

●Shinagawa Historical Museum Explanatory Sheet

The Agriculture of Shinagawa

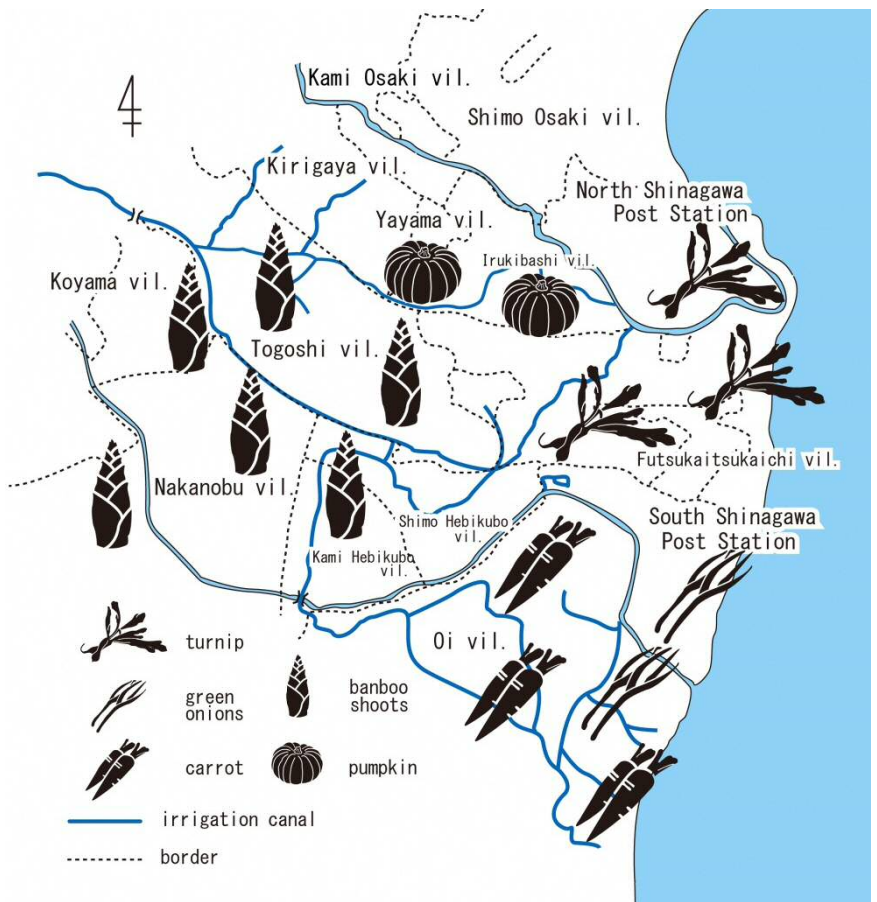
The Agriculture of Shinagawa During the Edo Period

Shinagawa was primarily composed of farming villages during the Edo Period, producing rice in rice paddies, and barley, millet, azuki beans, radishes, eggplants, green onions, turnips, carrots, pumpkins, and bamboo shoots in the fields. Some became notable products named after the regions where they were grown. Records in 1843 included Oi carrots and Shinagawa green onions.

In addition to the above, there were also famous vegetables such as Irukibashi pumpkins, Togoshi bamboo shoots, and Shinagawa turnips. These vegetables with the names of the regions around Edo were known as “Edo Vegetables,” and became the specialized products of the various farming regions.

The Edo Vegetables of Shinagawa

Irukibashi Pumpkins: It is said that Buddhist priest Takuan Soho brought seeds from the Kyoto region to Matsubara Shozaemon of Irukibashi village to grow the first Irukibashi pumpkins. The pumpkins were defined



▲ Map of "Edo Vegetables" in Shinagawa

by their highly wrinkled outer skin. They were grown throughout the Kanto region up through the 1930s.

Togoshi Bamboo Shoots: Between 1772 and 1781, it is said that the sea merchant Yamaji Jirobei Katsutaka brought Mosochiku bamboo from the Satsuma Domain (present-day mainly Kagoshima Prefecture) to Togoshi village to grow the first Togoshi bamboo shoots. Neighboring farmers also took up growing the bamboo, and the region became a major producer of bamboo shoots. A memorial grave stone for Katsutaka was erected in 1806 in Koyama 1-chome, Shinagawa City, Tokyo.



▲ Irukibashi Pumpkin

(Tokyo Metropolitan Agricultural and Forestry Research Center Collection)



▲ Memorial stone of Yamaji Jirobei Katsutaka (Shinagawa City Historical Landmark)



▲ The left is a Shinagawa turnip (National Archives Collection, "Agricultural Drawings")

Shinagawa Turnips: According to records made by the Satsuma Domain in 1804, Shinagawa turnips were offered to the Tokugawa shogunate government. These turnips had somewhat long roots, and were prized for making pickles.

vegetables in the area.

A stone monument has been erected on the edge of Suijin Pond at Hara in Oi, commemorating that the pond used to be a vegetable washing spot. This seeks to remind people of the times and scenes that have since been lost from Tokyo.

The Recycling System of the City and Farming Villages

People in the farming villages formed contracts with samurai families and townspeople to use their excrement as fertilizer. This became an important source of income for people in the cities. These contracts with the farmers also helped to keep the cities clean. The vegetables grown with this excrement fertilizer were then sold back to the city. It formed an efficient nutrient recycling system.

The Faint Memories of the Farming Villages

As the modernization of Japan continued, the majority of Edo's farming regions were turned into residential areas, and the cultivation of vegetables almost ceased entirely.

Suijin Spring in Oi, Shinagawa, the pond in the grounds of Taki-oji Inari Shrine, and Suijin Spring Pond of Hara in Oi were all former watering holes to wash



▲ Oi Hara Suijin Spring (Shinagawa City Historical Landmark)