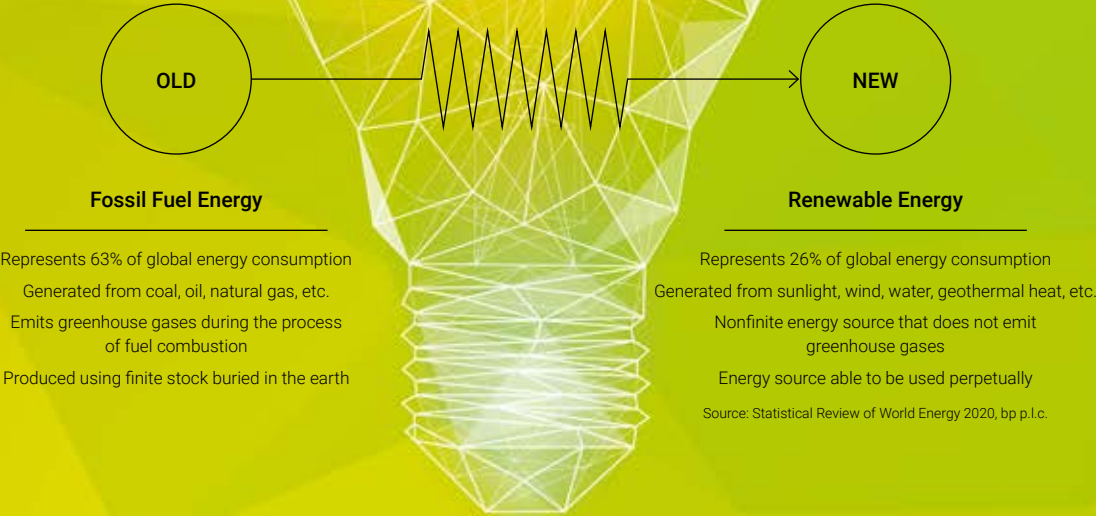


ACTION FOR THE FUTURE

CO-CREATION ECOSYSTEM

ACTION FOR THE FUTURE



01 Green Recovery Shaping the Future

We use energy every day, whether it be in the form of electricity, gas, or gasoline. A large portion of the energy used around the world is derived from fossil fuels, and generation of energy using these fuels entail emissions of massive quantities of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases, which are a cause of abnormal weather events and natural disasters. If we continue to use energy from fossil fuels at the current pace, it is estimated that the average global temperature will rise 4°C above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century, which would bring a destructive end to the environment as we know it. The global COVID-19 pandemic stimulated a movement to reset our economy. An important global keyword with regard to this movement is "green recovery," which signifies a switch to sustainable economic activities. There has thus been a spread in the idea of building resilient social and economic models by injecting initiatives for addressing environmental issues into efforts to reset the economy.

Renewable Clean Energy

As the world pursues a green recovery, the shift toward renewable energy is gaining attention on a global scale. Renewable energy is generated from sources including naturally occurring sunlight, wind, water, and geothermal heat. These energy sources can be used to keep social infrastructure functioning without concern for resource depletion or for greenhouse gas emissions. At the United Nations Climate Action Summit held in New York in 2019, 77 countries from around the world declared their commitment to pursuing carbon neutrality, effectively decreasing greenhouse gas emissions to zero, by 2050. Carbon taxes and restrictions as well as other measures are being implemented on a national level to work toward the realization of a carbon-free society. Against this backdrop, Japan's efforts have been limited to announcing a goal of sourcing between 22% and 24% of the country's energy from renewable energy by 2030.



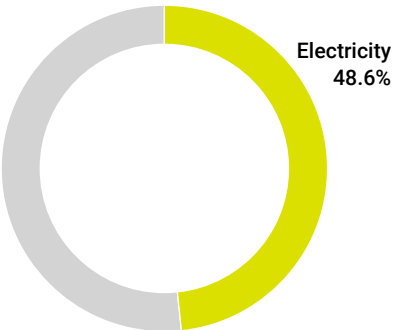
Era of Energy Choice

Global energy consumption in 2030 is estimated to be roughly twice the level of 1990. As the No. 5 global emitter of greenhouse gases, Japan currently generates 87.7% of its energy using fossil fuels, which come from finite stock developed within the earth over a period of hundreds of millions of years. The depletion of fossil fuel resources has been recognized as an issue since the 1970s, but we still have yet to escape from our dependence on the fuels. The future of the earth can only be saved if we all accept the truth of the crisis we face and choose to shift toward more renewable options.

