

Organic Agriculture Experience in Fujieda with the Kinezuka Family

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At first, I was not sure what to expect from this visit to the organic plantation at Fujieda. Since I am originally from Nagasaki, the semi rural agricultural scenery is not new to me. I think what struck me in the beginning is how calm and comforting the atmosphere is. It was a nice change as we arrived from Tokyo.

After arriving at Fujieda, we immediately set out to the organic tea plantation site. The farmer explained to us about how he started the tea plantation about 30 years ago and how they faced many challenges along the way until finally it was a success. But recently they face another problem; the earthquake which occurred on March the 11th has damaged the Fukushima nuclear plant. They detected levels of radionuclide in their tea. Unfortunately this problem is beyond their control and they can only be honest to the consumers about it and hopefully it will slowly decay.

This time we were very lucky to get a special talk by Kousaka san who is an organic restaurant owner and author of a book on organic farming. He spoke about his experiences and how he has learned that we do not have to sacrifice happiness for a living. And that from his point of view, he is happier and more successful now than he was years ago working in company as a salary man. The lesson learned I think is that as people, we have the power to choose our lives and create a harmonious balance with ourselves and nature. Besides that, we received another special event when a band that plays Okinawa cultural music came to perform for us. The theme was mostly nature based and that reminded us of the beauty of the environment and our role to protect it. The day ended with a barbeque dinner and drinks all around. It was a splendid ending to a fruitful day.

The next day, we had the exciting activity of planting paddy seedling in a field reserved for us. I think it is a very good activity because we get to experience the hard work of the farmers. Though it was hard work, but because we were all working together it was really fun. And when



everything is done, I felt very happy and contented to see the field full of planted seedlings.

We were also given the time and opportunity to discuss with the local people about their lives and farming especially organic farming. I now notice that many factors and aspects are important in agriculture. Even my field which is long distance transport of aerosol and organic material in the atmosphere is an important aspect to agriculture especially with the recent tragedy in Fukushima. I think that younger generations who are well educated can contribute to agricultural activities in Japan. I think that in today's world, with all the modernization and complexity, there is more to agriculture than just labor. And I hope that the younger generations know that enough to not just chase after office jobs leaving such important responsibilities such as agriculture to the elderlies.