

# AAINews

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## Greenhouse cultivation of papayas in Okinawa

We usually think that papayas are cultivated in the out fields. But recently, the greenhouse of papayas has come up. In winter, the minimum temperature drops to 12-13 in Okinawa, the southern-most prefecture in Japan, and it is not warm enough for papayas to bear fruits, however, greenhouse has made it possible to provide high quality papayas throughout the year. Papayas can be classified into two varieties by color of the flesh. One is yellow and the other is pink, and recently pink ones are becoming popular because of its mild smell. Papayas are expected to be widely eaten not only as fruits but also as vegetable when it is not yet ripen. As a vegetable, it can be cooked in various ways - salad, saute, pickles, etc.



Papayas growing in a greenhouse

But the greenhouse method still has many technical problems. For example, papayas grow up to 5m tall, therefore they have to be laid down inside the greenhouse, and improvement of facility utilization is desirable. The dwarf papayas are not popular because the quality of their fruits are not preferable. In Okinawa, various plants are extensively cultivated. In addition to sugarcane and vegetables for local consumption, tropical farm products targeting domestic market such as chrysanthemum and starches are popular items among farmers. Like other rural villages in other prefectures, Okinawa (except for Naha city) has depopulation problem and it is necessary to develop attractive industries. And agriculture seems to possess great possibility to solve depopulation problem in Okinawa. ( Reported by Abe in Okinawa )

### **Related information:**

Main agricultural products in Okinawa are industrial crops. The cultivation area is 6,473ha. Some 95% of that is upland farming, and 64% of the upland farming is for industrial crops. 38% of farmers (28,160 house hold) are full time farm households and this rate is quite high compared with other prefectures in Japan. Production of Amorpophallus konjac is No.4, chrysanthemum is No.2 in Japan. 100% of pineapple, 61% of sugar cane and 60% of raw sugar come from Okinawa.



Long-shaped Papaya