

# MAIMEE RICE COMMONS

Redesigning Rice Paddies  
for the people  
with the people  
by the people

KENTA KONDO

エノバ



**HI, I'M KENTA**

**I AM AN INDEPENDENT  
DESIGN FUTURIST +  
MECHANICAL ENGINEER.**

**AS A DESIGN FUTURIST**

**I CRAFT  
STRATEGIC VISIONS  
BY COMBINING  
SPECULATIVE DESIGN  
+ STRATEGIC FORESIGHT**



**NEAR FUTURE FICTIONAL PRODUCT**



**AS A DESIGN FUTURIST**

**I CRAFT  
DESIGN FORESIGHT  
WORKSHOP  
FOR GLOBAL  
BUSINESSES**





**AS A DESIGN FUTURIST**

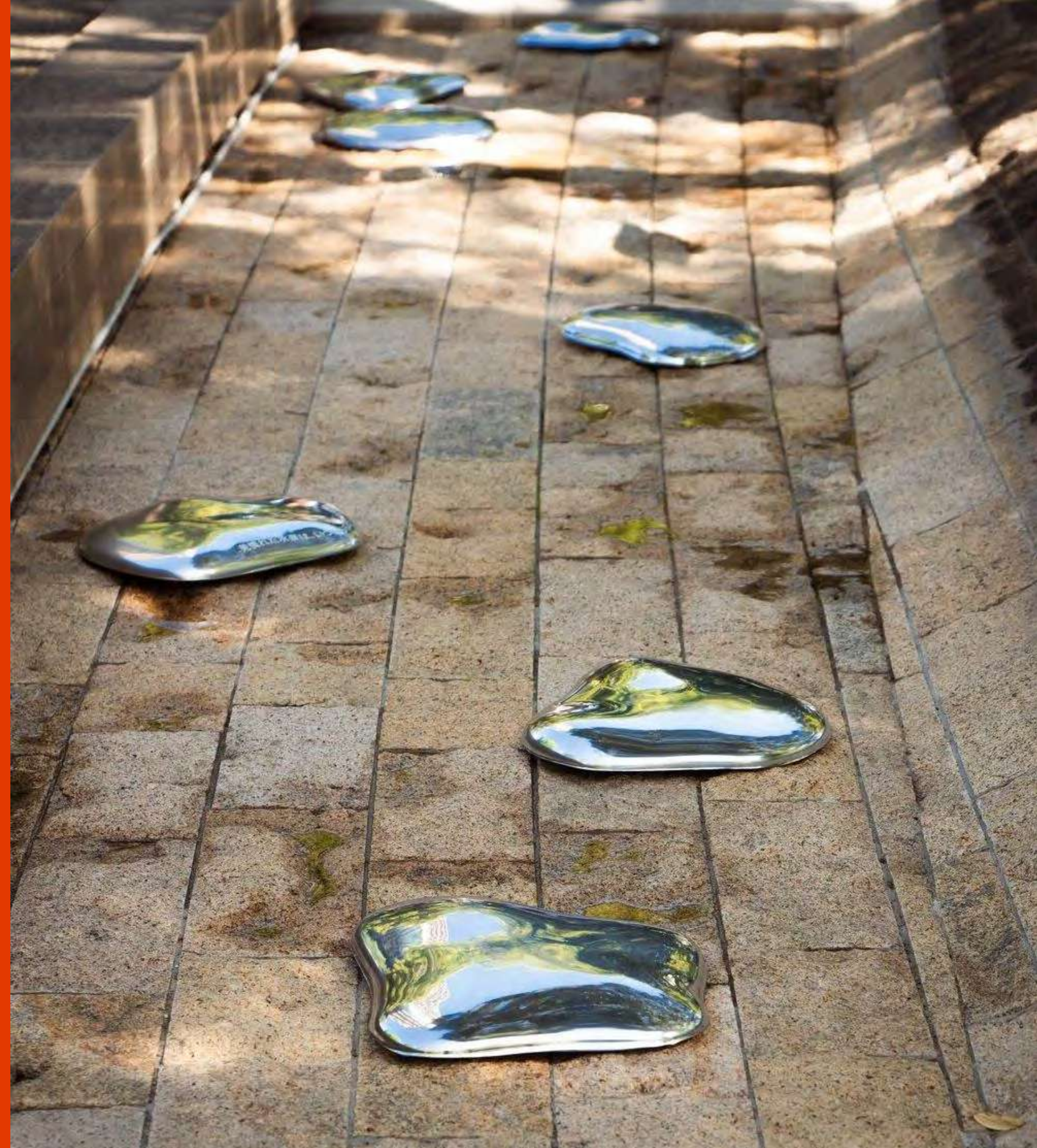
**I CRAFT  
ORG. DESIGN  
WORKSHOPS  
FOR GOVERNMENT  
AGENCIES**





