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 JFS Weekly

23 - 29 Jun. 2015

Civil Society

[Fukushima Solar and Agriculture Experience Association to Foster Next Generation of Reconstruction Leaders](#)



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The Fukushima Solar and Agriculture Experience Association won an award for utilizing renewable energy in the Tohoku on January 15, 2015. The award is given by the Director-General of the Tohoku Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, to local initiatives that accelerate carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions reductions in Tohoku.

In April 2013, the association opened the Minamisoma Solar Agripark with a 500-kW solar array and a plant factory on 2.4 hectares of land inundated by the 2011 tsunami. In cooperation with Minami-soma City, the association has been conducting experience-based educational activities for local elementary and junior high schools, with over 1,800 students taking part for the first

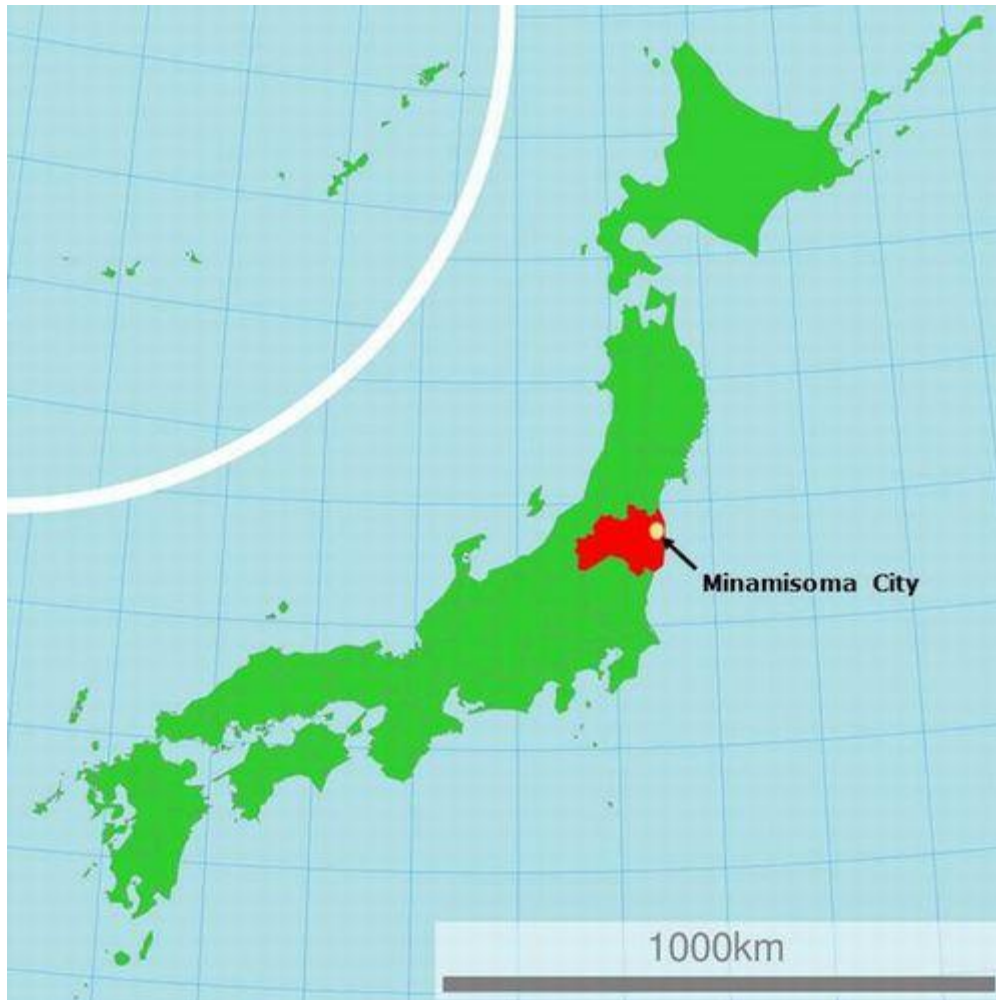
two years. Through these activities, the association supports the development of local children who will be responsible for Fukushima's future reconstruction.

The association also started an open school for senior high school students, colloquially called "Hangai & Edahiro Juku" (juku means "school"). The instructors, Eiju Hangai, its representative director, and Junko Edahiro, a representative of Japan for Sustainability (JFS), help equip the students for effecting social change by helping them clarify their goals and develop their own projects.

