**
- They clean the shared space on a voluntary basis.



■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- **Posters and notices displayed in the company are translated into Vietnamese, Myanmar, and Khmer to raise awareness. We use smartphone translation apps** to try to communicate each other.
- **We thoroughly implement the 5S (Sorting, Setting-in-Order, Shining, Standardizing, and Sustaining the Discipline) and the three safety principles. All the workers read them out.** They used to read them out in Japanese and foreign languages, but now only in Japanese because they understand Japanese.
- Many of the workers want to work overtime more, so we respond to their request as much as possible.



4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- Technical Intern Trainee (i) is paid a minimum wage level in the prefecture. The wage increases by 5% when they become Technical Intern Trainee (ii), and by a further 5% when becoming Specified Skilled Worker. **Considering the length of service, the wages further increase.**
- A bonus equivalent to one month's salary is provided twice in summer and winter. We plan to provide a leader allowance in the future.
- The basic working hours are 7.5 hours. Breaks are 45 minutes for lunch and 15 minutes each in the morning and afternoon.



■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- **We have many talented foreign human resources, so we are considering appointing foreign leaders.** Currently, **there are several men and women who may become sub-leaders in two to three years.**
- Three workers have a license to operate large machinery. The company provides subsidy.

■ Benefits

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we went on overnight company trips and held a cherry blossom viewing party, but attendance varied. People from different countries have different preferences.
- Currently, we hold dinner parties and other events by country, factory, or department.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- The labor force has improved, resulting in an increase in business scale and sales.
- **The rotating schedule has been working well, and the workers have been able to flexibly work.**
By assigning the main personnel and sub personnel, the main personnel can take holidays, for example.
- **Before accepting foreign human resources, a plan needs to be developed in order to hire ideal personnel and realize future vision.** Just hiring because of a shortage does not work well.
- About 10% of workers changed jobs to the restaurant industry in urban areas.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We want to hire more foreign workers in the future.
- We want to hire Specified Skilled Workers basically. If the system continues, we would like to hire Technical Intern Trainees (i) and want them to work for a long time.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- **There are six workers who have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).** All are at N2 level in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. **They have solid future plans, such as obtaining permanent residency and sending their children to Japanese schools.**
- If the hurdle for the exam is too high, it will not make sense to secure competent and experienced personnel or solve a labor shortage.

6 Views on accepting new countries

- So far, we have accepted people from China, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Nepal. Although there are some concerns, we would like to continue accepting foreign human resources from various countries.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- Some of the workers participate in community events, such as picking up trash and cleaning.
- **In addition to providing support to foreign workers, we believe that business succession and education for Japanese workers are also important.**
- We think that the key to the realization of society of harmonious coexistence is the creation of jobs for young people who will play a major role in the next generation of agriculture.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Ms. Le Fong Chin

- I came to Japan as a Technical Intern Trainee and have been working at Shii Farm. **It's been almost four years since I became a Specified Skilled Worker.**
- **I have obtained N2 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. I studied Japanese at a school in Vietnam.**
- I work for sending money to my family.
- **I passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).** I studied using textbooks and my smartphone to look up the words I didn't understand.
- Katakana is difficult.
- **I want to work in Japan for a long time.**

Case
10

Creating support plans within the company and hiring and supporting foreign human resources

The workplace has been revitalized and has a positive atmosphere

Accepting organization

Kushima Aoi Farm Co., Ltd.

(Kushima City, Miyazaki)

(Established in 1950, incorporated in 2013)

Registered support organization

None (by themselves)



1 Basic information

● Main crops

Sweet potato (Production, processing, and sales)

* **Our unique initiatives include:** production of 10,200 tons of **a wide variety of products to meet the needs**; **development of special packaging materials**; **a total storage capacity of approximately 4,500 tons**, including a large cryogenic storage facility with a capacity of up to 1,150 tons; **active use of IT tools**; and **improvement of farmers' income**.