**AS A DESIGN FUTURIST**

**I CRAFT  
SPECULATIVE DESIGN  
PROTOTYPES  
FOR PUBLIC  
EXHIBITION**







**PRESENT DAY GTM PRODUCT**

**AS A MECH. ENGINEER**

**I DEVELOP  
GO-TO-MARKET PRODUCTS  
COMBINING  
DESIGN +  
ENGINEERING**





**AS A MECH. ENGINEER**

**I PROTOTYPE  
EARLY-STAGE  
CONCEPTS  
IN LOW FIDELITY**

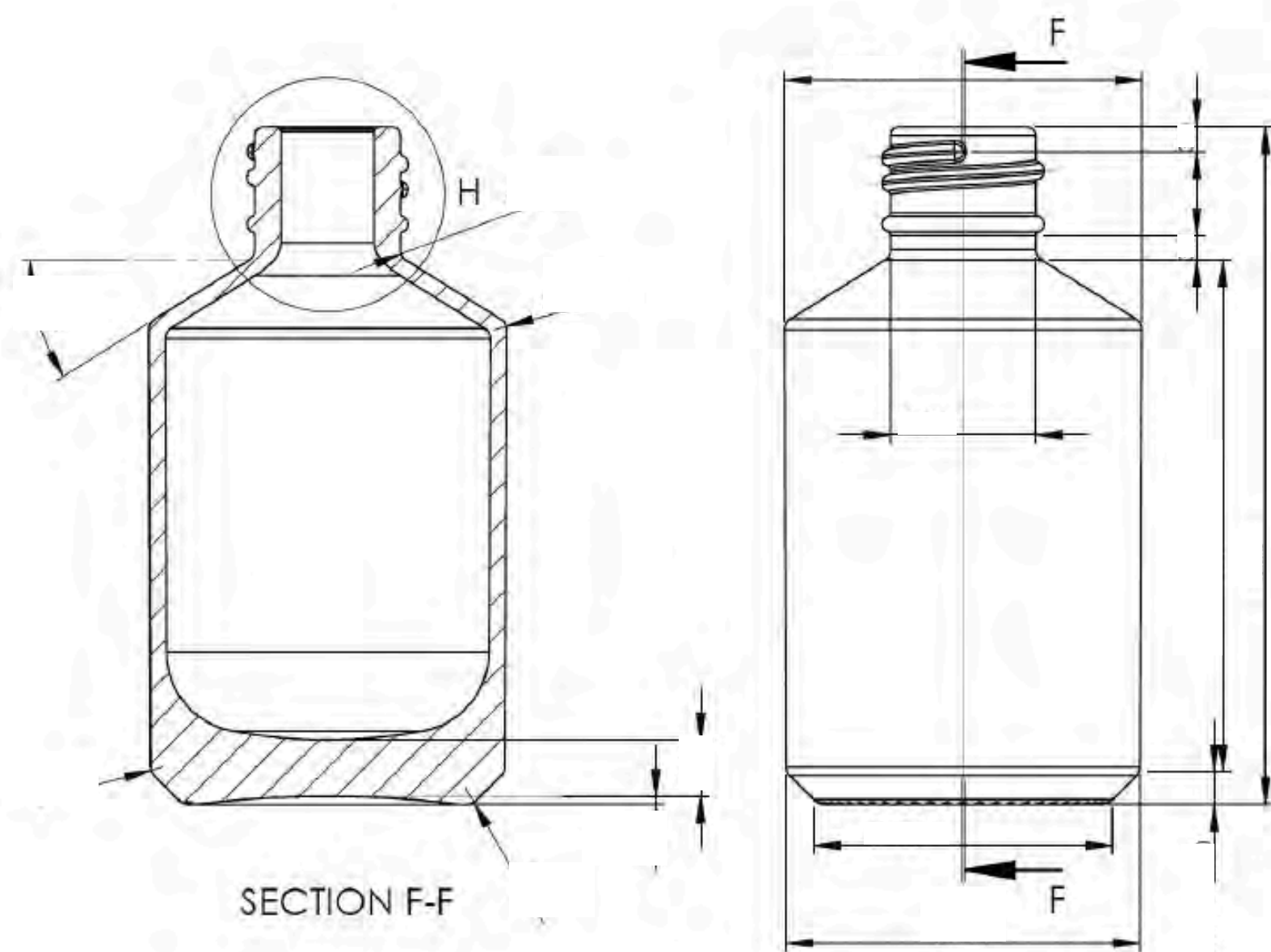




**AS A MECH. ENGINEER**

**I BUILD +TEST  
CONCEPT  
FEASIBILITY  
USING  
FIRST PRINCIPLES**





**AS A MECH. ENGINEER**

**I DRAFT  
MANUFACTURING  
READY DRAWINGS  
FOR GTM PRODUCTS  
WITH SUPPLIERS**





**PRESENT**

**FUTURE**



2023 2024 2025

DESIGN MATTERS



# 2023

# FUTURE OF SUSHI







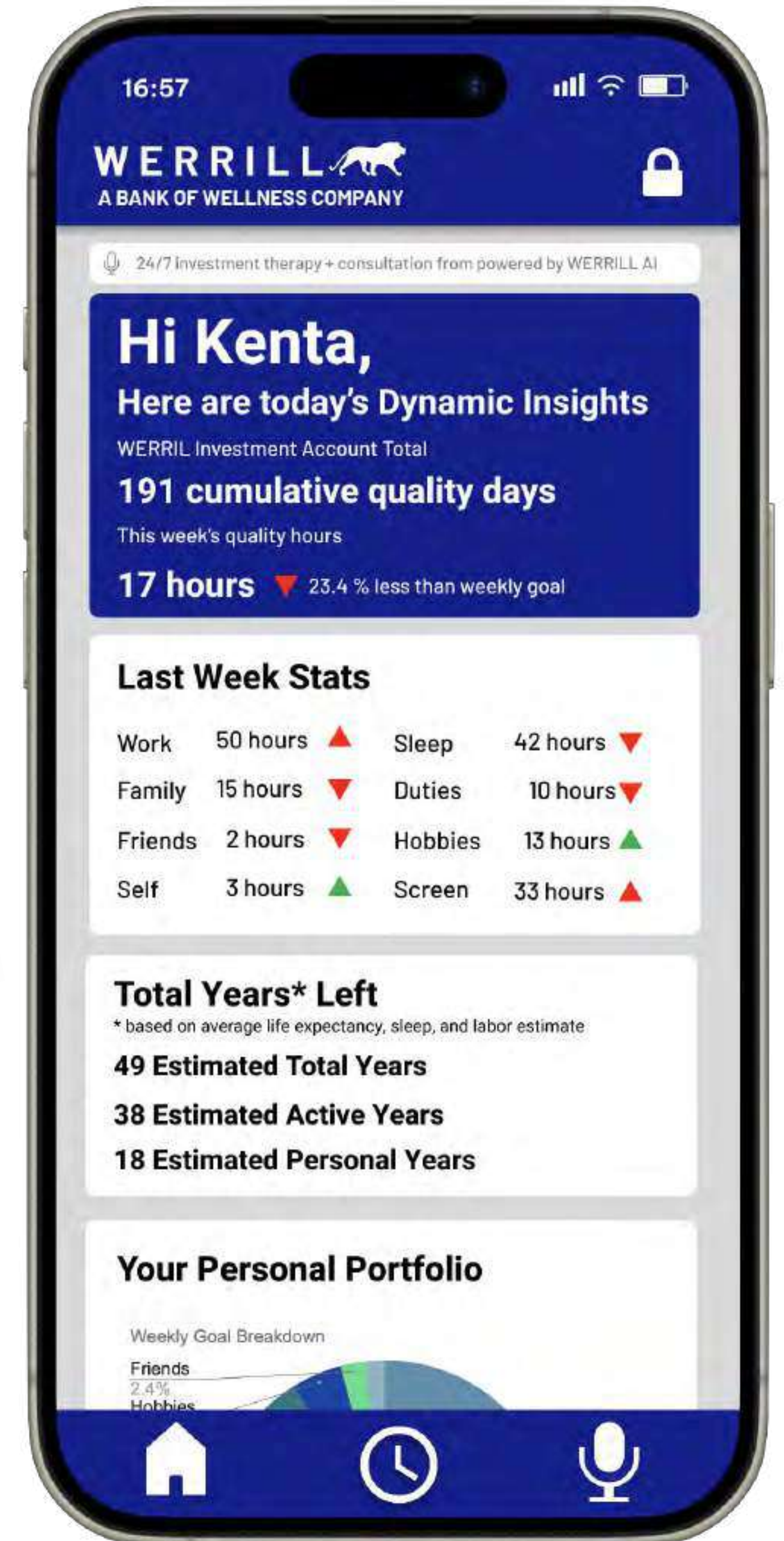


# 2024

# PROTOTYPING RETIREMENT



## FICTIONAL APP







[READ ARTICLE HERE](#)





