

Food strategy for lifestyle disease prevention



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Presentation main points

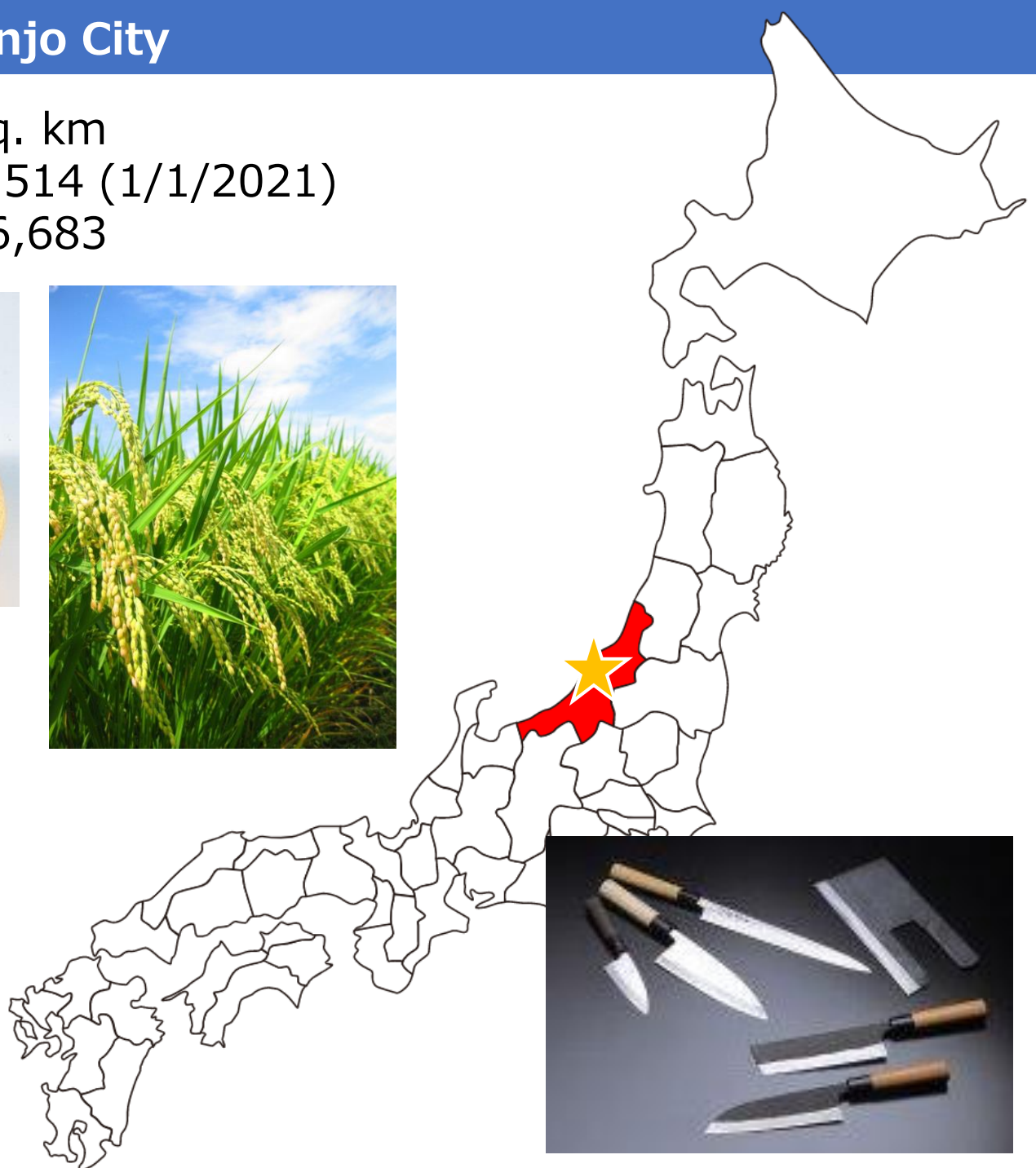
1. Overview of Sanjo City
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7. Summary

1. Overview of Sanjo City

Size: 432.01 sq. km

Population: 94,514 (1/1/2021)