● Cultivation area

30 ha (**company's land + leased land**), (**Contract farm = 280 ha**; **support for farm business succession**)

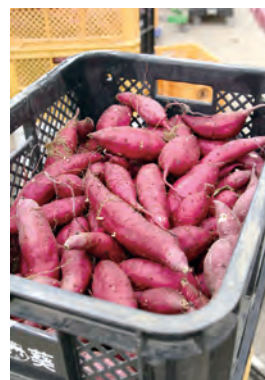
● Sales

2.5 billion yen for the fiscal year ended July 2024, (**300 million yen in exports** mainly to Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and to other areas such as Europe and Middle East)

● Personnel structure

Japanese nationals: 58

Non-Japanese nationals: 56 (as of October 2024)



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** **43 (Men: 17, Women: 26)** (Indonesian, Philippine, Vietnamese; employment started in February 2022)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 12 (Indonesian, Filipino)
- **Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services** 1 (Vietnamese, in charge of overseas sales)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- As we have expanded business scale gradually, we started hiring foreign human resources to solve a labor shortage.
- **Before accepting Technical Intern Trainees, we accepted a Vietnamese engineer with the status of residence of Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services.** At that time, we produced products in Vietnam, so we hired the engineer. He was very talented.
- With this background, we accepted Vietnamese Technical Intern Trainees. However, if we hire only Vietnamese, they would talk in their native language, so we hired Filipinos. We also hire Indonesians gradually.
- **We started hiring Specified Skilled Workers (i) in February 2022. They are from Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines.**
Technical Intern Trainees are from Indonesia and the Philippines. The most common nationality is Indonesian, followed by Filipino and Vietnamese.
- **We do not use a registered support organization; we handle the dispatch and acceptance of foreign workers in-house.**
- Foreign human resources come to Japan mainly to earn foreign currency. Of course, many of the human resources return to their home countries to engage in farming, and some wish to become independent.

■ Recruitment methods

- **We mainly recruit foreign human resources who have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker in Japan and overseas.** We are often introduced to human resources who have completed Technical Intern Training (ii) at an agricultural corporation we know or other companies. Comparing workers who became Specified Skilled Workers through the exam and those who transitioned from Technical Intern Trainees, the latter are already accustomed to life in Japan, reducing the burden on the accepting company.
- We are often introduced by recruitment agencies and sometimes pay a referral fee to find human resources.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- The status of residence is renewed on a yearly basis, so **contracts are also made on a yearly basis.** Basically, **we do not terminate employment at our own discretion.** Each time, **we ask workers if they are willing to renew their contract.**

■ Support plan

- **We create support plans by ourselves.**
- It is difficult for foreigners to understand the tax system, such as income tax and residence tax, and the pension system. We explain the systems at the time of pre-entry guidance and as necessary. We tell foreign human resources to ask us if they have questions.

- **We tell them that they can change jobs, and if they want, we cooperate with it.** On the other hand, **we are sometimes asked by workers who have changed jobs if they can return to Kusima Aoi Farm.**



■ Living environment

- There are men's dormitory and women's dormitory. **We have made leasing contracts for several houses, including detached houses. The photos show a detached house that we purchased and renovated, and a newly built women's dormitory. We prepare private rooms for Specified Skilled Workers.** The dormitories are within about five minutes from the company by bicycle.
- We lend bicycles to all the foreign workers. Wi-Fi is available.
- Household garbage is disposed of at the company. In Kushima City, rules for garbage separation are very strict, so it is better to have the workers bring garbage to the company and dispose of them at the company than to tell them the rules.

■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- **We hold the morning meeting every day before starting work.** Each section has a leader with strong Japanese language skills, and workers are encouraged to ask them if they do not understand something. **We mainly have communication through a chat tool on smartphone translation app.** Since we have many foreign workers, it is difficult to talk individually.
- **There are requests for more work hours, but we inform them that the company's policy is not to have overtime.**
- Regarding complaints, there was a request to secure private rooms, so we made efforts to secure private rooms.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- **A monthly salary system is applied. In August 2024, the salary was revised** to 180,600 yen. If it is converted to hourly wage, it is 1,050 yen (starting wage for Specified Skilled Worker).
- The wage is raised according to the length of service.
- **A bonus is paid twice a year (50,000 to 100,000 yen each) based on the performance of the worker.**
- **We encourage the workers to use up their paid holidays.** One to two months' vacation can be taken.



- Basically, workers have nine days off a month (weekends plus one day).
- In the past, a leader allowance was provided, but at the request of foreign workers, it is now included in the basic salary.
- Rent allowance is provided to workers who live alone.