# 2025

REDESIGNING  
RICE





# WHAT IS JAPAN'S FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY RATE\*?

\*the percentage of a country's food needs that are met by it's own production



# JAPAN'S FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY RATE

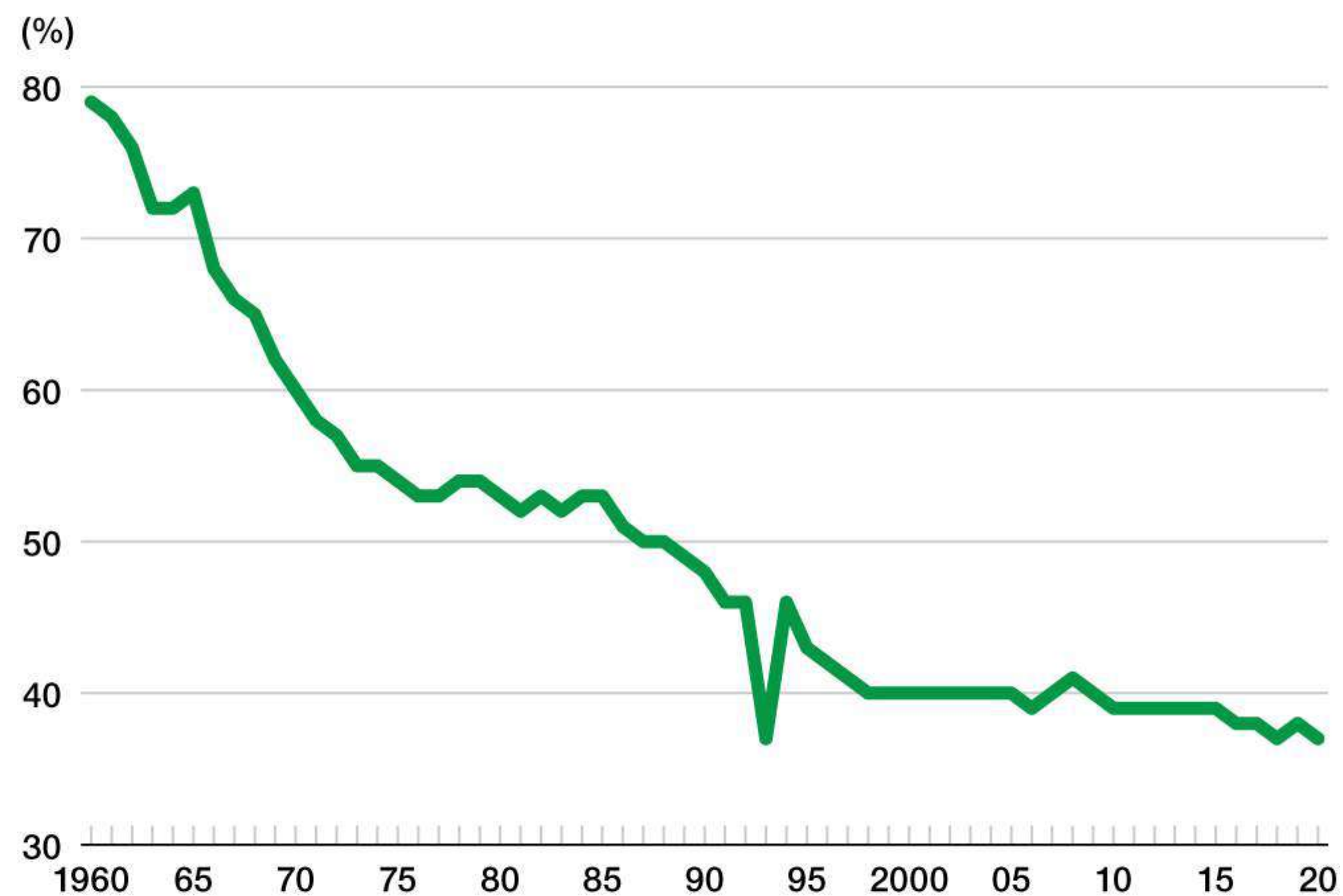
38 %

data from MAFF



# JAPAN'S FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY RATE

Japan's Food Self-Sufficiency Rate (Calorie Base)

