

## **Wada House: Grain Storehouse and Drying Shed**

Around the Wada House, the largest *gassho*-style farmhouse in Shirakawa-go, stand several related structures whose placement and architecture reflect local customs and circumstances. Two of these, the grain storehouse (*hasagura*) and the drying shed (*hasagoya*) are both located on the northern part of the estate, some distance from the main house. This is to prevent damage in the event of fire, one of the greatest threats to the thatched wooden houses of Shirakawa-go, spreading from one structure to another.

The grain storehouse has a steeply slanted thatched roof resembling that of a *gassho*-style house. In this case, however, the roof structure was chosen for purely stylistic rather than practical reasons. The building is still used to store grain and other foodstuffs. The wooden racks surrounding it, also covered by the roof, are for drying sheaves of harvested rice.

The simpler drying shed has more of the same racks underneath a high roof; its original thatch has been replaced by a modern metal roof. Sheaves of rice dried in the storehouse and shed are threshed on site, and some of the straw is used to make the rope needed to secure the roofs of the *gassho*-style houses. The ropes need to be replaced every time a roof is re-thatched, usually once every 20 to 30 years.