■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- We provide a reward to workers who have obtained N3 or N2 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.
- It is difficult to become a leader as Japanese language skills are necessary in giving instruction. However, it is expected that the ratio of foreign workers will increase in the future, and we are considering creating instructor positions specifically for foreign employees.
- If a worker becomes a Specified Skilled Worker (ii), he/she will get a pay increase. We also encourage foreign workers to change their status of residence to Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services.
- Each section has a leader. Since the workers live in a dormitory, they also have a leader in their private lives. If they obtain a license for a car or forklift, the scope of their work will expand, and their salary will increase accordingly.

■ Benefits

- Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we held events every three months in turn. Now, each department holds dinner parties. There are few workers who want to go on a company trip.



5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- Labor force has increased, and the workplace has been revitalized. Since many of the workers have bright personalities, the workplace atmosphere is getting better. They have a good relationship with experienced employees.
- When workers from other companies transfer to our company, they sometimes have to wait for about two weeks because there is no place for them to live.
- It is important to learn and adopt the system without leaving it to the registered support organization.

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- We would like to increase foreign human resources to eliminate a labor shortage.
- Some of the former Technical Intern Trainees are under the supervision of the supervisors' association or the Organization for Technical Intern Training. They think that they will be continuously under the supervision of the association or organization. They need to understand that they, as Specified Skilled Workers, are expected to manage things independently.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- There are four to five workers who are interested in Specified Skilled Worker (ii). We have informed them that the exam is challenging.

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- **We want to hire people from any country if they are motivated**, but our priority is to hire Cambodian and Nepalese nationals.
- **Basically, we conduct interviews overseas.** We recruit **human resources in cooperation with local sending organizations.**

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- They participate in activities, such as preparing for local festivals and cleaning up the beach. Since we are a company in Kushima City, we try to participate as much as possible if we are invited by community people.

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Ms. Nikadek Novi Antali

- I am from Bali, Indonesia.
- **Before I came to Japan, I had studied at Japanese language school. I have obtained N4 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.**
- I think Kanji is difficult, particularly the readings.

- After coming to Japan, **I have been working at the Kushima Aoi Farm for four years.** I am engaged in packing products in bags and boxes at the factory.
- I couldn't get used to the work at first, but I get used to it now.
- I send my salary to my parents.
- **I would like to work in Japan for a long time.**

Case 11

Declaration of SDGs based on raising calves and fattening pigs Valuing connections between foreigners and striving for career advancement!

Accepting organization

Takahashi Farm Co., Ltd.
(Annaka City, Gunma)

Registered support organization

I&T Cooperative Association
International Symbiosis Business
Cooperative Association



1 Basic information

- **Main livestock species** Pig raising and dairy farming (fattening pigs)
- **Number of heads raised** Dairy cows: 520, Fattening pigs: 14,000, Sows: 1,250 (including 450 growing pigs)
Production of corn and grass as feed for cattle in circular agriculture (37 ha)
- **Personnel structure** Japanese nationals: 10
Non-Japanese nationals: 22

■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** Specified Skilled Worker (i): 14 (Men: 11, Women: 3)
(Vietnamese: 8, Filipino: 6)
- **Technical Intern Trainee** Technical Intern Trainee (ii): 5 / Technical Intern Trainee (i): 3
(Of all foreign human resources, 3 are female: 2 Filipinas and 1 Vietnamese)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system, etc.

- At present, we ask two organizations, I&T Cooperative Association and International Symbiosis Business Cooperative Association, to continue their support.
- At first, we accepted Technical Intern Trainees, but in order to increase the number of workers, we hire Specified Skilled Workers who can contribute immediately.
- We accept about three Technical Intern Trainees every year, but we think that procedures to hire Specified Skilled Workers are smoother than those for Technical Intern Trainees.
- The reason to accept Specified Skilled Workers is to solve a labor shortage. Specified Skilled Workers live in Japan longer than Technical Intern Trainees, and their Japanese level is higher.
- Foreign workers want to work in Japan to deepen their knowledge and experience in agriculture, as well as earn high wages, so we mainly explain salaries and benefits of our company.

■ Recruitment methods

- Currently, **two of the Specified Skilled Workers have completed Technical Intern Training at our company.** Many of the workers return to their home countries to receive lump-sum pension payments.
- **In the past, we hired a Specified Skilled Worker who was introduced by his/her friend who was also a Specified Skilled Worker, and a couple who immigrated to Japan as Specified Skilled Workers. We feel that the connection of foreign communities is strong.**
- Because it is difficult to find excellent human resources, we interview and hire people introduced by the support organization. We conduct interview because it is difficult to know about the person without an interview.