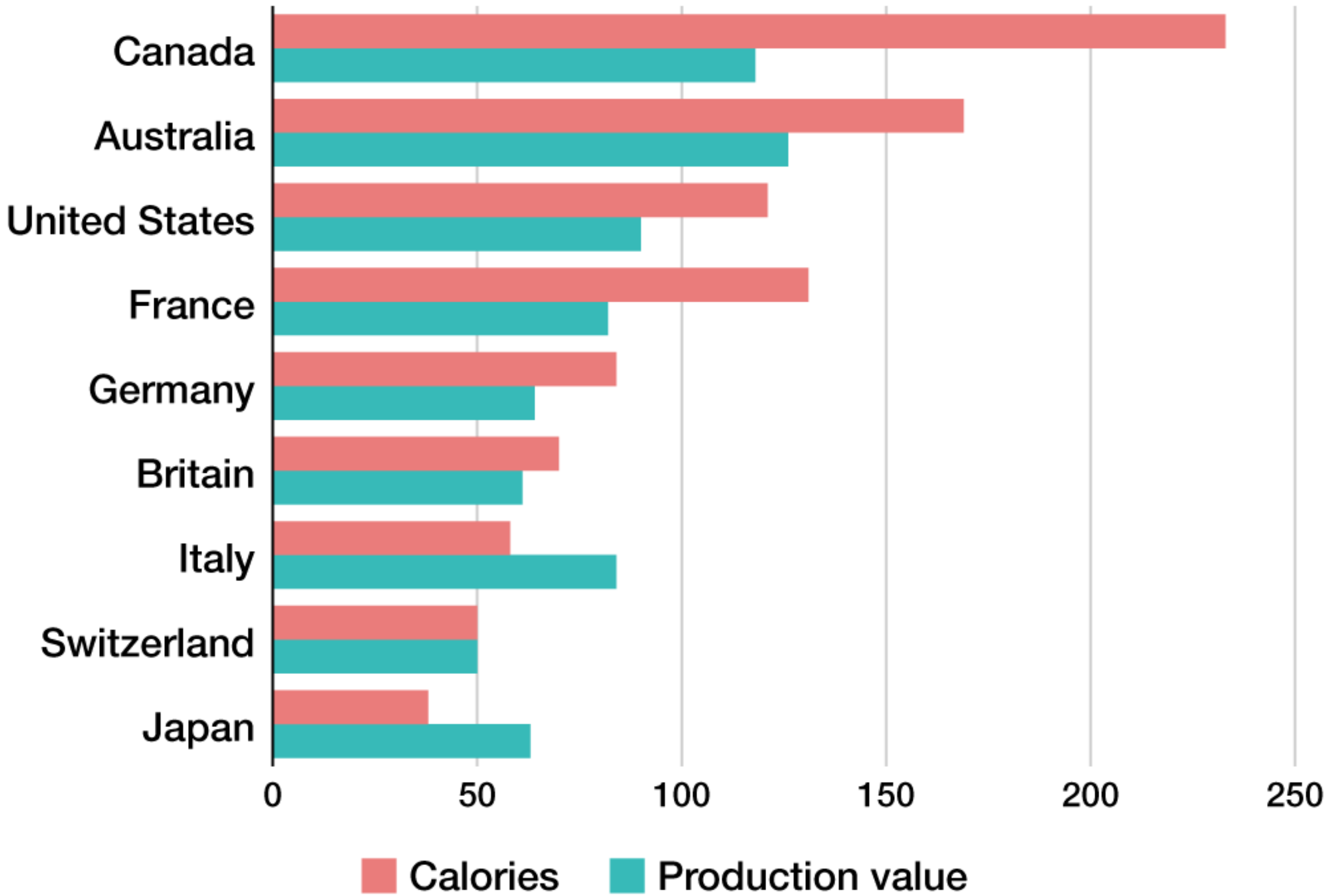


Created by *Nippon.com* based on data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.



# COMPARATIVE FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY RATE

Food Self-Sufficiency Rate by Country



Created by *Nippon.com* based on data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.



**WHAT IS THE  
AVERAGE AGE OF A  
FARMER IN JAPAN?**



# AVERAGE AGE OF A FARMER IN JAPAN

**69**  
**YEARS OLD**

data from MAFF website: <https://www.maff.go.jp/j/tokei/sihyo/data/08.html>



# AVERAGE AGE OF A FARMER IN JAPAN



# 69 YEARS OLD!

## 農業労働力に関する統計

### 基幹的農業従事者（個人経営体）

単位：万人、歳

	平成 27年	令和 2年	3年	4年	5年	6年
基幹的農業従事者	175.7	136.3	130.2	122.6	116.4	111.4
うち女性	75.1	54.1	51.2	48.0	45.2	43.1
うち65歳以上	114.0	94.9	90.5	86.0	82.3	79.9
平均年齢	67.1	67.8	67.9	68.4	68.7	69.2

data from MAFF website: <https://www.maff.go.jp/j/tokei/sihyo/data/08.html>



**WHAT IS THE AVERAGE  
SALARY OF A  
RICE FARMER?**



# AVERAGE SALARY OF RICE FARMER?

1.1

MILLION YEN



**AVERAGE SALARY OF RICE FARMER?**

**7660**  
**USD PER YEAR**

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2025/07/17/japan/politics/yamagata-election/>



**HOW MUCH DID THE  
PRICE OF RICE INCREASE  
IN THE LAST TWO YEARS?**



**PRICE OF RICE?**

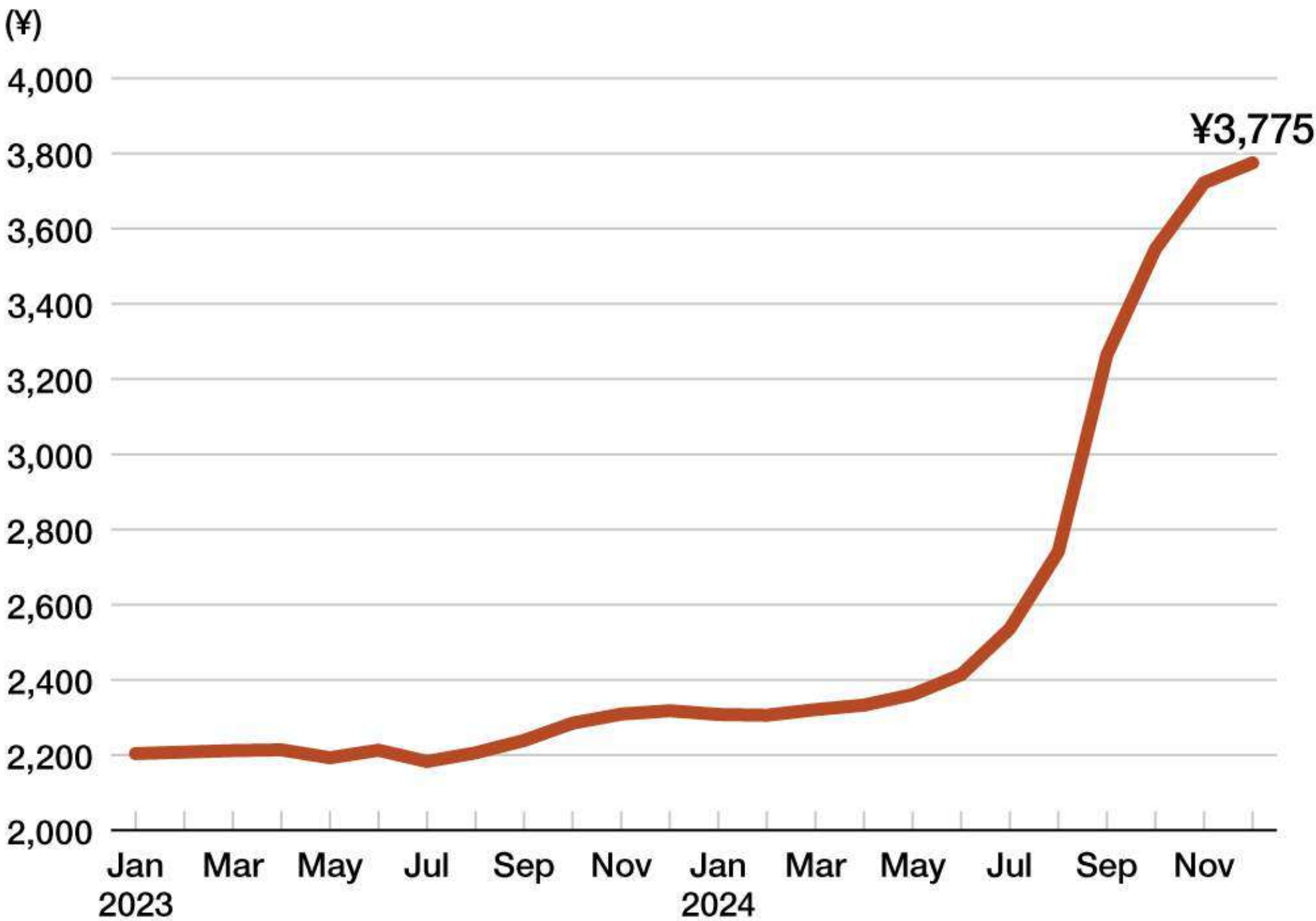
**90**

**% INCREASE**



# PRICE OF RICE?

Average Retail Price of Koshihikari (5 Kilograms)



Created by *Nippon.com* based on data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.



