

Revitalisation of Mountainous Communities Utilising Regional Resources (Yuzu Citrus)

Umaji Village, Kochi Prefecture



Situation Umaji Village once boasted a forestry industry that made use of its rich forest resources, however, the industry began to decline through the slump in timber prices and the downsizing of national forest projects. Umaji Agricultural Cooperative started to make efforts for the full-scale cultivation of yuzu, which had been used as seasoning in the village. In addition, they worked on the development of processed yuzu products as well as improving the strength of the local brand of the village.

Action Umaji Agricultural Cooperative promoted the village through producing and selling “Yuzu No Mura” citrus soy sauce and “Gokkun Umajimura”, juice made from honey, water and yuzu juice with the cooperation of government. In 2006, Yuzu No Mori was established to consolidate scattered factory facilities, which enabled the establishment of a system to consistently control the production, order receipt, delivery, and sales.

Impact Umaji Agricultural Cooperative features the consistent management of the whole process from production to delivery. Moreover, as Umaji Agricultural Cooperative provides the most job opportunities in the village, many young people from Umaji or who moved to the village have gainful employment. Brand recognition of the village was boosted through the products and subsequently, sales increased yearly, and sales for 2017 stood at 2.87 billion yen. A number of visitors and tourists visit the village to see the efforts of Umaji Agricultural Cooperative, which has led to an increase in revenues for accommodation facilities in the village.