

EFL ENGLISH DAILY



Keywords

1, rural

2, decline

3, spur

4, innovation

5, beneficiary

6, donor

7, channel

8, exploit

9, intensify

10, contrary



Furusato Nouzei

As many younger people move to cities, the future of rural communities in Japan looks less certain. To try and reverse their decline, the Japanese government established a support scheme titled *Furusato Nouzei* in 2008 whereby people can support any rural area of their choice with a donation and receive products from that area in return. The benefit is that contributions not only protect jobs there but also spur innovation. Gifts options may not be limited to food products but could include things like a wedding photo shoot with formal wear and hotel stay included, train rides and rare insect collections.



Gifts from the beneficiary prefectures are limited by law to 30% of the donation value.

Donors can also lower any tax burden in their city of residence making donating attractive. In addition, large chain stores have huge buying power over producers, so this provides a channel to establish a relationship more directly with the consumer.



Comprehension

- 1, What situation do sparsely populated areas face?
- 2, What did the government do to counter the decline?
- 3, What is the attraction for rural communities?
- 4, What are the benefits for donors?
- 5, Describe the alternative outlet for producers.
- 6, What issues does the system face?

>>>

Concerns have been raised, though, that the system is being exploited as competition intensifies amongst prefectures to gain donations.

Ensuring the gift value does not exceed the maximum 30% of donation value is the challenge the government faces.

Bigger donations naturally attract more expensive gifts which could be re-sold, providing an opportunity to profit from the sale of a gift, which is contrary to the spirit of the system, if not the law.

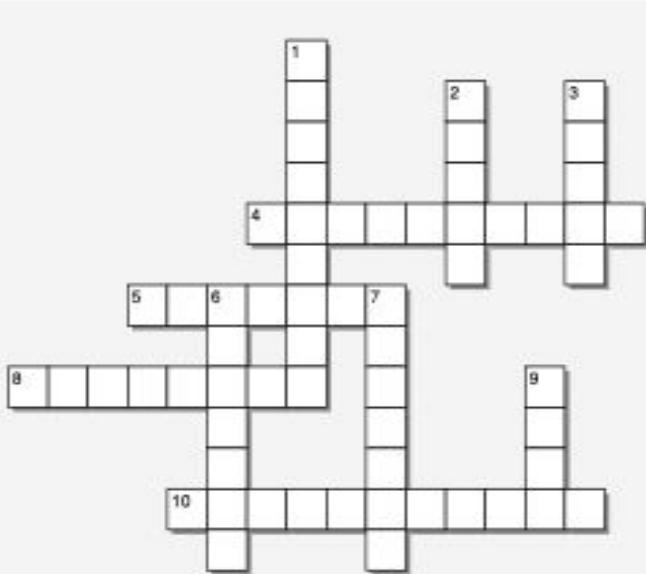


Conversation

- 1, Do you support any communities in this scheme?
- 2, What would be your motive for giving support?
- 3, What products would you be most attracted to?
- 4, Is rural or urban life more appealing to you?
- 5, When did you last make a donation?
- 6, What sort of charities do you prefer to support?



Crossword (using the Keywords on page 1)

**Across**

4. improvement in technology.
5. reduction in activity or number over a long period.
8. against what is normal or expected.
10. someone who receives a benefit.

Down

1. an increase in pressure in a situation.
2. an area with a low population.
3. A person who makes a donation.
6. a route for outlet of something.
7. to take advantage for selfish gain.
9. encourage positive action.

Your chance to write....

What features would you promote about your hometown?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....