

Consumers Union of Japan

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From the Editors:

Reaching Out

This issue of Japan Resources is published as usual on our English website as a pdf file. We also send it out on a mailing list to those who have shared their email address with us.

Did you know that Consumers Union of Japan also has an “X” account that you can subscribe to?

Since starting the English newsletter in the 1980s we have been making efforts to reach out to activists and colleagues around the world.

Back before the Internet, Japan Resources was a paper newsletter, mostly with photocopied articles and items of interest, as consumers share many of the same concerns around the world.

We hope you will also take advantage of our new online feature to contribute to Consumers Union of Japan, which makes it easy to make a financial donation online, and support our work.

- Editors

**Statement of Protest Against the
U.S. Declaration to Resume
Nuclear Testing**

14 November 2025

To: The US Embassy

From: Consumers Union of Japan

We are a Japanese citizens' non governmental organization (NGO). As citizens of a nation that has suffered atomic bombings, we strongly protest President Trump's declaration to resume nuclear testing.

Nuclear weapons are inhumane weapons that not only cause massive destruction but also inflict prolonged suffering on countless victims.

Nuclear testing is an act that leads to the development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the United States of America has signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. President Trump's claim that China, Russia, and Pakistan are conducting nuclear tests is false; North Korea is the only country that has conducted nuclear tests in recent years.

Some countries possess nuclear arsenals large enough to destroy humanity multiple times over. Nuclear weapons must be abolished without delay. What your country must do is take the lead in advancing the path toward nuclear abolition. We strongly demand the withdrawal of President Trump's remarks, which turn their back on peace.

**Joint Statement Sent to Japan,
South Korea, Taiwan, China, and
10 ASEAN Countries**

8 September 2025

Consumers Union of Japan and the Housewives' Federation have sent the Joint Statement for Asian Peace to the Prime Minister of Japan and the embassies of South Korea, Taiwan, China, as well as the 10 ASEAN countries.

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We are Japanese consumer organizations working to establish consumer rights and protect lives and livelihoods.

We express our deepest respect to the ASEAN member states, which have long pursued diplomatic efforts to build peace in the Southeast Asian region.

We are writing to share our Joint Statement on Asian Peace, which advocates "dialogue over force," with ASEAN, an organization that values and practices dialogue above all else. We have enclosed the statement. We would be grateful if you would take the time to review it.

We issued the Joint Statement for Asian Peace in August 2024, wishing for the swiftest possible end to the unceasing wars and conflicts around the world and for all people living on Earth to be able to live in peace. Currently, 30 civic groups active in

Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and New Zealand have endorsed it. Thus, there are people across Asia who sincerely wish for peace and support solidarity among citizens.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II. As citizens of Japan, whose Constitution advocates non-aggression, we will continue dialogue and exchange to further expand and deepen connections between people seeking peace. This is to prevent any more wars from occurring in Asia and around the world.

50th Anniversary of Peace in Vietnam

1 October 2025

Earlier this year, I visited Vietnam. Red flags and the number “50” were displayed everywhere. In 1975, the fall of Saigon and the reunification of the country brought an end to the “American War” (as the Vietnamese call it). More than that, this war put an end to a history of suffering under Japanese imperialist rule, which lasted until 1945, and the long humiliating French colonial rule.

1975 may seem like a distant past, but traces of the intense bombing by U.S. forces, especially the use of chemical weapons like napalm and defoliants containing dioxin-

contaminated 2,4-D and other herbicides, remain to this day. The environmental destruction caused by this defoliant campaign was described as “ecocide” by figures like Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme. Soldiers from the United States, Australia, and South Korea also suffered long-term health consequences. According to the Vietnamese government, up to 3 million people suffer from illnesses caused by Agent Orange (a mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T). What I witnessed were elderly and young victims, severely disabled even 50 years later, on the beautiful streets of Saigon (Ho Chi Minh City).

Today, as we advocate for food safety and oppose genetically modified crops like soybeans, we recognize that U.S. companies have developed genetically modified soybeans and corn resistant to 2,4-D. While this is certainly different from the “spraying of Agent Orange,” the contamination of food with such chemicals is utterly unacceptable. As U.S. farmers continue spraying, residual levels of 2,4-D and other herbicides have been detected near schools across the United States, as reported by the nonprofit media outlet Investigate Midwest. With growing empathy for chemical poisoning victims worldwide, this situation is ethically intolerable.