38

PERCENT

65

YEARS OLD

1.1

MILLION YEN

90

% INCREASE



**JAPAN RELIES ON IMPORTS FOR FOOD SECURITY**

**JAPANESE FARMERS ARE SUPER-AGED**

**GROWING RICE IS NOT A LIVEABLE WAGE**

**NO INCENTIVE FOR THE YOUTH TO GROW RICE**





**IF GROWING RICE IS NOT PROFITABLE,  
IS IT NOT WORTH GROWING?**





**IF RICE IS NOT PROFITABLE,  
DO WE THROW AWAY OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE?**





**IF RICE IS NOT PROFITABLE,  
DO WE ABANDON OUR FOOD SECURITY?**



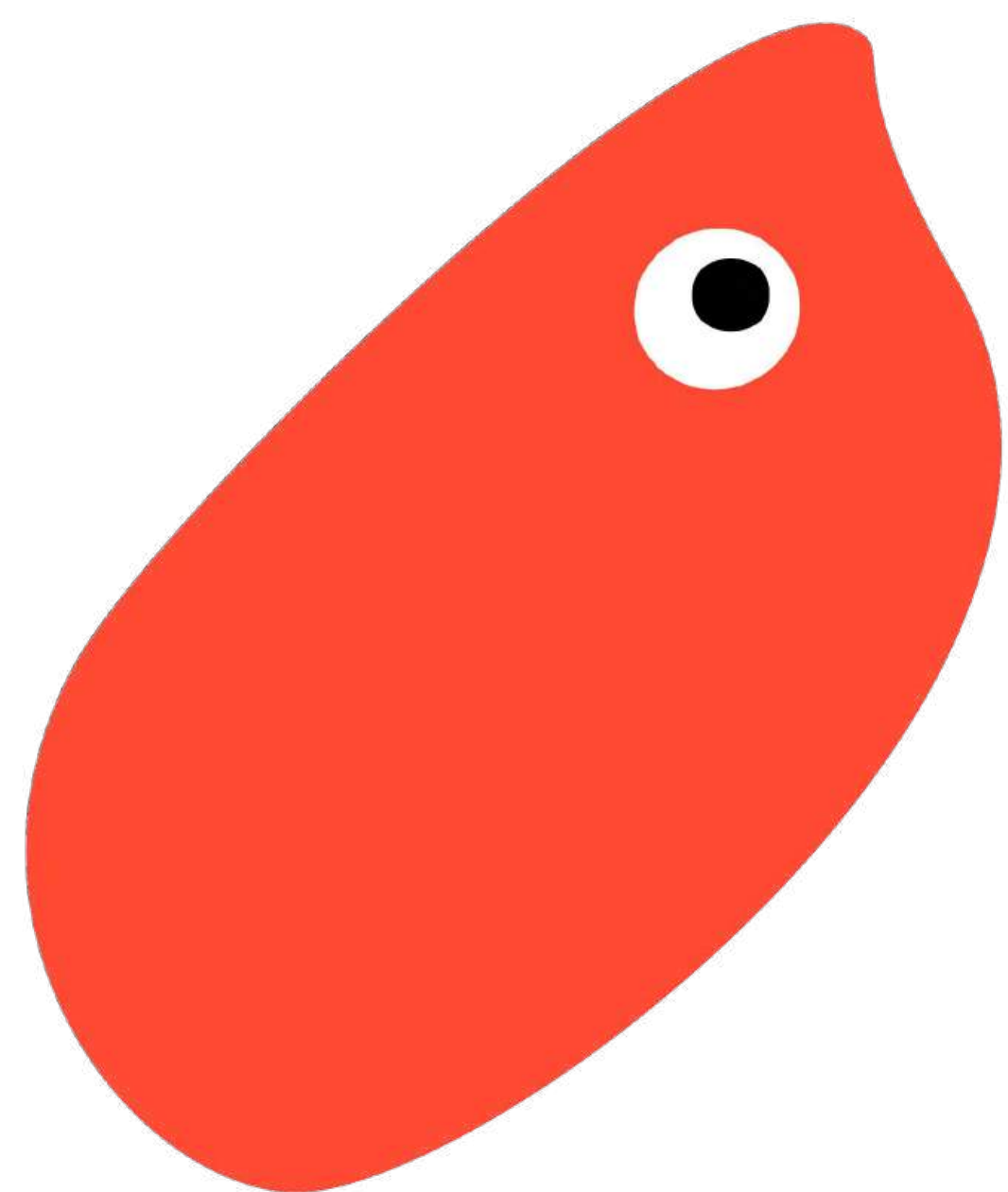
**HOPEFULLY NO...**





**SO WE  
DECIDED TO  
RE-DESIGN  
RICE**





米 在 一

**RICE COMMONS**





---

マイミーはお金じゃない  
豊かさを育む田んぼ

---

MAIMMEE IS A  
RICE PADDY THAT  
NURTURES  
NON-MONETARY  
RICHNESS OF LIFE





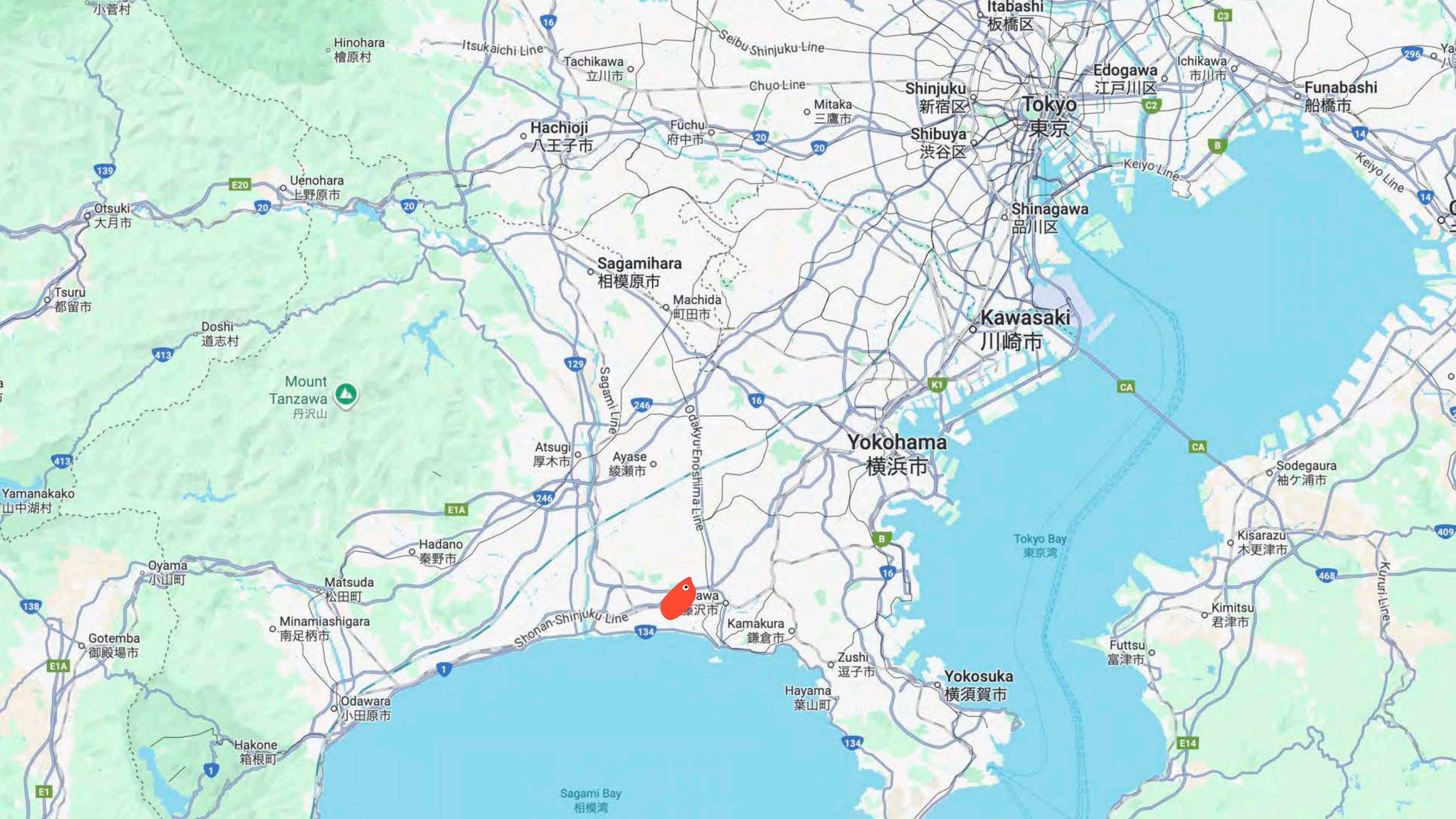
**WE ARE AN ORGANIC RICE COLLECTIVE THAT**

