

*Bring Out and Up the Ability of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and Take Over the History of the Farm*



## **Uemura Farm since 1884, Nara**



### **“They are my fortune.”**

People often ask me if I have a disabled member in my family or not since I hire ID people in my farm, but actually I don't. I just started hiring them due to the lack of staff and I had no idea about intellectual disability when I accepted the offer from the Public Employment Security Office (Hello Work). They said that those who have intellectually disabilities would take a while to get used to the job but they would surely be helpful, so I immediately answered, “Yes, they are welcome.” That is how I met them and I soon realized that was a big challenge....

One day, I asked them to weed grasses and pointed out the kinds of grasses I wanted them to weed out. A few hours later, I found the garden all naked, no plants or flowers. That kind of things happened a lot and to be honest, I often thought I should have hired non-disabled people no matter how much it would cost. However, I learned how to teach and communicate with them little by little and now they have become so precious to me. If I catch a cold, they come over to me and say “Are you ok?” with drinks and food in their hands. It is not easy to teach them and it takes a long time, but they work really hard and that is what our farm needs as it is still operated by hand labor.

I do not think a lot and always try new things, but one thing I always keep in mind is “not to give up easily and try my best”. As a result, we have been together for 23 years.



Ms. Reiko Kurose  
President of the farm



### **15 staff with intellectual disability**

**Farm Group** . . . taking care of cows, washing bins and delivering.

**Cooking Group** . . . making cookies, puddings and meals for staff.

**“Each person has innate abilities”**

Teaching them patiently has now become our daily routine. I find their strong and weak points through the work and connect the strong points to their duties.

Strength and kindness can be very useful at work like farm. It takes 2 or 3 years for them to be able to do the duty perfectly, but once they master it they never forget as they learn it with their full bodies.



**“They have given me so many opportunities to meet wonderful people”**

The biggest change since I have started hiring the persons with intellectual disabilities is the “relationship between the community”. They have been a bridge between us and people in the community now support us a lot.

When I accept interns from special schools or hire a new ID member, teachers, parents and people from the administration often visit here and support us.

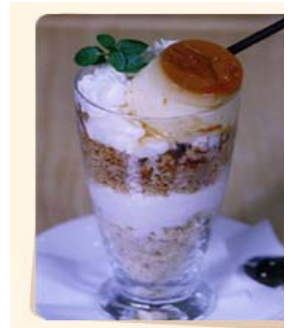
What we are today is thanks to those people. This is really a small farm. However, my wish is to keep it a warm and cozy place in the community with a lot of beautiful flowers, lovely animals and good products.



Soy Wastes for Forage

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