Action by All Stakeholders

Roughly 20% of Japan's greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to households, of which 48.6% comes from electricity consumption. Here we see the potential that could be realized if people shift toward clean renewable energy. MARUI GROUP is working toward its goal of sourcing 100% of the electricity used in its business to renewable energy. By working toward this goal, we have become aware of the fact that customers too have great interest in renewable energy. MARUI GROUP thus chose to launch a project for commencing services that make it easier for customers to choose renewable energy (see pages 52–53). We recognize that substantial contributions to the realization of a sustainable society can be made if all of MARUI GROUP's stakeholders embrace renewable energy. We have thus embarked on actions for the future to promote the shift toward renewable energy together with customers.

Breakdown of Household Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Japan by Source



Source: Greenhouse Gas Inventory Office of Japan

Provision of Options for Creating a Brighter Future and
Preserving the Global Environment for Future Generations

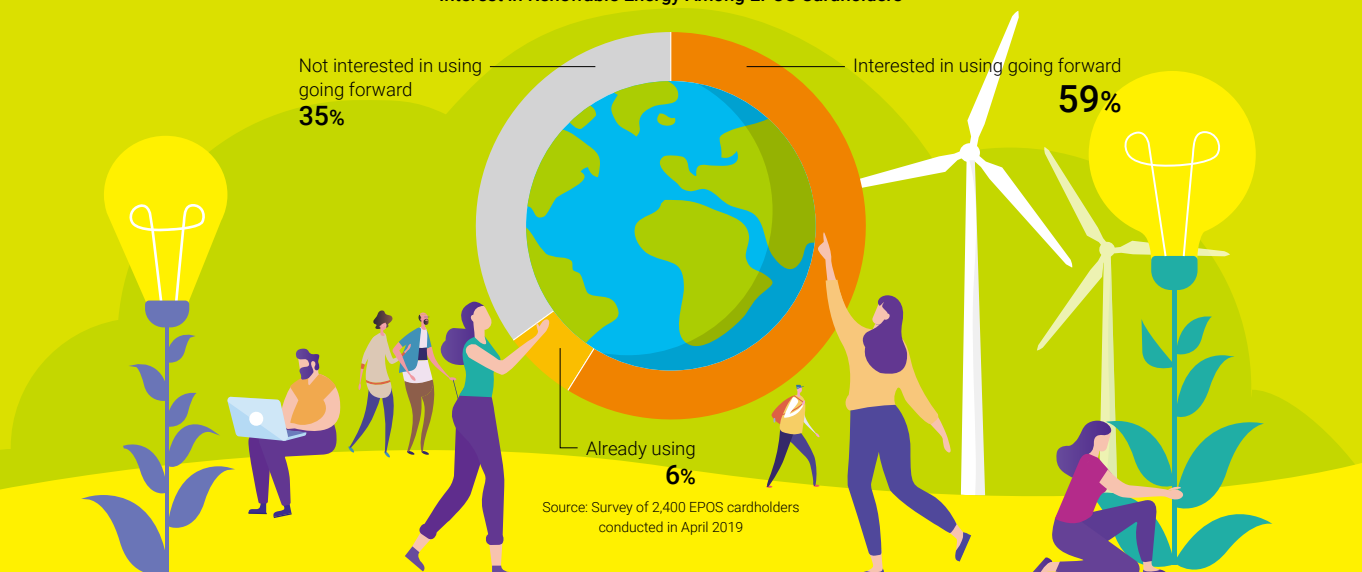
Start of Project for Promoting Shift to Renewable Energy!

MARUI GROUP has joined the RE100 international initiative, declaring its target of sourcing 100% of its electricity from renewable energy by 2030. We are shifting to renewable sources for power at Marui and Modi stores nationwide to further us toward the accomplishment of this goal. MARUI GROUP has begun supplying renewable energy with visibility of producers together with Minna-denryoku, Inc. In addition, we have launched a project aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions by promoting renewable energy use through collaborative efforts with both facilities and customers. Through these efforts, we are targeting reductions in CO₂ emissions of 1 million tons by the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, to help address environmental issues together with customers through renewable energy.

Desire to Use Renewable Energy Indicated by 60% of EPOS Cardholders

A survey of EPOS cardholders conducted in 2019 indicated that approximately 60% of cardholders had a desire to use renewable energy. However, only around 25% of cardholders have actually switched to renewable energy due to the difficulties associated with changing power companies.

