

Fruit and Vegetables

Each season on Sado Island brings new flavors that are only available for a few months. Spring is the main vegetable season. Local fruit comes to market mainly in autumn and early winter, and is grown in the southwestern part of the island because of the relatively warm climate there. Persimmons, including a brand-name variety called *Okesagaki*, are popular and are frequently eaten dried. French fruit varieties such as the Le Lectier pear and Violette de Solles fig are juicy delicacies that make for tasty souvenirs. Apples, another autumnal indulgence, are specialties of Nishi-Mikawa. In winter, shiitake mushrooms grown slowly on local timber take the spotlight.

Organic farming is common on Sado, where industrial agriculture was largely abandoned by 2011. This was done in part to accommodate the crested ibis, a bird that was once virtually extinct in Japan but is now thriving on Sado thanks to decades of breeding efforts. Not only does this focus on organic practices help the crested ibis thrive, it also helps the produce grow large and tasty. The connection of farm to table is important on Sado, where produce sold by agricultural cooperatives is labeled with the name of the farmer who grew it and the area it was grown in, so customers know exactly what they are eating.