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- Direct employment based on a one-year contract. The contract can be renewed based on the intention of the worker.
- **At the moment, no one has Specified Skilled Worker (ii) status, but there are some workers who want to get it. We are considering a long-term contract for them.**
- In line with the revision of the minimum wage in every October, we evaluate and increase the wages of all foreign workers, including Technical Intern Trainees.

■ Support plan

- Support plans are created in cooperation with the registered support organization.
- We focus on explaining our support for workers' daily lives and procedures and consultation system, in addition to salary and tax systems. We explain necessary items through an interpreter of the registered support organization and try to handle problems and questions as needed.

■ Living environment

- We have dormitories with renovated interior near each farm. Each room is for two people with an area of about 14 to 21 m².
- Each worker is charged 25,500 yen.
- WiFi is available as it is essential.
- We lend bicycles to workers who are close to the farms and provide transportation by car for those who live a bit farther away.
- The city provides instructions in foreign languages on how to dispose of and separate garbage, so we use them for explanation.



■ Communication

- We try to maintain regular communication with foreign workers. **The department head visits the farms in the afternoon** when the registered support organization does not visit, **and interacts with the workers.**
- We are sometimes invited to dinner parties by foreign workers. We have a smooth relationship with them.

4

Working conditions and career advancement

■ Working conditions

- The wages range from 1,000 yen to 1,200 yen per hour. Allowances are provided to leaders and workers having a driver's license.

Some of the workers earn more than 300,000 yen a month.

- More than the minimum wage of Gunma (985 yen) is paid to Specified Skilled Workers.
- Working hours are long (8 to 9 hours) because we engage in agriculture, but we provide holidays and overtime allowance in accordance with labor laws.
- As for wage increases, we interview each farm manager in every October to assess workers.
- As for allowances other than wages, qualification and ability allowances are provided. Work clothes and other goods necessary for work are also provided free of charge.

■ Health and safety management

- In the summer, we provide beverages at the company's expense to prevent heatstroke.
- **We have declared SDGs and are working on circular agriculture.**
- Specifically, we work on the introduction of automatic milking machines, productivity improvement, introduction of high-performance cameras to monitor the health status of livestock, original compounded feed and production management, ensuring quality and safety, and construction of a better working environment.

■ Career advancement and capacity improvement

- We have a system for career advancement for necessary human resources. This year, **one Vietnamese worker got a driver's license at the company's expense.** We provide a monthly allowance of 5,000 yen to those who voluntarily obtain a license.
- Since we have many foreign employees, we have introduced a leader system in which **a leader is assigned to each group and will be responsible for the guidance of Technical Intern Trainees.**
- **The work guidance is mainly provided by the president to educate foreign workers.**
- We have a capacity building system, such as the implementation of work education by external organizations. We subsidize the costs for capacity building.

■ Benefits

- This year, we held the New Year's party at a day-use hot spring facility.
- We also participate in local festivals, and hold BBQ and other dinner parties and social gatherings regularly.

5

Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- The improvement of the labor force is a significant effect.
- We do not think **we would have been able to continue our business without foreign human resources.**

■ Challenges and advice after acceptance

- We were worried about whether Specified Skilled Workers would be able to work for a long term.
- It is recommended to get a referral from a registered support organization because we cannot know the ability and personality of foreign human resources if recruiting on our own. In addition, **although there are costs involved, the support of a registered support organization is essential as we can go through smooth administrative procedures and receive follow-up support.**

■ Exchange after returning to their countries

- We do not have contact with foreign human resources who have returned to their countries.

■ Plan of increasing personnel and new countries

- We have no plans to expand our business, so we are not considering hiring more workers. (If there is a vacancy, recruitment will be considered.)
- If there are applicants who are Specified Skilled Workers (ii), we will consider hiring them in the future.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence and the training and employment system

- We adjust the holidays of foreign workers so that they can participate in local events, but participation is not mandatory. While we are not specifically aiming for a symbiotic society, **we want foreign workers to experience Japanese culture as much as possible since they are working in Japan.**
- We feel the need to learn about and utilize the training and employment system.
- Experience matters in agriculture, so we would like foreign workers to work for a long time.

