

Mackerel Industry

Isso has a long fishing history that has shifted in focus from skipjack tuna in the 1200s to flying fish in the late 1700s, to blue mackerel from the late 1800s to today. After centuries of dry-smoking skipjack tuna to make the *katsuobushi* blocks that are a staple of Japanese cooking, Isso's citizens applied that same know-how to mackerel. These artisanal, smoke-cured *sababushi* fillets, recognized nationwide as the Yakusaba brand, are one of this township's standout products. Yakusaba fillets are essential to the savory stock that features at high-end soba shops, especially in Tokyo. In Yakushima the smoked fillets are used in preparing the stock for udon noodles and as a flavoring for pickles, too.