Interest in Renewable Energy Among EPOS Cardholders



MESSAGE FROM A SUSTAINABILITY EXPERT

I have high praise for MARUI GROUP's approach toward sustainability through co-creation management. There are a lot of companies for which the formulaic initiatives themselves, advocated by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI),* the International Integrated Reporting Council, and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board, become the primary goals. MARUI GROUP, meanwhile, is setting clear goals from a long-term sustainability perspective and working toward these goals. The Company has recently launched a project for promoting the shift to renewable energy. This project is one facet of its approach toward co-creation sustainability management. GRI and the other international standards were designed to serve as benchmarks for the initiatives of forward-looking companies. In other words, the second the standards are made, a precedent has already been set. I want to see MARUI GROUP going beyond simply complying with existing standards to advance unique initiatives and thereby set new precedents for businesses, ecosystems, and standards. Japanese companies are not known for setting new standards, but I hope that MARUI GROUP can become a leader in this regard.

* A nonprofit organization tasked with the mission of issuing international sustainability reporting disclosure standards



Hidemi Tomita

Representative Director
Lloyd's Register Japan K.K.

Easy Two-Step Application for Renewable Energy Services

Customers have expressed that changing to renewable energy is difficult and a bit of a hassle. To address this issue, MARUI GROUP has made it possible to apply for renewable energy services in two steps from a special page on its EPOS Net portal site for EPOS cardholders. This smooth application process is made possible by provision of basic customer information necessary for contracts between Minna-denryoku and Epos Card Co., Ltd.



Words of Encouragement from Minister of the Environment

In September 2020, a meeting was held with Minister of the Environment Shinjiro Koizumi (center in picture above) at the Ministry of the Environment. MARUI GROUP President Hiroshi Aoi (left in picture above) and Minna-denryoku Representative Director CEO Eiji Oishi (right in picture above) attended and led the minister through the two-step process of applying for Minna-denryoku's renewable energy services. Minister Koizumi offered us words of encouragement, stating that easy application systems are imperative for getting individuals to switch to renewable energy and expressing his desire to use this initiative as a door opener to encourage action by other companies and industries in our quest to realize a carbon-free society.



Please refer to the following website for details (Japanese only).
www.to-mare.com/news/2020/post-8.html

Application Requiring Only Smartphone and Billing Statement



みんぱ電力エポスプラン

Minna-denryoku EPOS Plan

Minna-denryoku EPOS Plan for EPOS Cardholders

In addition to the easy two-step application process for Minna-denryoku's renewable energy services, we also offer the Minna-denryoku EPOS Plan for EPOS cardholders. This plan has three characteristics.

Characteristic 1: 100% Renewable Energy*¹

The electricity provided through this plan is effectively 100% sourced from renewable energy through a combination of solar power, wind power, and hydropower as well as non-fossil fuel certificates with environmental value provided through feed-in tariff schemes.*²

*¹ Supplied electricity is effectively 100% sourced from renewable energy through use of non-fossil fuel certificates provided via feed-in tariff schemes (resulting in zero CO₂ emissions).

*² Schemes in which electricity generated from renewable sources, namely solar power, wind power, hydropower, geothermal power, and biomass power, is purchased by power companies.

Characteristic 2: Visibility of Contributions to CO₂ Reductions

Switching to the renewable energy through the Minna-denryoku EPOS Plan allows customers to reduce their CO₂ emissions to zero, meaning this plan has the potential to prevent global warming. Users of this plan are able to see their contributions to CO₂ reductions via our website.

Characteristic 3: Benefits Providing Tangible Connections

The Minna-denryoku EPOS Plan offers various benefits from users and generators of renewable energy. Moreover, 0.5% of electricity fees are used to fund forest preservation and reforestation activities in Japan.

These connections to resolving environmental issues are made more tangible through means such as allowing customers to view progress in tree planting activities online.



Launch of Minna-denryoku EPOS Card


In October 2020, we launched the Minna-denryoku EPOS Card as a symbol for renewable energy that can be used by eco-conscious customers. As an application benefit, ¥1,000 will be donated to renewable energy generators upon application. Moreover, we will transform the card itself into a sustainability initiative by replacing the prior disposable plastic cards with cards made from eco-friendly materials, a first for Japanese credit cards, in April 2020.




