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Japan Screen Topics

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JAPAN'S FOOD SUPPLY

149feet 4min. 09sec.

1. (INTRODUCTION) Food is the basic necessity of life. The need for shelter and clothing various degree...depending on the climate. But mankind cannot survive, even under the best of conditions, without sufficient supplies of food.

And so, for as long as man has walked the earth, a guarantee of stable food supplies has been of primary importance.

2. (SHIPS AT PORT; AIRCRAFT; COWS; GRAIN) Japan is a nation of very limited land area, high population density and exceptional industrialization. In particular, the mountainous terrain limits agriculture to rather small plains districts, where farming must compete for space with residential and industrial needs.

Thus Japan can produce only 72% of its total food requirements, and must import 28% of the food required for its large population. These imports cost an average of \$14 billion each year.

3. (SUPERMARKETS; RICE FIELDS; BREAD) Japanese supermarkets feature wide varieties of foodstuffs imported from throughout the world, and have proved popular with Japanese consumers.

Such extensive imports of food have brought about major changes in the people's diet. Rice, while still the staple grain, has seen consumption per family drop from 337kg annually in 1965 to 178kg in 1978.

Bread has become a popular staple, with consumption increasing from 36.4kg in 1965 to 40.8kg in 1978.

4. (GREENHOUSES, VEGETABLES, FRUITS) In fact, while Japan is by far a net importer of grains, receiving 67% of its needs from abroad, the country now has a large surplus of rice. Farmers have, in recent years, reacted to this overproduction of rice by switching away from that centuries-old staple to cultivate increasing amounts of fruits and vegetables.

5. (AERIAL VIEW OF N.I.A.S.) This is the National Institute of Agricultural Sciences established by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries at the academic/research center of Tsukuba, north of Tokyo.

6. (MEASURING PLANTS; LIGHT EXPERIMENTS) Here scientists are conducting a host of experiments aimed at increasing agricultural knowledge so as to obtain maximum produce from available land. Basic research is conducted in such fields as plant physiology, genetics, plant pathology, entomology, agricultural chemistry and soil science.

Some experiments, for example, aim at using artificial light-dark cycles to increase the growth rate of plants.

7. (COLD/WIND TESTING; RADIATION USE) Because much of Japan endures severe winter weather, many experiments aim at breeding plants capable of withstanding greater extremes of cold and strong winds. If successful, such research could greatly increase growing seasons and allow for more non-grain cultivation in northern Japan.

Isotope research efforts include studies in improved fertilizer application, plant nutrition and breeding. By using radioactive isotopes to trace plant nutrition, scientists can discover new ways of improving agricultural production.

8. (SAMPLE STORAGE) This is the Germplasm Seed Storage Center, where seed samples can be kept under special conditions for long periods, and data compiled through such studies can lead to new, improved breeding and genetic controls.

It is through such extensive scientific research and development that Japan aims at insuring a stable supply of food for its population well into the future.

MARINE "MECHANIMALS"

76feet 2min. 07sec.

1. Moving swiftly, silently and surely through a medium in which man is slow and awkward, marine creatures are adapted by nature to fit well into their environment.

(FISH; ROBOT "MECHANIMALS") The ordinary fish, for example is a portrait of grace as it swims through the water. But there are now some man made creatures moving through the water as well. They may not appear so graceful, or be so swift, but they are prototypes of future devices which may increase man's capability to explore and develop the vast oceans of the world. And, at the same time, they are great fun to watch.

2. (BUILDING ROBOT) This is the construction process for one of these robot marine creatures, or, as they are sometimes called, "mechanimals".

3. (VARIOUS ROBOTS) Here is a real, live shrimp moving along the seabed, for example.....and here is a 'bionic' shrimp doing the same.

The delicate, dance-like movements of an anemone and lovely to watch.....and can also be mechanically duplicated.

The common crab is not very beautiful, but is certainly surefooted.....and his 'bionic' counterpart is just as steady.

Rays of various species move through the sea with a gentle, wing-like motion.....duplicated by this "mechanimal".

And, of course, the classic tail-flip movement of the common fish.....is still one of the best ways to get around under the sea.

4. (FISH & ROBOT) But these mechanimals are not just toys, they are actual prototypes of advanced undersea devices which may, someday, allow mankind to join 'society beneath the waves'.

"RABBIT ISLAND"

76feet 2min. 07sec.

1. (BOAT TO ISLAND; FEEDING;RABBITS) Each morning about 7:30, this boat crosses a gentle bay to a small, off-shore island that is the home of a rather unusual 'community'. Some 400 rabbits live on 'Rabbit Island', and the boat brings their daily meals to them each day.

As the boat arrives, and the crew begins to unload various types of food, the rabbits come rushing down to the dock to 'greet' their visitors.....and to make sure they get their fair share of the daily meals.

Although not tame, the rabbits are extremely accustomed to humans, and are great tourist attraction.

But one of the most unusual aspects of this Rabbit Island is that the diet of these bunnies includes some very non-rabbity items.

.....like deep-fried shrimp, for example, which the rabbits have to come greatly enjoy.

.....almost as much as they like the fried fish which is also a part of their meal.

Indeed, these may be the world's only 'carnivorous' rabbits. They got that way when 3 years ago, scientists researching the life of rabbits, discovered that their little subjects had developed a taste cycle for more gourmet fare than lettuce and carrots.

2. (DR. OZAKI; RABBITS IN WATER) Toyoaki Ozaki, an experienced veterinarian, makes frequent trips to Rabbit Island to keep the bunnies healthy, and to treat cuts and scratches inflicted by hawks patrolling the nearby skies.

And uniquely, these rabbits have no fear of water, unlike most of their species. They calmly brave the 'terrors of the ocean depths', at least right along the shore, and seem to have no qualms about getting their feet wet.

TOKYO'S GALA FESTIVAL

60feet 1min. 40sec.

1. (AERIAL VIEW INTRO) In the heart of downtown Tokyo, nearby the Sumida River, lies the traditional old district known as Asakusa. This is truly 'old' Tokyo, with streets of buildings and homes reflecting ancient architectural styles, and several famous old temples.

2. (MIKOSHI; FESTIVAL SCENES) Each spring, as the weather turns warm, Asakusa explodes in joyous celebration of the Sanja Matsuri, one of Tokyo's largest, noisiest, happiest and most exciting festivals.

Huge crowds gather in the narrow streets nearby the famed Asakusa Kannon Temple to cheer on the bearers of portable shrines, known as O-mikoshi. The bearers dance through the streets and lanes, bearing the shrine high on their shoulders and moving constantly while shouting out chants dating back hundreds of years.

Priests from the temple give blessings to the bearers of the O-mikoshi, and its followers.

Even children join in the fun, carrying special miniature palanquins through the streets.

Carring the O-mikoshi requires strength and stamina, but the girls of Asakusa carry on their own tradition by joining in and putting their shoulders to the task, matching the men in spirit if not physique.

Asakusa's Sanja Matsuri is famed throughout the nation as one of Japan's most riotous, gala celebrations, and is the unofficial symbol of springtime to many Tokyo residents.