**RESCUES ABANDONED RICE PADDIES**

**GROW ORGANIC RICE WITH + FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

**FOSTERS A PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO BE THEMSELVES**











**FROM**

**TO**



**FROM**

**SOLO WORKPLACE**

**TO**

**COMMUNITY THIRD-PLACE**



**FROM**

**SOLO WORKPLACE**

**PROFESSIONAL FARMERS**

**TO**

**COMMUNITY THIRD-PLACE**

**CURIOUS DOERS**



**FROM**

**SOLO WORKPLACE**

**PROFESSIONAL FARMERS**

**SUPER-AGED WORKERS**

**TO**

**COMMUNITY THIRD-PLACE**

**CURIOUS DOERS**

**INTER-GENERATIONAL COLLABORATORS**



**FROM**

**SOLO WORKPLACE**

**PROFESSIONAL FARMERS**

**SUPER-AGED WORKERS**

**INHERITED PROPERTY**

**TO**

**COMMUNITY THIRD-PLACE**

**CURIOUS DOERS**

**INTER-GENERATIONAL COLLABORATORS**

**SHARED LANDSCAPE**



**FROM**

**SOLO WORKPLACE**

**PROFESSIONAL FARMERS**

**SUPER-AGED WORKERS**

**INHERITED PROPERTY**

**OPTIMIZING THE VALUE OF RICE**

**TO**

**COMMUNITY THIRD-PLACE**

**CURIOUS DOERS**

**INTER-GENERATIONAL COLLABORATORS**

**SHARED LANDSCAPE**

**EXPLORING THE VALUE OF RICE**





Fourth Year

Rescued 3 abandoned rice paddies