Please refer to the following website for fee estimates and application (Japanese only).
www.eposcard.co.jp/minden/index.html




Target of Sourcing 100% of Electricity from Renewable Energy by 2030

Approximately 80% of the CO₂ emissions from MARUI GROUP are associated with electricity use. To curb these emissions, the Company became a member of the RE100 international initiative and declared its target of sourcing 100% of its electricity from renewable energy by 2030. We began working toward this target by forming a business and capital alliance with Minna-denryoku in December 2018, after which we started converting to renewable sources for electricity at Marui and Modi stores, beginning with Shinjuku Marui Main Building. Furthermore, we completed registration of Group company MARUI FACILITIES Co., Ltd., as a power retailer in September 2019, making it possible to procure power directly from power producers. Direct procurement of renewable energy was commenced in April 2020, and we aim to source 50% of our power from renewable energy, including that procured from other power companies, in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.




EIJI OISHI









Eiji Oishi was born in Osaka in 1969. After graduating from Meiji Gakuin University, he joined advertisement production company Toppan Printing CO., LTD., where he took part in the establishment of digital content distribution, imaging, and fashion businesses before starting up Minna-denryoku in 2011. At this company, he developed an electricity traceability system using existing infrastructure, thereby giving visibility to power producers.




SAORI IWANO









Saori Iwano is a 16-year-old environmental activist. She first took an interest in climate change and other global environmental issues after watching a speech by Severn Cullis-Suzuki. Resonating with the message of Greta Thunberg, who organized a school strike to promote climate awareness, Iwano joined Fridays For Future Tokyo with the aim of taking such action herself.



ISAO SAKAI





Isao Sakai is a 19-year-old environmental activist. He first became aware of the crisis our planet faces from the environmental science curriculum he experienced while studying in the United States. This prompted him to join Fridays For Future Tokyo and take part in activities such as marches for encouraging the fight against climate change issues.



EMIKO SHIMBA





Emiko Shimba joined MARUI GROUP in 1999 before being transferred to MARUI FACILITIES in 2016. She has been promoting the use of renewable energy (green businesses) in her position responsible for power procurement and planning in this company's Eco Management Division since 2019.

Creation of Green Ecosystems through Power with Visibility of Producers

Climate change has recently come to be referred as a climate crisis, drawing attention to the efforts of companies to address this issue along with the idea of a green recovery aimed at preventing us from returning to the way things were before the COVID-19 pandemic. The following pages chronicle a discussion on the potential for a green ecosystem based on the conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic and projected after the pandemic by Eiji Oishi, who is promoting the idea of giving visibility to power producers; Saori Iwano and Isao Sakai, members of Fridays For Future Tokyo; and Emiko Shimba, who is responsible for renewable energy procurement at MARUI GROUP.

Stakeholder Connections formed through Visibility of Power Producers

Shimba: MARUI GROUP is working to source 100% of the electricity it uses from renewable energy. This goal extends to the power used in Marui and Modi stores as well as in the offices and at other business sites where we work. We have previously focused primarily on reducing electricity consumption and switching to energy-efficient equipment. However, the recent rise

in tenants dealing in food has made us realize that there is a limit to the extent to which we can curb electricity use, prompting us to shift toward using renewable energy. This undertaking led us to talk to Minna-denryoku and eventually to switch to using renewable energy in Shinjuku Marui Main Building in September 2018. We have been progressively introducing renewable energy at other stores since with the goal of having 50% of our power coming from renewable sources in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.

Oishi: Minna-denryoku is currently supplying Shinjuku Marui Main Building with electricity originating from wind power generated in Aomori, hydropower generated in Nagano, and solar power generated in Fukushima.

Shimba: What encouraged you, Mr. Oishi, to begin developing services for promoting the visibility of power producers?

Oishi: It all started when I was riding a commuter train. My mobile phone was running out of battery when I saw a woman with a solar panel keyholder hanging from her handbag. I thought to myself, "I wonder if I can buy some power from her?" This experience made me realize that we were now entering into an era in which electricity, a resource that was previously monopolized by a few oil and power companies, could be produced by anyone. The basic concept of our business is to alleviate wage gaps and reduce poverty. As anyone can produce electricity, I figured that we could break up the prior power monopoly if power producers could inject additional value into their electricity in the form of their personalities. I thus established Minna-denryoku in 2011 with the goal of providing visibility to power producers.