In April 2015, the school launched its first project, "Messages from High School Students: Fukushima Taberu Tsushin (Eating Fukushima Magazine)." Being aware of how the nuclear accident has damaged the reputation of agricultural products made in their beloved home of Fukushima, and wanting to address the problem, the students' editorial club publishes once every three months an information magazine compiling stories and anecdotes from farmers in Fukushima, and a supplement on the agricultural produce they painstakingly grow.

Energy / Climate Change

[Minamisoma Releases Non-Nuclear Power Declaration, Targeting 64% Self-Supplied Power by 2020](#)



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Minamisoma City in Fukushima Prefecture became the first city in Japan to release a non-nuclear power declaration on March 25, 2015. More than 10 thousand citizens of Minamisoma continue to experience life as evacuees as the result of the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011. The article to follow is reproduced in edited form with permission from Smart Japan. Smart Japan is an online publication specializing in energy conservation, storage and generation.

Non-Nuclear Power declaration of Minamisoma City shows its determination.

Non-Nuclear Power Declaration

Minamisoma City suffered unprecedented damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011. Furthermore, the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant forced the evacuation of over 60 thousand citizens from their homes. A large number of citizens lost their lives on the way to or after arriving at evacuation sites.

Families, communities and regions are being torn apart, with many continuing to suffer from fear of the long-term effects of radiation exposure. Minamisoma City faces the challenge of rebuilding against the backdrop of this historic disaster. We have a responsibility to re-build communities where children can dream and hope for the future, and to prevent such nuclear accidents from ever happening again.

Therefore, the people have decided to build a new city that does not depend on nuclear power.

Minamisoma City here declares to the world its intention to be a nuclear power-free city.

Reconstruction Planning Department of Minamisoma City (in Japanese)

<http://www.city.minamisoma.lg.jp/index.cfm/8,23464,75,html>

In Minamisoma city, which faces the Pacific Ocean, over 600 people were killed in the Great East Japan Earthquake. Due to the radioactive contamination caused by the subsequent accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, the population of the city, which was 70,000 before the disaster, had temporarily fallen to less than 10,000. As of March 2015, more than 10,000 people lived in other cities as evacuees.

At about 18 months after the disaster, the city set three basic principles; promotion of energy saving, positive use of renewable energy and establishment of a smart community. To eliminate its dependence on nuclear power, the city presented a measure to increase self-sufficiency to 64 percent by 2020, aiming to reach 100 percent by 2030.

Solar and wind power are the core of renewable energy, and 20% of their generation potential would meet the target level for 2030. If the construction of mega-solar power generation planned by Minamisoma city and Toshiba Corp., are realized, annual power generation will exceed 100 million kWh, more than 60 percent of the target level for solar power generation in 2020. The city plans to implement procedures to convert a farm land into solar power generation facilities under its reconstruction maintenance plan.



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Also sponsored by Toshiba, "Minamisoma Solar Agripark" where a solar power plant with a generating capacity of 0.5 megawatt has been constructed started operations in March 2013, aiming at a new style of agriculture.

In the two domed plant factories on its property, vegetables are cultivated using electricity generated by the solar power plant. Growing safe vegetables using renewable energies, and not depending on nuclear power, it has been positioned as a symbol of agricultural revitalization toward disaster recovery.

Minamisoma city intends to realize a recycling-oriented "Eco-friendly Future City". Along with securing the environment for locally produced renewable energy for local consumption, the city will build smart communities of 30 households per village. On the industrial side, making use of the plant factory, it plans to create a circulating local industry that encompasses everything from production, processing and sales to energy supply of agricultural products.

Overcoming radioactive contamination damage and continuing efforts to create a city for future generations will lead to disaster restoration. These thoughts are expressed in the document of the "Declaration for a Nuclear Power-Free City".

How seriously do electric companies and the government take this declaration? At four years since the disaster, the movement to reopen nuclear power plants has steadily continued. Cities such as Minamisoma city need to carefully consider the pros and cons of the plants to be restarted after assessing the situation of communities that are struggling to overcome radioactive contamination.

Source: [Smart Japan](#) (in Japanese)

What's New This Week from JFS (23 - 29 Jun. 2015)

Interview with Jay Tompt for JFS's "Local Well-being" Project
http://www.japanfs.org/en/interview/interview_id035287.html

Junko Edahro, chief executive of JFS, interviewed Jay Tompt, coordinator of Totnes REconomy Project.

Topics are about relocalization as a counter movement of globalization, local ownership and active citizens for greater well-being, projects and groups to activate local economy in Totnes, UK, etc.

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