

32. Eating habits

32.1 Daily meals

In old times farmers grew almost all their household food needs. The principal food of the Meiji Period was barley (*bakumeshi*). Through the Taisho Period to about Showa 30 (1955), a principle diet of mixed barley (cracked, then later rolled) and rice (mainly dry field rice) was eaten. Side dishes (*osai* or *osei*) were mainly field-gathered vegetables. Hand-caught Tama River fish, *aramaki-jake* (lightly salted salmon received as New Year's gifts), *himono* (dried fish) bought from peddlers etc. were eaten, but irregularly.

In the busy farming season (April to October), farmers woke early for morning duties before breakfast. The usual breakfast menu was barley, *miso* soup and pickles. When duties were hard, they had a tea break about ten o'clock to eat pickles and candies. Lunch was a light meal. A small dish of fish boiled in soy sauce or salted salmon was regarded as an indulgence. If they were too busy to cook, left over food was eaten for breakfast. To avoid hunger fatigue they ate a snack meal about at three o'clock called *okoju*, seasonally harvested foods including *yakimochi* (baked left-over-rice cake), boiled potato, rough melons grown among dry field rice and steamed sweet potato. Especially during heavy labor, such as barley harvest, special foods such as rice balls and *yude-manju* (bean-jam-filled boiled buns) replenished spent energy. In the evening, they ate mostly rice, that was cooked the previous morning, miso soup and pickles. That being insufficient, they ate supplementary fine noodles in summer and *noshikomi* (noodles simmered in broth) in winter, and sometimes dumpling soup.

32.2 Meals for important occasions

The New Year, Bon and wedding day were ceremonial day. In those days people made delicious food. They ordinarily spent simple life. So the *monobi* (special day)'s diet was very pleasant for all. 1, 15 and 28 of every month were also the *monobi* when they ate boiled rice.



Fig.203 Short rest in a day of rice planting (1957 (Showa 32)).



Fig.204 Celebration party (1955 (Showa 30)). Zenwagura (warehouse for ceremony's good) sets were used as tableware. A yanagidaru (sake cask) was decorated the tokonoma (alcove).

	CEREMONIES	FOOD	REMARKS
Childbirth and growth	Oshichiya (The seventh night after a baby's birth)	Rice boiled with red beans or azuki-bean food	
	Sanmimai	Rice (one to two sho (0.477 US gallon/sho)), two dried bonito	Donated by maternal family, distant relative or other donor
	Ubuyaake (Omiya-mairi)	Rice boiled with red beans, sake	Offering to Ubusuna-sama, rice boiled with red beans placed on Japanese cypress leaves
		Rice boiled with red beans, sake, dried bonito (boy), dried cuttlefish (girl)	A return gift for Sanmimai
	Kuizome	Rice boiled with red beans, boiled food, fish	100 or 110 days after the childbirth.
	March seasonal festival	Diamond shape rice-cakes, clams, dried cuttlefish Rice boiled with red beans, other boiled food	Dishes remaining from the family-sponsored March seasonal festival gift.
	May seasonal festival	Rice boiled, red beans, rice cake wrapped in daiyo oak leaf, dried kasago (Sebastiscus marmoratus) Rice boiled with red beans, other boiled food	Dishes remaining from the family-sponsored May seasonal festival gift.
	Obitoki (Seventh year celebration)	Red and white rice cake or tsurunoko rice cake, rice boiled with red beans, sake, dried bonito (boy), dried cuttlefish (girl)	Dishes remaining from family-sponsored gift.
		Rice boiled with red beans, other boiled food	Offering to Ubusuna-sama, rice boiled with red beans placed on Japanese cypress leaves.
	Utaihajime (nanakusa)	Sake (1 sho (0.477 US gallon/sho))	Celebrated when the first-born son reached 15 years (18 years after WWII). (Kumagawa area)
Marriage	Inari-ko	Sake (1 sho)	Celebrated when the second-born or later son reached 15 years (18 years after WWII). (Kumagawa area) Celebrated at 20 years outside the Kumagawa area.
	Yomemorai	Sake (1 sho)	Hashikake takes to the bridal family. The bridal family's opening of the sake bottle, showed their consent to the marriage.
	Kuchigatame	Sake (1 sho), kuchitorimono.	
	Yuinou	Dried bonito, konbu (tangle weed), dried cuttlefish, sake, kuchitori-mono.	Engagement presents.
	Go-shugi	Cold sake, bridal otakamori, Bridal chakan-zake, kuchitorimono, boiled food, soup, soba (buckwheat noodles) or wheat noodles	
Funeral	Miyamairi	Rice boiled with red beans, sake	Offering to Ubusuna-sama.
	Hikyaku	Cold sake, rice,	
	Makuradango	Dumpling	Unwashed, ground rice, boiled in backyard on temporary stove, then buried in pit with deceased person.
	Makurameshi	Rice	Unwashed rice boiled in the backyard on temporary stove, then buried in pit with deceased person
	Yukan	Cold sake	
	Tsuya	Gomoku-meshi (Japanese pilaf), miso soup with leek and tofu (soybean curd)	Oshinogi for memorial service.
		Noodles (night)	Last noodles are eaten.
	Anaban	Cold sake, tofu	
	Nokaeri	Dumpling, salt	
	Kodengaeshi	Imasaka Manju (bean-jam-filled bun)	Gift for funeral attendees
	Niwatoki	Rice, miso soup with leek and tofu	Lunch given to the Kumiai.
	Danbarai	Noodles, boiled food, sake	

Fig.205 Meals for important occasions.