Sakai: Traceability is rare for food and other commodities used in our daily lives, making it increasingly difficult to see how one is

related to environmental and social issues. I therefore feel that your efforts to grant visibility to producers and business operators is something really impressive.

Oishi: It is not as though any company will do so as long as they are using renewable energy. This is especially true given the recent trend toward greenwashing, or using green ideas purely as a marketing ploy. There are some companies that destroy local mountains to develop large-scale solar power generation operations or cut down rain forests in the Philippines to build biomass plants so that they can sell "renewable" energy to Japan. This is why the visibility of producers is so important.

Shimba: We are grateful for the opportunity you provided to adopt renewable energy. I have spoken to many other companies on this subject, and Minna-denryoku frequently comes up in conversation, especially with regard to your impressive blockchain technologies. We have also invited Mr. Oishi to speak at MARUI GROUP meetings. These efforts have proved beneficial as we have seen a rise in employee awareness as well as in people switching to purchasing electricity from Minna-denryoku. MARUI GROUP is also currently engaged in joint projects with Minna-denryoku. For example, we are developing a scheme through which EPOS cardholders can help us popularize

renewable energy. I am thoroughly enjoying these projects, which only increases my desire to spread renewable energy.

Iwano: I am overjoyed to see companies commit to visions of the societies they want to shape or the future they want to protect and take steps to resolve the issues along these paths. It is not enough to look to increase the value of one's company through green initiatives. I have high praise for how Minna-denryoku goes further to promote a green supply chain and to encourage a wide range of companies to adopt renewable energy.

Sakai: Miss Iwano and I have come up with an idea that we want to propose to MARUI GROUP. I understand that you plan to switch to renewable energy for all of your offices to accomplish your goal of sourcing 100% of your electricity from renewable energy. Given that teleworking is becoming increasingly common amid the COVID-19 pandemic, how about extending the scope of this renewable energy target to include employees working at home?

Shimba: We are currently procuring high-voltage electricity for large-scale facilities. At the moment, we are not procuring the type of low-voltage electricity used in households. However, after we have converted our stores and offices to renewable energy, we would definitely consider using a scheme for selling electricity to standard households should such a scheme exist.

Need to Change Views of Consumers

Oishi: I believe that increasing consumer awareness is an important task to be tackled with regard to renewable energy. When selecting power suppliers, consumers tend to use price comparison sites to choose the most affordable option. I hear that you, Mr. Sakai and Miss Iwano, are using our services. What prompted you to do so?

Sakai: In my case, I heard about you during the shooting of an online program I was invited to take part in. My mother watched the program and decided to switch to your services.

Iwano: Last year, I took part in some activities together with activists promoting carbon-free approaches. They told me that climate change and energy issues were intimately connected and that nationwide measures are being implemented to address these issues. This caused me to modify my own energy use. When researching options for adopting renewable energy, I happened upon Minna-denryoku, and my decision was made.

Oishi: Thank you for your patronage. When consumers become aware of climate change issues and start to adopt renewable energy, it will have an impact on companies as well.

Shimba: MARUI GROUP is developing a system in which the customer information stored by Epos Card is transferred to Minna-denryoku to allow for easy application for their services. We look to engage in full-fledged initiatives beginning in fall 2020 to accelerate the move toward renewable energy by capitalizing on this system, the desire of our customers to switch to renewable energy, and our co-creation activities with various stakeholders. If our more than 7 million EPOS cardholders were to all embrace renewable energy, it would definitely help transform the world.

Sakai: A lot of people are convinced that renewable energy is expensive. Currently, the primary users of renewable energy are companies. So, changing the views of consumers across society in this regard will require companies to increase their use of renewable energy, demonstrating that it is an affordable and viable option.

Potential for Individual Action to Grow into Larger Movements

Oishi: I understand that you both sent a proposal regarding renewable energy to the Ministry of the Environment. How did that go?

Iwano: At first, the minister stated that it was not the place of the Ministry of the Environment to become overly involved in energy policy, but that it would do what it could. When we pushed back saying that it was indeed Japan's energy policy that we wanted to change, he responded by saying that recognition of the need for cross-organization, government-wide action in this regard is spreading.

Oishi: That is very powerful. When advocates for future generations, for which my generation is creating an increasing burden, speak up in objection, it is greatly persuasive.

Sakai: I think it is important to shape the new normal to be more friendly toward the environment, rather than allowing us to return to the way things were before the COVID-19 pandemic after it ends. The recent rise in meteorological disasters makes it painfully clear that we are approaching our time limit for addressing environmental issues. We therefore must act immediately, banding together with others from our generation to present a unified voice.

