

Kakaji Chomeiso

Kakaji Chomeiso is the brand name and local producer of *chomeiso* (*Peucedanum japonicum*), a plant that grows naturally in Bungotakada and is rich in vitamins and minerals. *Chomeiso* is a popular health food and is often steeped to make tea, mixed with a sweet citrus syrup base, or added to drinks as a powdered supplement. The leaves of the young plant are also eaten as tempura (lightly battered and deep-fried).

The plant is a member of the parsley family and is identified by its distinctive purple stem, which is an unusual feature in Japan's native flora. The species contains a high percentage of anthocyanins—compounds found in blueberries and other purple foods—which are said to benefit the eyes and to act as anti-inflammatory agents. The plant is often found growing close to the sea along rocky terrain. Its popularity prompted an increase in cultivation in fields around the Kunisaki Peninsula. Kakaji Chomeiso products can be purchased in Bungotakada as well as online.