Households: 36,683





▲ Sanjo curry ramen



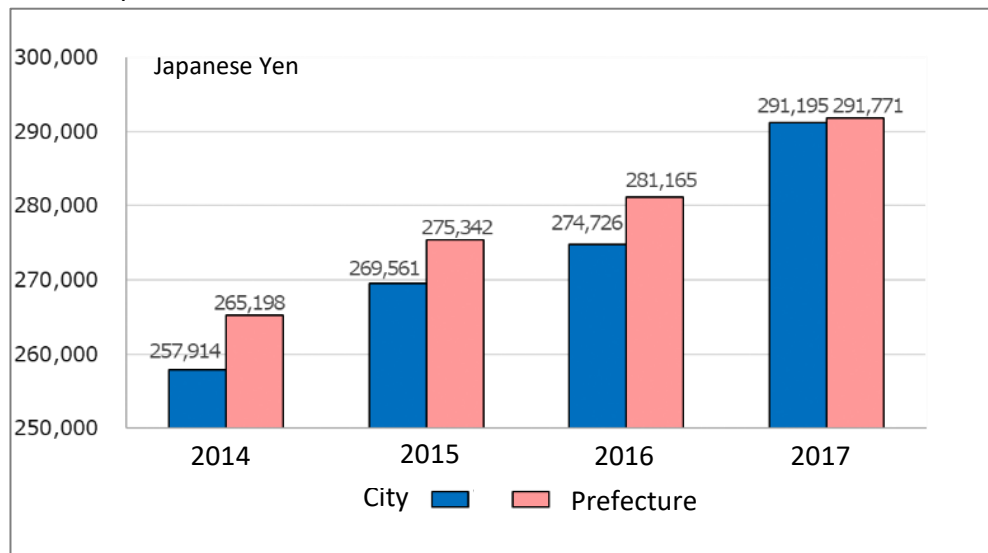
► Salted salmon (top) and pickled vegetables (bottom)



2. Project background (1)

The increase in cardiovascular diseases, such as hypertension and cerebrovascular diseases, has caused an increase in medical costs. One of the factors contributing to cardiovascular disease: excessive salt intake

Changes in Japan's National Health Insurance's medical expenditure per insured person



Source: National Health Insurance Business Status Report (Business Annual Report)

Ranking of medical expenditure per capita by disease, in 2017

National Health Insurance medical costs		
	Types of diseases	Medical cost per capita
1st	Neoplasms (Cancers, benign tumours, etc.)	53,248 JPY (342 GBP)
2nd	Cardiovascular diseases (Hypertension, cerebrovascular disease, heart disease, etc.)	41,158 JPY (264 GBP)
3rd	Digestive system diseases (Stomach, intestine, liver, dental disease, etc.)	39,008 JPY (251 GBP)
4th	Mental and behavioural issues (Depression, dementia, etc.)	34,690 JPY (223 GBP)
5th	Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases (Diabetes, dyslipidaemia, etc.)	22,275 JPY (143 GBP)
6th	Musculoskeletal system and connective tissue diseases (Spinal disorders, osteoporosis, etc.)	19,502 JPY (125 GBP)

Source: Niigata Prefecture National Health Insurance Federation

Unknown data: Citizen's salt intake

Survey on salt intake

Date: September 2015

Target: 442 people (208 men and 234 women between 20s-80s)