Shimba: Did you see any changes in the people around you as a result of your activism?

Iwano: My family has changed the most. I think it is rare to talk about social issues with your family, despite how you are always together. I, however, was persistent in talking about climate



change and renewable energy. I continued to participate in marches and other activities, and in September 2019, my mother chose to take time off from work to join me in a march. We were also able to switch to renewable energy thanks to the approval of my mother. A lot has changed. Today, we are even working to reduce animal products in our diet.

Oishi: I am amazed. Hearing about how our services have sparked family discussion and eventually action, leading you to adopt renewable energy, has truly made my efforts thus far worthwhile. I am sure that my employees will feel the same.

Sakai: If everyone does what they can, I am sure that those around them will take notice. It is enough for everyone to do just what they are able to. In fact, I think that lowering the barrier to action to allow for more widespread action is important. Our mission is not to judge the intent of others; it is to continue to advocate our ideals. It is crucial for us to remain free of unneeded worries so that we can keep broadcasting how we think the future needs to change.

Oishi: I completely agree. I expect that we will remove various barriers going forward, allowing people to live more creatively. One of these barriers is a lack of visibility of the involved parties. This is why I think that building relationships in which both parties are visible to one another is the most important theme when it comes to shaping the world after the COVID-19 pandemic. I was amazed to see how deeply you two have thought about these issues. I did not practice anywhere near this deep a level of introspection when I was in school. I hope that you will maintain this confidence to communicate how you think we should shape the future and your belief that it is your generation who should shape this future while also turning those words into actions. I have no doubt that your efforts will help guide society in a positive direction.



ACTION FOR THE FUTURE

CO-CREATION ECOSYSTEM

ACTION FOR THE FUTURE



Diverse Options for the Future of Food

Food is indispensable to our daily lives, and globalization and technological progress are making food more abundant and convenient. In Japan, people are now able to purchase their favorite types of food whenever they like. Moreover, they can choose consumption styles for these foods based on their needs at a given time, including making meals by hand, using kits for home preparation, eating in restaurants, or buying pre-prepared food. However, this convenience is also contributing to food loss as well as emissions of greenhouse gases that damage the global environment.



Ability to Purchase Quality Foods Matched to One's Body in the Appropriate Portions

In the past, ingredients and food were prepared in a manner that was designed to accommodate large families and preparation at home. However, nuclear families, two-income households, and people living alone have become commonplace in Japan, resulting in a rise in instances of people eating alone. At the same time, younger generations, for whom fast food has been a familiar option since a young age, are coming to embrace organic goods out of a desire to eat foods that are better for their health. These trends are generating anticipation for food products that can be customized and personalized so that every customer can purchase quality foods matched to their bodies in appropriate portions. The emergence of such options will give rise to a new circular food economy that makes mealtime more enjoyable while reducing food loss. MARUI GROUP recognizes that there are immediate actions we can take to help realize such an economy.



Logical Conclusion of Pursuit of Abundance and Convenience of Food

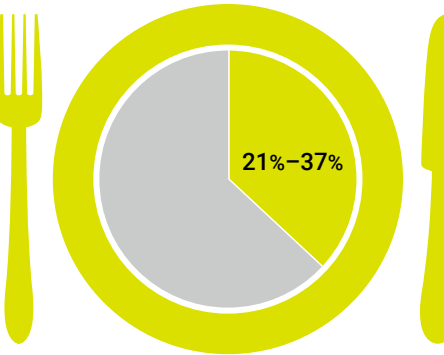
The foods we purchase and eat as a matter of habit are provided to us through a supply chain encompassing production, import or export, processing preparation, consumption, and disposal. In fact, 1.3 billion tons of food waste are produced around the world each year, meaning that roughly one-third of all of the food produced for human consumption is thrown away.*1 This amount refers to the excess food and ingredients that are produced and disposed of before they pass into consumer hands and the food that we throw away after purchase. This waste is referred to as food loss and is becoming a serious social issue. Everyone, whether a producer, seller, or consumer, needs to be cognizant of the food issues to which they contribute.

