

## **Food Safety, from Farm to Table**

The high quality of foods produced in Hokkaido starts with the environment. Clean soil and water and a focus on organic farming and sustainable practices result in products of a high level of purity. The organizers of Autumn Fest ensure that food safety is maintained as these products are brought into Sapporo for the festival.

Hokkaido is a prime example of a place where people and nature coexist in harmony. This is expressed in the idea of *satoyama*, usually thought of as living on upland slopes while cultivating fields on the more level ground below. In Hokkaido, *satoyama* encompasses the mountains, woods, farms, fields, and rivers surrounding rural communities.

The products showcased at Autumn Fest come from all over Hokkaido, grown on this extended *satoyama*. Maintaining food quality and safety throughout the festival is of paramount importance. The organizers and vendors pay great attention to food safety and hygiene. Venue managers and vendors attend food safety and hygiene seminars held by outside experts. Twelve of these seminars are held each year. Outside experts also conduct 16 test inspections of the kitchens at the festival venue to ensure safety during the event.

Visitors to the festival are encouraged to do their part to contribute to food safety. Frequent handwashing is recommended, and hand soap is provided in the toilets at 5-chome, 7-chome, 9-chome, and 11-chome. Additionally, taking perishable foods home in bulk is not advised.