100% organic rice farming

7 core members

~80+ satellite helpers



























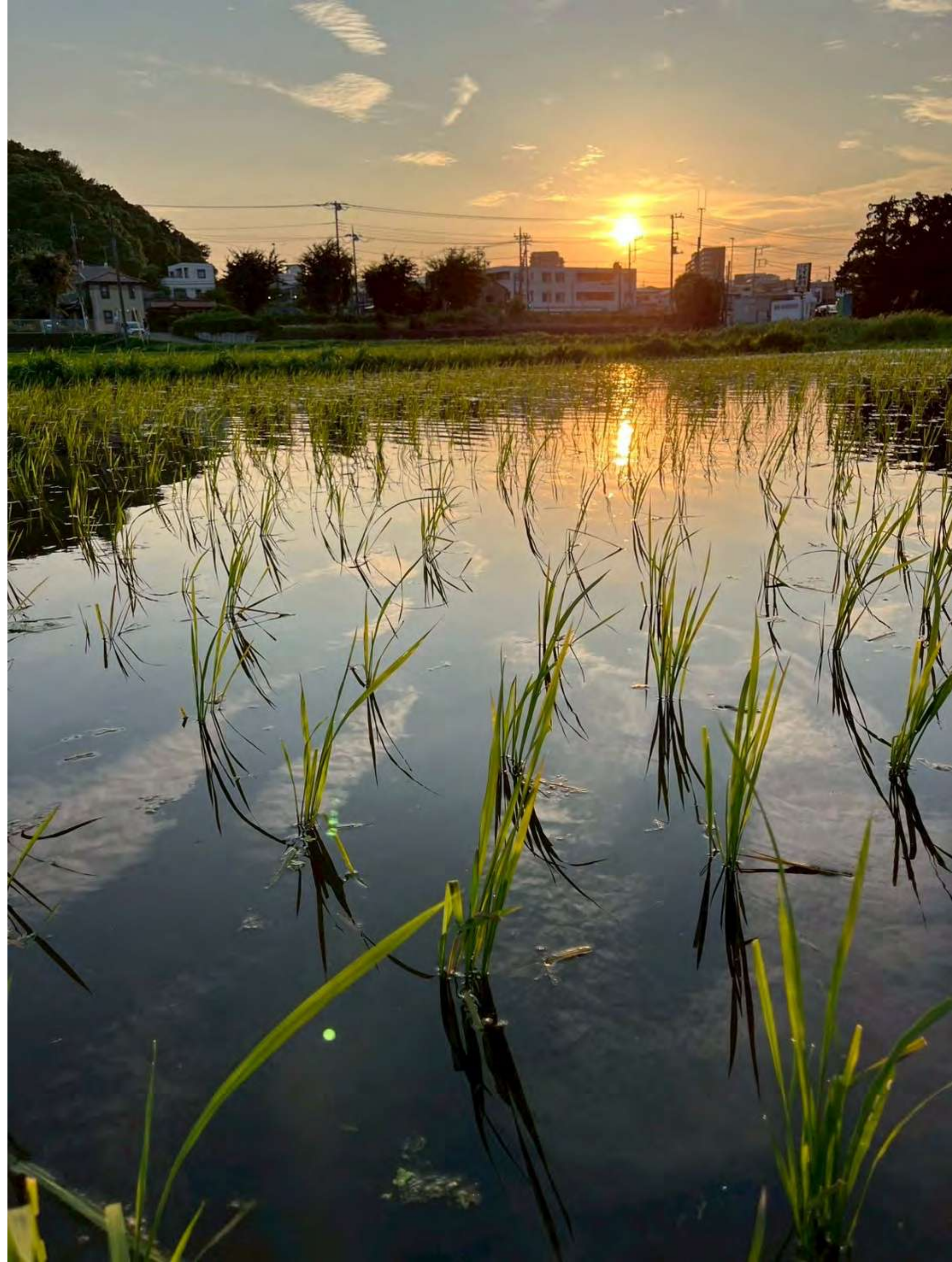














































# DESIGN CHALLENGES



**NO PROFIT**

**NO MONEY**

**NO CAPITAL...**



# WHY PURCHASE TOOLS WHEN WE CAN BUILD OUR OWN





# WHY PURCHASE MACHINERY WHEN WE CAN BORROW FROM OUR NEIGHBORS





# WHY PURCHASE KNOW-HOW WHEN WE CAN LEARN FROM OUR ELDERS





**WHO'S GOING TO  
WHOSE LAND?**



# COLOR-COATED MAIMEES





# COLOR-TAGGING THE PADDIES

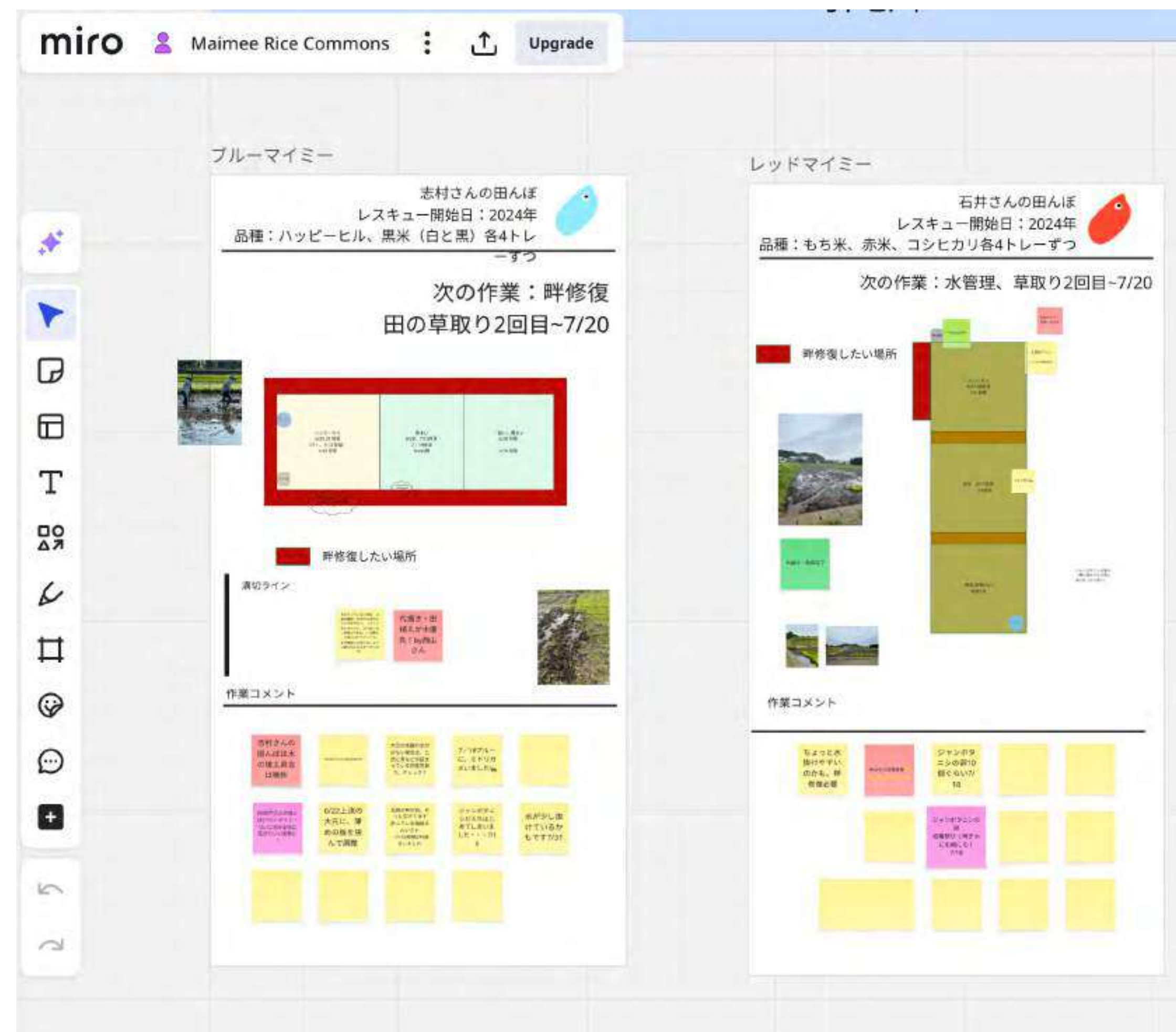




**WHO DID WHAT,  
WHERE AND WHEN,  
WHY AND HOW?**



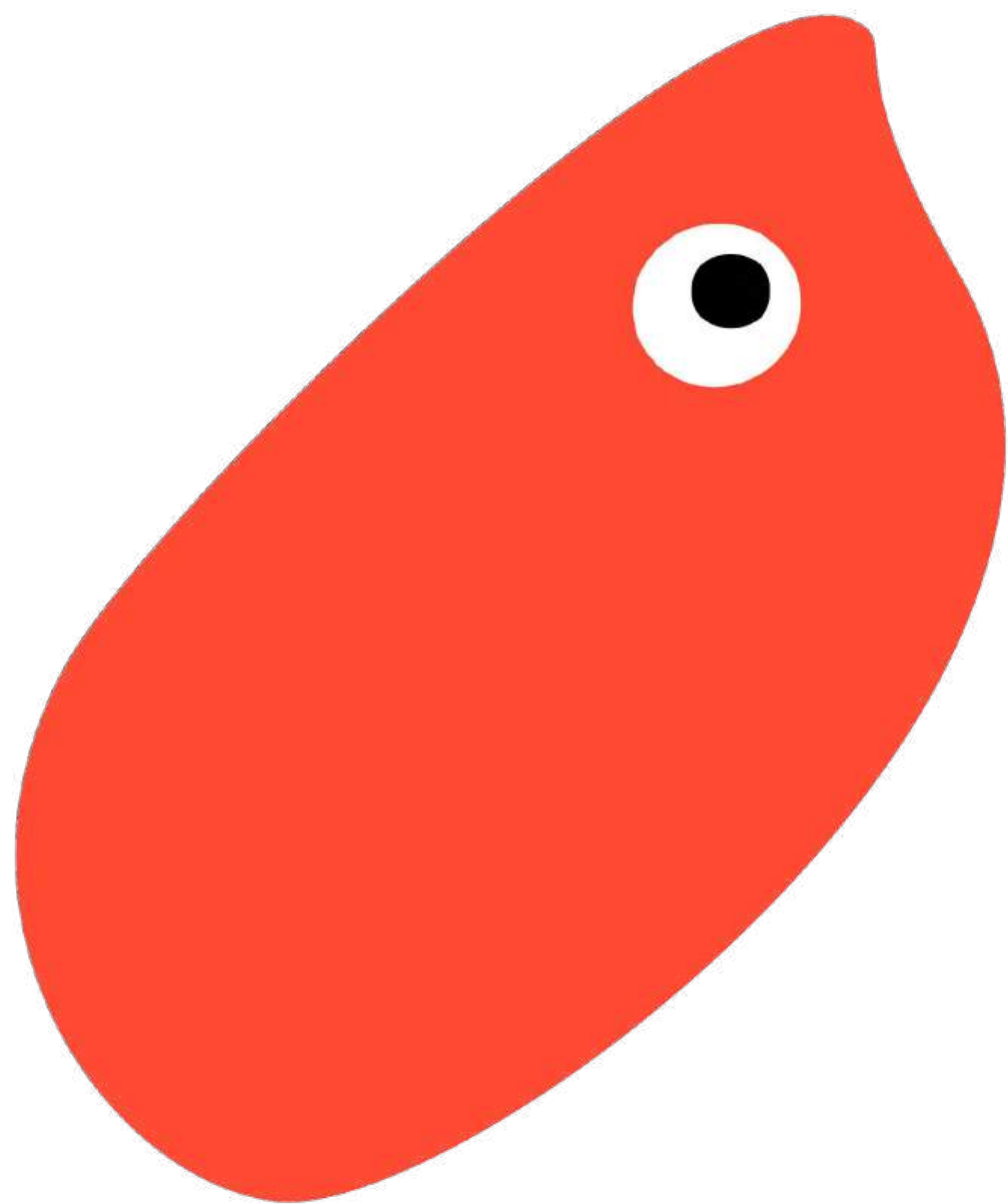
# MIRO DIGITAL RICE PADDY





**SO MUCH MORE THAT I'D LOVE TO SHARE,  
BUT TO WRAP UP...**





**FOR ME,  
MAIMEE  
RICE COMMONS  
IS AN EMBODIMENT  
OF HOPE  
FOR THE FUTURE**



**SPECULATIVE DESIGN**  
**SYSTEMIC DESIGN**  
**TRANSITION DESIGN**  
**DESIGN FUTURES**  
**DESIGN FICTION**  
**STRATEGIC FORESIGHT**



**SPECULATIVE DESIGN  
SYSTEMIC DESIGN  
TRANSITION DESIGN  
DESIGN FUTURES  
DESIGN FICTION  
STRATEGIC FORESIGHT**