*1 Source: *Global Food Losses and Food Waste*, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011

Sustainable Food Options for Shaping the Future

It is estimated that between 21% and 37% of the total amount of greenhouse gases emitted by society is attributable to the production and distribution of food. A large portion of these gases come from livestock. Cows, for example, emit methane gas, which is 28 times more effective than CO₂ at trapping heat in the atmosphere, while also consuming massive amounts of water and grains. Accordingly, such livestock threatens to damage the global environment. This reality has directed attention toward vegan foods, which do not use animal-derived ingredients, instead replacing them with soy and other alternatives. This type of meat substitute is also gaining attention in Japan. Eating is an essential part of living. Accordingly, if everyone were to replace just one meal a week with a vegan alternative, it could have a significant benefit toward limiting global warming. We are now pressed with the need to reassess our daily meals and the amount of food we waste to consider the possibility of sustainable food options in our actions.

Portion of Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Attributable to Food Production and Distribution*2



*2 Represents greenhouse gas emissions associated with human activities
Source: *Special Report on Climate Change and Land*, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2019



Potential of Vegan Lifestyles

Veganism, which entails avoiding the eating or using of animal-derived products, is gaining attention as a sustainable lifestyle. Vegan consultant Alex Derycz stresses that veganism is not a hard lifestyle to adopt. After appearing on MARUI GROUP's community site in June 2016, Derycz once again joins us to discuss the potential of veganism with two MARUI GROUP employees.



Various Paths to Veganism

Ishii: Mr. Derycz, you are promoting veganism under your brand, Vegan Prince, in Japan. Is your family also vegan?

Derycz: My family is not completely vegan. I became a vegan at age 17, when I was in high school, because I wanted to help preserve the environment and protect animals. My father and little brother recently embraced veganism while my little sister and her boyfriend are vegetarians. My big brother and mother are neither vegan nor vegetarian, but their refrigerators are mainly stocked with vegan food. However, if someone who is unfamiliar with vegan food were to open their refrigerators, they would not know that their contents were vegan. They would see things that look like meat and cheese without realizing that these "meats," "cheeses," and even "ice creams" were all made entirely from plants. In fact, the foods I eat now do not really taste that different from those I ate before I became a vegan.

Uezono: Did your mother learn to cook vegan food for your father?

Derycz: I think my father cooks for himself. The reason he became a vegan was to prepare for triathlons. When he turned 50, he suddenly decided to take part in the Ironman race, the longest of all triathlon events. He needed to get in shape to participate in this race. When researching the diet that would provide the best nutritional balance, he found that it was a diet consisting primarily of vegetables, with the only meat being a little bit of chicken. This is when he realized that his ideal diet was essentially a vegan diet.

Ishii: What was your path to veganism, Ms. Uezono?

Uezono: My path traces back to my 10-year-old daughter's elementary school homework assignment. She brought home a survey on the degree of eco-friendliness of our lifestyles. All members of my family checked the actions we did and didn't do and then tallied the results. One of the actions was "eat fresh and seasonal vegetables." I was surprised that this was considered "eco-friendly." I mean, when you think of eco-friendliness, you tend to think of turning off lights and not leaving water running, right? When my daughter asked why this was eco-friendly, I could only reply "because it is good for the environment." However, I could not help but be curious. Committed to finding the answer, I studied the matter with my daughter and came to realize that the issue was my lack of environmental awareness.

Ishii: It is not often that you see a homework assignment teach both children and their parents. I was not aware of these kinds of issues when I was in elementary school. There are a lot of different paths to veganism, like that of Mr. Derycz's father or your path, Ms. Uezono. I love meat. However, my big sister became a vegan about a year ago. Her path to veganism was a concern for animal welfare and issues surrounding clothing made from animals. I didn't know anything about veganism at the time, but one day my sister and I went to a vegan restaurant. I was shocked at how good the vegan hamburger I ate there was. You wouldn't have guessed that it was vegan if no one told you. I was also amazed at how good the custard pudding tasted,



Using eco-friendly materials to make clothing, belts, and accessories is a way to enjoy fashion while contributing to the environment, feeding two birds with one scone, if you will.