6 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Mr. Dan Quan Hoang

- I'm from Vietnam and have been in Japan for six years.
- **I worked as a pig farmer in Okinawa until three years ago. Now I'm the leader of a piglet breeding farm.**
- I'm satisfied with my life in Japan, but at first, I missed my family in my country.
- **I have a cooking license in Vietnam, so I would like to run a restaurant after going back to Vietnam.**

Case 12

Working in a large group with an integrated system that connects people
Obtained a status of residence of Specified Skilled Worker (ii) and
planning to marry a woman who is staying in Japan to start a new life!

Accepting organization

Hokuetsu Keien Co., Ltd.
(Murakami City, Niigata)

(Takamura Group Co., Ltd., reorganized from an agricultural producers' co-operative corporation to a joint-stock company in 2022.)

Registered support organization

Sakura Cooperative Association, Asian Techno Cooperative Association, Toyama International Training Promotion Cooperative Association



1 Basic information

- **Main livestock species** Egg production hens (Breeding, rearing, and adult chickens)
- **Number of heads raised** Adult chickens: 3.5 million, Breeding and rearing: 1.8 million
(Takamura Group = Niigata + Tochigi)
- **Number of Employees** Japanese nationals: 350 (Takamura Group)
Non-Japanese nationals: 43



■ Status of residence, etc.

- **Specified Skilled Worker** 2 (Hokuetsu Keien), 3 (Takamura)
1 male Vietnamese, transferred to Specified Skilled Worker (i) from Technical Intern Trainee in September 2021
Passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii) in December 2023
2 male Vietnamese: Specified Skilled Worker (i) since February 2022
1 male Vietnamese: passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii) in June 2024
1 male Vietnamese: Specified Skilled Worker (i) since April 2024
- **Technical Intern Trainee** 38 (Vietnamese, Myanmar, and Indonesian in Takamura Group as a whole)

2 Opportunity and initiatives to introduce the system

- To solving a labor shortage. We have introduced the system to continue employing Specified Skilled Workers since they are Technical Intern Trainees.
- Of the Specified Skilled Workers, Mr. Song has been working at the company for about nine years, which is the longest. In 2015, we accepted him as a Technical Intern Trainee, and in 2021 he became a Specified Skilled Worker (i).
- Foreign workers **had a longing for Japanese culture**, such as high wages, a tidy and waste-free environment, and lifestyle.
- We have accepted Specified Skilled Workers mainly through Sakura Cooperative Association, a registered support organization.
- As information is exchanged actively via the Internet, we are concerned about headhunting by other companies in the same industry based on a comparison of working conditions.

■ Recruitment methods

- **We continue to employ Specified Skilled Workers (i) from Technical Intern Trainees (iii).**

3 Employment contract and support

■ Employment contract

- The employment contract is **renewed each year after we confirm the intention of the worker**, and continues for five consecutive years.
- At Hokuetsu Keien, two workers have passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii). We would like to extend their contract period further.



■ Support plan

- We ask the registered support organization to prepare support plans.
- In the preliminary guidance, we specifically explained the relationship between salaries and tax payments and pensions.
- We explained the difference between Specified Skilled Worker and Technical Intern Trainee, **and the importance of having a sense of responsibility and leadership because they will be in the same position as Japanese employees and be in charge of 120,000 chickens in a chicken house.**

■ Living environment

- We have prepared an apartment (a private room of 8 tatami mats with a kitchen and closet, and shared bathroom and toilet).

- At present, five foreign workers live in the apartment. **Mr. Song, who is the longest-serving worker, serves as a coordinator.**
- We have prepared Wi-Fi and other internet environment and lent bicycles for commuting.
- When we accepted foreign workers first, they had a trouble with the neighbors about fireworks, but there is no trouble now.
- They understand how to separate garbage and take out garbage according to the rules.
- They also do gardening in their free time.



■ Communication, complaint handling, etc.

- **At meetings every morning and evening, we explain the details of work.**
- In the evening, we review the work of the day and share information, such as the work schedule for the next day.
- We try to provide explanation in plain Japanese and communicate with each other.
- We receive request for the facilities of the apartment, but there have been no significant complaints.

4 Working conditions, career advancement, and treatment

■ Working conditions

- The wages range from 1,200 yen to 1,400 yen per hour, **which is the same as the wages of Takamura Group in the Kanto region.**
- Bonuses are provided to Specified Skilled Workers.
- The daily working hours are 7.5 hours throughout the year.