**FRAMEWORKS  
MENTAL MODELS  
STRATEGIES  
QUESTIONS  
TOOLS  
VISION**



**SPECULATIVE DESIGN  
SYSTEMIC DESIGN  
TRANSITION DESIGN  
DESIGN FUTURES  
DESIGN FICTION  
STRATEGIC FORESIGHT**

**BUSINESS DECK  
CLASSROOM  
RESEARCH PAPER  
BOOK  
MUSEUM EXHIBIT  
TOOLKIT**





**WHAT'S MISSING  
FROM FUTURING  
IS BOTTOM-UP  
ACTION**





**WE ACT ON  
THE FUTURES  
WE IMAGINE**





**WE ACT ON  
THE FUTURES  
WE ENVISION**

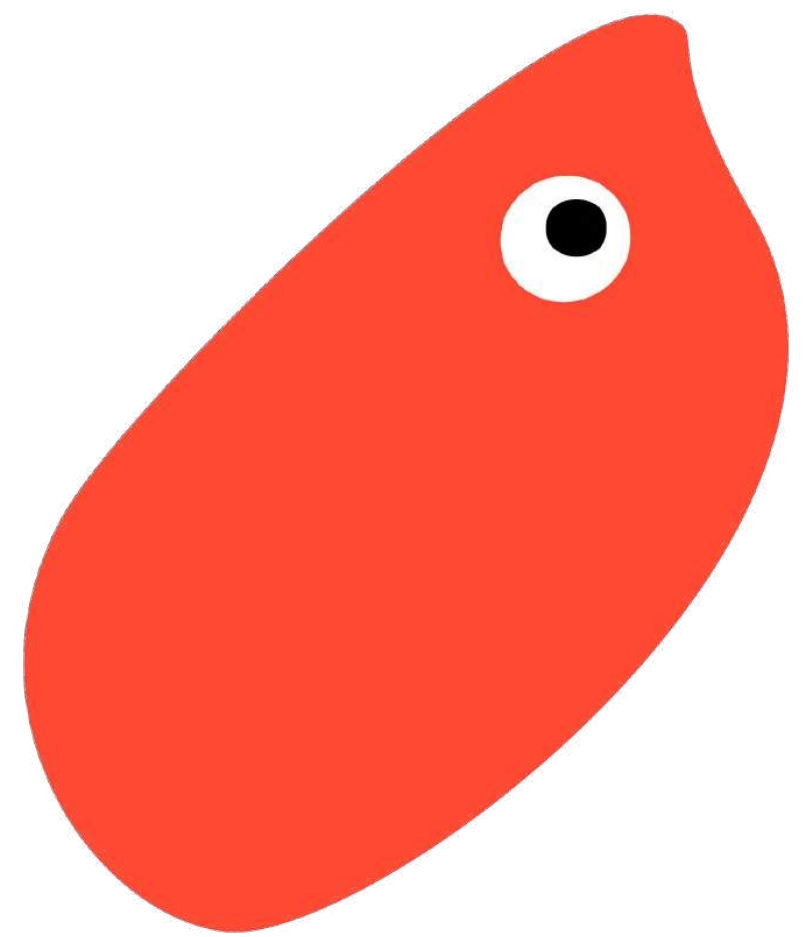




**WE ACT ON  
THE FUTURES  
WE WANT**



**MAIMEE RICE COMMONS IS  
AN ONTOLOGICAL PROTOTYPE**





**WE EXPLORE  
A DIFFERENT  
SET OF VALUES  
RATIONALITY  
+ BEHAVIORS**





**WE EXPERIMENT  
WITH  
ALTERNATIVE  
WAYS OF BEING**





**WE SLOWLY  
BUT SURELY  
BECOME  
WHAT WE DREAM**





**AS DESIGNERS AND FUTURISTS,  
WE OFTEN SEARCH FOR SIGNALS OF CHANGE.**

**BUT LET'S NOT FORGET "TO BECOME"  
THE SIGNALS OF CHANGE OURSELVES.**



# MAIMEE RICE COMMONS

Redesigning Rice Paddies  
for the people  
with the people  
by the people  
of Tsujido

THANK YOU!



**I'D LOVE TO KNOW HOW YOU ARE PROTOTYPING YOUR FUTURE!**



**Personal Website**