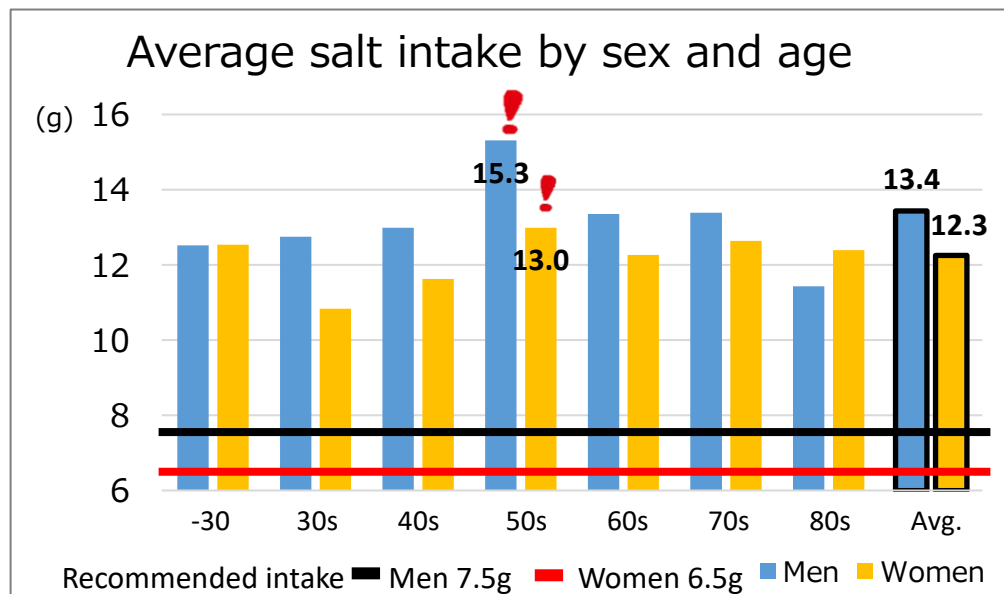
Surveys: Questionnaire on citizens' lifestyle, urinary sodium measurements

*Analysis run by the Prefectural University of Niigata estimating salt intake based on Na and Cr content in urine.

2. Project background (2) - Results of the salt intake survey

Result 1

The average salt intake was **more than 5 g above the recommended dose** in most age groups



- ✓ > 90% of people consumed more than the recommended daily salt intake
- ✓ Men were more likely than women to consume too much salt
- ✓ A number of people whose salt intake was too high still believed they were being careful with salt

Result 2

Eating habits which lead to a high salt intake

Eat until they felt full

→ Eating more food = higher total salt intake, even with lightly salted food



Eating out over twice a week

→ Many meals served in restaurants are high in salt!



Drinking every day

→ Appetisers high in salt + increased appetite due to alcohol consumption



Not checking salt contents when shopping or eating out

→ Many people are not aware of the recommended intake



3. Objectives and approach

Objective

In order to prevent cerebrovascular disease and high blood pressure, which are major health issues in Sanjo, we run awareness campaigns about the importance of an adequate salt intake and we created a system which helps citizens naturally reduce their salt consumption.

High

Health literacy

Low

Sales of low-sodium products

(2) Smart Meals project - healthy meals made available in restaurants that promote local production for local consumption



1) The Invisible Salt Reduction Strategy

Improving the food environment



(3) Campaign using our salt awareness leaflet and food replicas

Awareness-raising activities on a daily basis on the go

Awareness campaign

4. Invisible Salt Reduction Strategy

Aim

Rise in numbers of dual-earner households and elderly single-person households ⇒ Growing need for ready-made meals to save time on cooking. We aim to:

- Create an environment in which people can naturally reduce their salt intake in their daily lives
- By reducing salt content in ready-made dishes while maintaining their taste

Project

Discussions and survey

- (1) Inquire about interest in project
- (2) Survey of salt content in ready-made meals
- (3) Discussion with business re: the development of low-sodium ready meals



Salt reduction in existing meals

Development of low-sodium ready meals

The results of the survey is used to develop low-sodium ready meals and provide advice on recipes

We suggest tips that are easy for businesses to follow, such as:

- Switching from powder fish stock to a natural one
- Measuring seasoning properly
- Using less seasoning



Sales and promotion of low-sodium ready meals

- (1) Sell ready made dishes without heavily marketing them as "low-sodium"
* We instead use the logo "UMAMI SANJO"
- (2) Promotion campaigns via social media and information magazines

The logo used on stickers and signs



Promotion campaigns in local magazines

Businesses that promote "Local Production for Local Consumption"

Businesses which actively use local agricultural products receive a certification from Sanjo City as a "Local Production for Local Consumption Business". 218 restaurants and retail shops have been certified so far.