■ Health and safety and labor management

- **We display posters in the workers' native languages to attract their attention** to the observation of the safety and health standards.

- The machines they use in the work process are barn cleaners, feeders, etc., and they do not engage in dangerous work.
- They also maintain and repair conveyors and feeders.



■ Measures for career advancement and capacity improvement

- We would like the workers to be in charge of instructing and educating new Vietnamese workers.
Qualified workers can become leaders regardless of nationality.
- **Mr. Song, who passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), has a sense of responsibility and already plays a key role.** Currently, he is in charge of a chicken house (120,000 chickens) as the person in charge of house management. No special job allowance is provided, but his performance is reflected in bonuses.
- We give a reward to workers who pass the Japanese Language Proficiency Test, etc. according to the grade. At Hokuetsu Keien, four people, including Mr. Song, passed N2 in the Japanese Language Proficiency Test.
- We will provide support to workers who want to obtain a driver's license. Since there are Vietnamese instructors at a driving school in Gunma, workers who wish to obtain a driver's license go there to take lessons.

■ Pay raises, etc.

- **We will introduce a regular wage increase system, based on the evaluation of workers, in the future.**
- In addition to wages, we would like to consider providing a housing subsidy and allowance, Japanese language proficiency allowance, subsidy and allowance for purchasing work clothes, **and leader allowance.**

■ Benefits

- To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, we have not held year-end parties or other events since the COVID-19 pandemic.

5 Effects and future trends

■ Acceptance effects

- The workforce has improved, and the business scale has expanded. Specified Skilled Workers have become a model for Technical Intern Trainees.

- On the other hand, **workers may transfer to other industries (such as food-related and restaurant businesses) or to the Kanto region** if they obtain Specified Skilled Worker (iii), **which disrupts the staffing plan, creating some concerns.**

■ Plans to increase foreign human resources

- In order to solve a labor shortage, we would like to hire more Specified Skilled Workers.
- We would also like to hire Technical Intern Trainees, who are currently working at our company, as Specified Skilled Workers if they wish.

■ Intention to utilize Specified Skilled Worker (ii)

- Two of the workers have already passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), but they still have the remaining period of residence as Specified Skilled Worker (i), so the application will be made in the future.
- Mr. Song said that **he used textbooks in preparation for the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii)**, and it was difficult for him to read Japanese and study livestock animals other than chickens.
- **Since he passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), he plans to marry a woman, who is living in Japan as a Technical Intern Trainee, in September this year and make an application to change his visa to Specified Skilled Worker (ii), which allows him to bring his family with him.**

6 Views on accepting new countries

■ People from new countries

- We would like to employ Indonesians, who currently work as Technical Intern Trainees, as Specified Skilled Workers if they wish.
- Although there are concerns about employing multinational human resources, we would like to accept more foreign human resources.

■ Initiatives for the realization of society of harmonious coexistence

- Foreign workers sometimes go to local festivals and other events.
- They have become good friends with neighboring farmers and receive vegetables from them.
- In Niigata, local governments used to provide exchange support, but not now.

■ Training and employment system

- Under the system, workers are restricted from changing jobs for a year, but companies want to avoid a situation where they leave after acquiring job skills.
- Although there are some concerns, such as the loss of workers from rural areas to urban areas, **we would like to actively use the system with the aim of having them transfer to Specified Skilled Worker (i).**

7 Voices of Specified Skilled Workers



Mr. Le Kwan Song

- He is present throughout this interview, and he has no difficulty in speaking Japanese and is familiar with Japanese culture and customs. He has passed the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii).
- He said that he used textbooks in preparation for the exam for Specified Skilled Worker (ii), and it was difficult for him to read Japanese and study livestock animals other than chickens. He said that it was particularly difficult to understand the meaning of the questions.
- He plans to marry a woman who is living in Japan as a Technical Intern Trainee in September 2024. He wants to go through procedures to change his visa to Specified Skilled Worker (ii), which allows him to bring his family with him, and to continue working for a long time.
- His family lives in the suburbs of Hanoi in northern Vietnam and was originally a farmer that raised pigs and birds. After graduating from high school, he worked in the clothing industry. Then he came to Japan as a Technical Intern Trainee, and he built a new house for his parents in Vietnam.