By Martin J. Frid, Consumers Union of Japan

Booklet: Sayonara, Food Additives

Many people want to avoid consuming food additives as much as possible, while others believe they are safe because the government says so. How does the government evaluate the safety of additives? Are they truly safe?

In Europe and the United States, research reports on the health impacts of synthetic food colorings and artificial sweeteners are emerging one after another. Japan's food additive regulations have been driven by external pressure from the United States; it is now reported that the US is considering a comprehensive ban on coal-tar-based colorants, starting with restrictions on Red No. 3. However, neither Japan's Food Safety Commission nor the Consumer Affairs Agency shows any sign of action.

Get our new booklet, and for now, the only option is to avoid additives.

Check labels and reduce your intake of additives.

- Additives to Avoid at All Costs
- US Moves to Eliminate Major Synthetic Food Colorings
- Survey on Food Additive Usage
- School Lunch Standards Must Prioritize Children's Health

This booklet explains that there are problems with the government's safety assessments and that various research studies worldwide have

revealed health impacts from additives previously deemed safe. We also highlight specific additives you should avoid and explains their risks.

You can order the booklet here (in Japanese):

<https://nishoren.net/new-information/21907>



Calling for Measures to Address Fragrance Pollution Affecting Children: New Survey Reveals Extent of Health Issues

In Japan, many people are suffering from fragrance pollution, particularly from scented fabric softeners and laundry detergents. These chemical fragrances permeate the air in public spaces and even enter homes

through ventilation, balconies, and gardens when neighbors dry their laundry indoors or outdoors. Although the exact number of affected individuals is uncertain, estimates suggest at least one million people may be experiencing health impacts.

Those affected report a wide range of symptoms, including headaches, nausea, coughing, eye irritation, sore throat, dizziness, and abdominal pain. In severe cases, individuals have been forced to leave their jobs or withdraw from school. The situation is making the everyday life of those who are affected very difficult.

Since 2017, the Network to Stop Fragrance Pollution (of which Consumers Union of Japan is one of five member organizations) has submitted formal requests to the Japanese government and held discussions with various ministries. Despite these efforts, meaningful progress has been very limited. The Ministry of Health maintains that there is currently no scientific evidence supporting the existence of fragrance pollution as a public health issue.

On 20 August 2025 the Network to Stop Fragrance Pollution, together with the Network of Politicians to Stop Fragrance Pollution (a coalition of local assembly members), held a press conference urging the government to take concrete measures, particularly to protect children.

This call to action followed a significant new survey conducted by the Japanese Society of Clinical Ecology and the Society of Indoor Environment, Japan, specifically their Environmental Sensitivity Subcommittees.

The survey, carried out nationwide among primary and secondary schools (children aged 7–15), collected interim responses from approximately 10,000 students. The findings showed that around 10% had experienced health issues at school related to fragrance exposure, and 2% reported difficulty attending school as a result. Based on these results, the two network groups submitted a written request to the Ministry of Education urging immediate countermeasures.

Tabekime Campaign Update

For World Food Day on 16 October, we again started the campaign “I decide what I eat. I decide what I plant and grow. Not for the benefit of multinational corporations.” We call this campaign the Tabe Kime Action (Tabe=Eat Kime=Decide).

Our campaign was launched in response to the criticism voiced by family farmers, small-scale farmers' groups and citizens' groups around the world against the multinational corporations led UN Food System Summit in September 2021, and to show Japan's support for them.

Many thanks to everyone who sent in photos this year!

View all the photos here:

<https://nishoren.net/event-information/21880>



Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) – Representatives from CBAN's Member Groups



MASIPAG Good Food Community visiting Japan from the Philippines



Nordic Seed Alliance (Denmark, Norway, Sweden)



Farmers in Kyoto, Japan



"Keep New Zealand GM Free!"



Special thanks to Akiko in Sweden, a member of a local organic cooperative, who sent the wonderful photos from Europe this year!

Consumers Union of Japan

CJJ is a politically and financially independent non-governmental organization (NGO). We are funded by membership fees, sales of publications and donations.

CJJ was founded in April 1969 as Japan's first nationwide grassroots consumer organization.

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