Targets & guidelines of the initiative (details adjusted based on each business's situation)

(1) Purchased foods with high salt content

Salt reduction targets for food sold in supermarkets, delis, lunchbox shops and restaurants which are usually high in salt

	Target	Salt reduction guidelines
Ready-made meals and lunches	- Reduce salt intake by at least 10% compared to current levels	[Salt content] Stews: less than 1.2% Marinated food: 0.5% Miso soup: 0.8%
Restaurant meals	- Implementing methods to reduce salt (e.g. using broth)	450-650kcal/1 serving: less than 3.0g 650-850kcal/1 serving: less than 3.5g

(2) Businesses that voluntarily reduce the amount of salt in their products

(3) Businesses where the products sold are already suitable for salt

As their practices coincide with our objectives, such businesses are invited to take part in the project




Types of low-sodium foods on offer

	Company A (2 shops)	Company B
2017	2 side dishes, 1 lunch box	-
2018	4 side dishes, 1 lunch box	-
2019	6 side dishes, 2 lunchboxes	3 or 4 salads 1 lunch box
2020	7 side dishes, 2 lunchboxes	3 or 4 salads, 1 side dish, 2 lunchboxes



Assessment of our Invisible Salt Reduction Strategy

Assessment indicators (in 2020)

	Item	Company A	Company B
1	Proportion of low-sodium ready meals sold annually (YoY)	93.6%	Increased (Figures are confidential)
2	Suitable salt content for dishes prepared and sold by the business (Ex: Less than 1.2% for stewed dishes)	Ex: Stewed black seaweeds 1.4% 	Less salt than in previous products (no figures)
3	Positive changes in the company's salt reduction policy	Actively increasing the number of products included in the initiative	Active participation in other health-related projects in Niigata Pref. and other areas



Shops place the initiative's logo on their products and display it on signs to raise awareness



▲ Talk given at the eat-in corner of Company B (Dec 2019)

Media coverage

▼ Local newspapers



▼ Cable TV and local news programmes



A press release was issued in January 2019. The project was then relayed by various local media, and even featured on national television.

▲ Broadcasted on the NHK (Japan's national public channel)

5. "Smart Meal" x Local Production for Local Consumption

Purpose

Create an environment where people can easily choose healthy food options from an increasingly large range of choices.

- Promote the "Healthy Meals and Food Environment" certification (a.k.a Smart Meal) among shops who support Local Production for Local Consumption
- Have them display the logo to inform customers of the certification
- Raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating among local businesses

どこでも、誰でも、栄養バランスの良い食事 が選べる社会をめざして



Smart Meal
スマートミール

「健康な食事・食環境」認証制度

スマートミールとは？
健康づくりに役立つ栄養バランスのとれた食事のこと。
つまり一食の中で、**主食・主菜・副菜** が揃い、
野菜がたっぷり **食塩** のとり過ぎにも配慮した
食事のことです。



"Towards a society where anyone, anywhere can choose a well-balanced meal"

"Healthy Meal and Food Environment" certification

What is a "Smart Meal"?

It is a meal which contributed to a balanced diet to improve your health. Such a meal contains a staple food, a main dish and a side dish, is rich in vegetables and does not contain too much salt.

Number of certified businesses in Sanjo City

- 8 restaurants
- 5 stores

Project content

Support for applications to the "Healthy Meals and Food Environment" certification

We provide support to restaurants & shops who had shown a willingness to participate governmental projects (such as Local Production for Local Consumption), and help them draft official documents and formulate meals that meet the standards.

- Providing meals and calculating nutritional values in accordance with the standards
- A qualified nutritionist from the local authority offers advice on recipes.



Stickers displayed in participating shops/restaurants

Smart Meal sales and awareness

- (1) When a business receives the certification, the city government issues a press release.
- (2) Official stickers are provided to certified shops and restaurants to be displayed in their window. Flyers are also created and distributed to inform residents.

