



This is what seed yams look like



Growing in the field



Spend two winters in storage



Replanted and ready to harvest



Must be harvested manually, so it takes a lot of manpower

## Konjac production: Gunma has 90% share in the country.

You may have seen farmers harvesting what seems like an adult human head-sized black konjac potatoes. Konjac is said to have originated in South-Eastern Asian countries such as India, Myanmar, Malaysia, etc. and came to Japan thousands of years ago sometime in the Jomon Era (BC15,000 - BC2,300). Japan seems to be the only country Konjac had survived to this day for commercial production.

A variety of food products using konjac potatoes are made here. We even have [a konjac theme park](#). Along with factory tours on the premises, the park has buffet of konjac dishes of many varieties. Both are offered free of charge.

The 1st-year konjac potatoes are planted in spring. It takes three long years to harvest them. The 2nd-year konjac potatoes will be kept in storage for planting the next spring. The 3rd-year Konjac potatoes become large enough to harvest between late October and early December. They are processed into powder before further processed into various konjac products.

As you may know, konjac is famously known as having almost "zero calorie". For this reason, konjac products have been drawing attention in foreign markets. Preceding to an international food fair in Italy in 2018, pasta dishes using shirataki, a type of konjac product, were offered at four restaurants in Milan. They were very well received by the local people.

**Misooden**, a boiled Konjac dish served with Miso-based sweet sauce, has been the norm for a long time. (See the upper-tight photo)

The prefectural government has been working hard to develop new recipes. The seven konjac dishes for people to eat a different konjac dish on a different day of the week is an example. Konjac dishes are not only healthy but also quite tasty. Please visit the URL below for more recipes.

[http://www.aic.pref.gunma.jp/etc/hime\\_lab/recipe\\_konnyaku.html](http://www.aic.pref.gunma.jp/etc/hime_lab/recipe_konnyaku.html)

## Misooden, a familiar serving style



## Developing new recipes



## ■ Setsubun-e Bean-Throwing Ritual

[Mizusawa Kannon Temple](#) celebrates its Setsubun-e on February 3 every year. People whose Chinese Zodiac signs coincide with the current year are referred to as *Toshiotoko* (men) and *Toshionna* (women). They are invited to throw beans to spectators. A raffle will also be held.

**When:** February 3 (Sun.)

**Where:** Mizusawa Kannon Temple  
(214 Mizusawa, Ikaho-machi, Shibukawa) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0279-72-3619

## Shibukawa



## ■ Setsubun-e Bean-Throwing Ritual

Hensho-ji Temple is located in Showa-mura. Here, two homa services are scheduled in the morning, after which bean-throwing will be held. A unique feature of lucky *Oni* (demons) dancing will also be offered.

**When:** February 3 (Sun.)

**Where:** Hensho-ji  
(744 Morishita Showa-mura, Tone-gun) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0278-24-6682

## Showa-mura, Tone-gun



# Gunma Events

# February 2019

## ■ [Mt. Akagi Snow Festival 2019](#)

Maebashi

Mt. Akagi is covered with the knee-deep snow in winter. This event offers a wide range of activities in the snow such as ice fishing, walking in snowshoes, riding on a dog sleigh, playing with dogs, etc. It's going to be very cold, so please be prepared.

**When:** February 2 (Sat.) 9:00-14:30

**Where:** Mt. Akagi No. 1 Ski Slope, Lake Akagi Onuma  
(Akagi Chinai, Fujimi-machi, Maebashi) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 027-210-2189



## ■ [Showa-mura Winter Festival 2019](#)

Showa-mura

This annual festival has a theme: "Dreams and fond memories to children." The festival attractions include riding a snow mobile, BINGO game, fireworks display, etc.

**When:** February 9 (Sat.) starts at 15:20

**Where:** Kekkono-mori in Chojanohara  
(5468-157 Itoi, Showa-mura, Tone-gun) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0278-25-4831



## ■ [Kitakaruizawa Fire Festival](#)

Naganohara-machi, Agatsuma-gun

Karuizawa is a fashionable resort town located in Nagano Prefecture. Kita-Karuizawa is situated right next to it in Gunma. During the festival, approx. 4,000 candles will be lit in the snow, creating a breathtaking scenery. Fireworks displays are also scheduled.

**When:** February 9 (Sat.) Starts at 16:00

**Where:** Kita-Karuizawa Fureai Hiroba  
(1988 Kita-Karuizawa, Naganohara-machi, Agatsuma-gun) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0279-84-2047



## ■ [Oigami Onsen Bikkuri \(Surprise\) Hina Doll Display](#)

Numata

There are two surprises.

One is the number of Hina dolls displayed on the terrace: 4,500

The other is the size of the terrace: (18-meter wide & 3.8-meter tall)

**When:** From Feb. 16 (Sat.) to Mar. 31 (Sun.) 9:30-16:30

**Where:** Numata Tone Kanko Kaikan Hall, [Nango-no Magariya](#),  
and other participating *Ryokan* Japanese Inns  
(607-1 Oigami, Tone-machi, Numata) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 0278-56-3013



## ■ [Takasaki Dance Festival 2019](#)

Takasaki

Dancers of many different genres gather in Takasaki to either compete for a prize or perform in a show. Domestic and overseas guests will make their appearances, too.

\*Admissions may be restricted in case of overcapacity.

**When:** February 24 (Sun.) 12:30

**Where:** Gunma Ongaku Center  
(28-2 Takamatsu-cho, Takasaki) [MAP](#)

**Contact:** 027-321-1203



## ■ [Strawberry-Picking Farms](#)

All parts of Gunma

Strawberry-picking season has started in December already and will last until May. Unlike other fruits, strawberries are grown in all parts of Gunma. So, check our website and our PDF to pick your favorite strawberry farm.

Fees usually include “all-you-can-pick and eat on the farm” for the first 30 minutes. You have to pay extra for the ones you want to take home.

<https://gunma-dc.net/cat-mikaku/ichigo>

Strawberry-picking farms in Gunma [PDF](#)

