

Yamagawa Port

Yamagawa has been used as a port since ancient times. Kinkowan Bay was created by the eruption of a submarine volcano, creating sand ridges that sheltered the bay from the open ocean and large waves. This natural barrier led to the development of the port of Yamagawa just beyond the mouth of the bay.

Yamagawa Port is believed to be the place where Francis Xavier (1506–1552) first landed when he brought Christianity to Japan in 1549. This is also where Maeda Riemon imported the first sweet potato in 1705, a crop that quickly became associated with Kagoshima Prefecture.

As the port is shaped like a crane's beak, throughout the Edo period (1603–1867) it was known as the “crane port.” Yamagawa Port is still in use today. It is also used as an evacuation point when typhoons threaten the region.