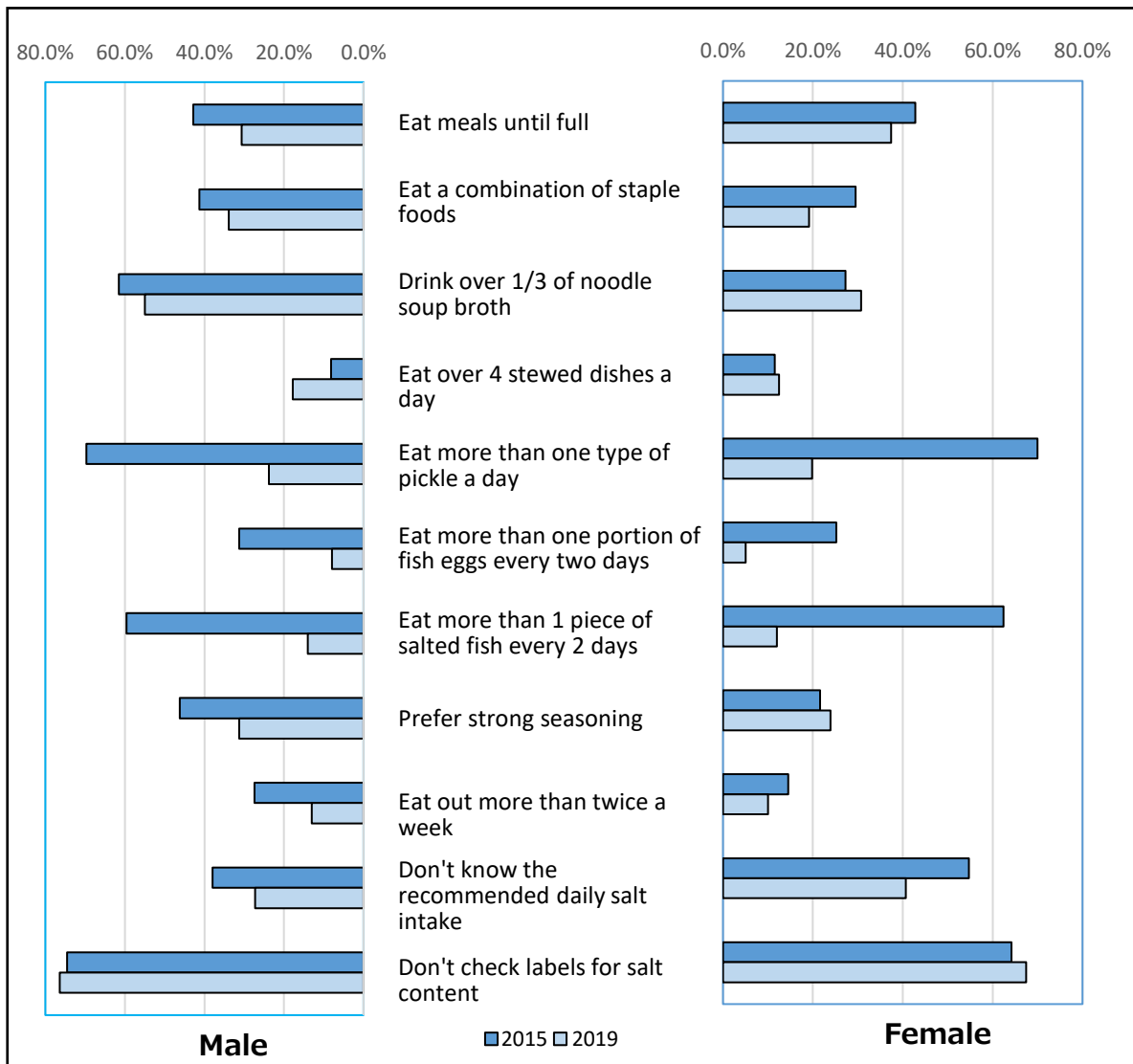
Flyers are distributed in dietary education initiatives and health projects



6. Campaign using our Salt Awareness Leaflet

- Awareness-raising activities using leaflets during city-run health check-ups.
- Nutrition guidance is provided using leaflets during health and dietary education programmes.

Results from the survey on eating habits



"You may be eating too much salt without even knowing it!"



◀ "Eat a Smart Meal at a restaurant promoting local production for local consumption!"



7. Summary

- Aim: reduce incidence of cardiovascular diseases
- Two-pronged approach to salt reduction policy
 - Raising awareness of dietary recommendations
 - Maintaining the food environment while lowering the overall amount of salt available
- Invisible Salt Reduction Strategy using a "less is more" approach to marketing products low in salt
- Smart Meals: healthy meals offered by businesses supporting "Local Production for Local Consumption"
- Salt awareness campaign (leaflet & survey at health check-ups). Results to inform future policy making.