

“Shimotsu”, the birthplace of Japanese mandarin oranges

Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System



Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System was registered as a Japan Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage System

In this area, terraced fields have been built since about 400 years ago using a unique masonry technique to cultivate mandarin oranges, and loquat has been cultivated on steep slopes.

People built earthen-walled warehouses in the mandarin orange gardens and created the "Kuradashi technique," a technique to enhance the sweetness of the mandarin oranges by the power of nature.

Furthermore, they have established a highly sustainable agricultural system by placing wooded areas on the top of the mountain to provide water source irrigation and prevent landslides, while maintaining the rich biodiversity of the Satoyama landscape.

Highly evaluated for these points, the Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System was recognized as a Japan Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage System by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in February 2019.

What is Japan Nationally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems?

This is the systems that the unique traditional agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries, which have been passed down from generation to generation while adapting to society and the environment, with closely related culture, landscape, seascape and agro-biodiversity, that are interrelated and integrated (Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Systems), recognized by Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

About our Logo

Our logo represents the diverse fruit trees grown in Shimotsu-cho, Kainan City, including mandarin oranges, loquats, and kiwifruit. In the background, the terraced fields, the mountains of Shimotsu, the sea pouring in from the Kamo River and its bounty, and the earthen-walled warehouses built within the mandarin orange gardens - the elements that make up the "Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System" are represented.

If you would like to use the logo mark, please contact us at the number below.



Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System
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Shimotsu, the "birthplace of mandarin oranges" in Japan

It is said that about 1,900 years ago, under the order of Japanese Emperor Suinin, Tajimamori brought back from China the tangerine, the ancestor of the mandarin orange, and planted it on the "Hill of Six Trees," thus making the area the "birthplace of mandarin oranges" in Japan.



Hill of six trees planted with tangerines



Kitsumoto Shrine, dedicated to "Tajimamori," the god of mandarin oranges



"Kuradashi technology" to increase sweetness

- ◆ In December, ripe mandarin oranges are harvested and matured for more than one month in a wooden and earthen-walled warehouse installed in the field.
- ◆ Wall clay is made from the garden clay to preserve mandarin oranges in a condition close to the natural environment of the field.
- ◆ The Kuradashi Mikan with a higher sugar content are shipped from February to April.
- ◆ This method is a unique technique followed in the Shimotsu area.



The Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System supports an affluent quality of life.



① Guarantee of food and livelihood

- ① Kuradashi Mikan" that can be sold at favorable prices.
- ② Relay shipment of Various late-ripening citrus and mandarin orange.
- ③ Combined management of loquats, kiwis, etc.
- ④ Sixth industries such as processed fruit products and tourist farms

② Agricultural biodiversity enabled by the Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System

- ① Symbiosis of wild birds such as white-eyes and honeybees with agriculture (Pollination of loquat, ecological control of fruit trees, nourishment of wild birds, etc.)
- ② Diverse flora and fauna nurtured by wooded areas and reservoirs
- ③ Cultivation of a variety of citrus.

③ Traditional local knowledge and technologies that make up the Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System

- ① Technology to adapt to steep slopes (Leaving thickets on the top of the mountain to nourish water sources and improve disaster resilience)
- ② Traditional masonry techniques using natural stone (It improves mandarin oranges productivity and disaster tolerance)
- ③ Traditional storage techniques for mandarin oranges (Mandarin oranges are naturally aged in a wooden earthen-walled storage set up in the field)

④ Shimotsu Kuradashi Mikan System contributes to culture, values, and social organization

- ① Community bonding through agriculture
- ② Various festivals and events related to agriculture
- ③ Use of mandarins oranges and loquats in daily life
- ④ Inheritance of systems cultivated by people (Inheritance of traditional techniques) (Fostering regional understanding through urban-rural exchange)

⑤ Features of Landscape and Seascape

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