Alex Derycz

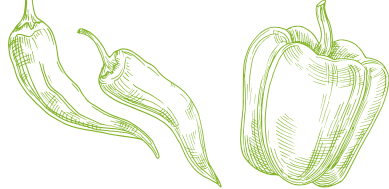
Model, Entertainer

Born in 1996, Alex Derycz comes from a multicultural background, with his father being from the United States and his mother being from France, and speaks five languages—English, French, Spanish, Japanese, and German. Adopting a vegan lifestyle at age 17, Derycz moved to Japan after graduating from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2017 to promote veganism. While working as a model and entertainer, he also provides information on vegan products, stores, and lifestyles via social media under his brand, Vegan Prince. After being named Ocean Ambassador in 2019, he leveraged the personal networks he had established in Japan's entertainment industry to launch a vegan consulting business in 2020. Employing more than 100 vegan influencers and 100 non-Japanese social media influencers, Derycz is developing a business that includes public relations and vegan-related consulting and collaborative product planning and development with influencers.



Please refer to the following website for Alex Derycz's appearance in June 2016 (Japanese only).
www.to-mare.com/tf/2020/s001.html





A vegan diet is great for your health as it lets you eat plenty of vegetables while offering satisfactory substitutes for meat. I don't think that there is any other way to contribute to the environment that is so enjoyable.


Hiroko Uezono
Soka Call Center
Epos Card Co., Ltd. (joined in 2004)

despite not using eggs. I think that the taste of vegan food is a simple yet legitimate path to veganism.

Derycz: It looks like everyone has their own path to veganism.

Ishii: We have launched a new section on the MARUI GROUP community site in which employees are able to post YouTube-style views based on the theme of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. A call went out asking people to submit videos, and I volunteered out of my desire to spread awareness of the appeal of eco-friendly vegan food. I was chosen and was able to talk about veganism as part of the first wave of videos!

Derycz: That is wonderful. I think that such efforts have a lot of meaning because there are so many people who are uninformed or misinformed about veganism.



Please refer to the following website for community site videos (Japanese only).

www.to-mare.com/ytube/

Option of Veganism Available to Future Generations

Ishii: Veganism is primarily thought of in terms of food, but it is actually a lifestyle that rejects all animal-derived products, whether they be clothing or other items. Mr. Derycz, how does your veganism influence your life in areas other than food.

Derycz: If we look at fashion, for example, the majority of items, such as leather coats, shoes, and belts, are made from animals. Wool and silk also come from animals. Lately, sustainable vegan

fashion, or fashion that does not use animal materials, is gaining popularity. One example would be the shoes I am wearing right now—they are made of cork.

Ishii: Cork? You mean like a wine cork?

Derycz: The very same. My belt too is made of cork, even though it looks like leather.

Uezono: I never would have thought that was cork. It looks very fashionable.

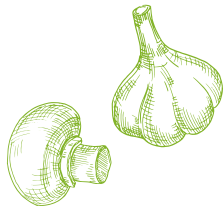
Derycz: Using eco-friendly materials to make clothing, belts, and accessories is a way to enjoy fashion while contributing to the environment, feeding two birds with one scone, if you will.

Uezono: Speaking of fashion, back when furs were in style, I remember collecting a number of animal products, ranging from fox, to raccoon dog, and even alligator. I wish I had recognized these issues earlier as I now regret how I contributed to the problem back then.

Ishii: A lot of people in their 20s are actually using vegan products in ways that might not always be apparent. For example, I use vegan cosmetics. Recently, using cosmetics that are not tested on animals is coming to be seen as something fashionable.

Derycz: It is just as you say. Cruelty-free products* are coming to be regarded as fashionable while also having less adverse impacts on the environment, meaning that they can be purchased with peace of mind.

* Products and their source materials that were not tested on animals during the development or manufacturing processes



Diverse Lifestyles

Ishii: MARUI GROUP began charging for shopping bags in July 2020. I think it was the rise in environmental awareness that prompted this move. Vegan foods also started appearing in supermarkets around that time. I hope that we are able to involve more people in the drive to spread awareness regarding veganism through venues such as the videos posted on our community site.

Derycz: I suspect that there are many people within MARUI GROUP who are interested in veganism like you two. Do you have any plans to launch vegan-related initiatives within the Company?

Ishii: We are planning vegan-related initiatives as part of our business. Personally, though, I want to introduce vegan meals into the menus of company cafeterias. Even meat lovers like me can help preserve the environment by eating vegan once a day, or even just once a week. If everyone at MARUI GROUP were to do this, the benefits would be massive.


Derycz: When considering embracing veganism, some people think they need to take an “all or nothing” approach. However, I believe your approach, Ms. Ishii, is just fine. You can just eat vegan more often or maybe make one day a week a vegan day. It is okay to adapt the lifestyle to meet your needs. There are actually a lot of people who don't eat vegan at work, but are fully vegan at home.



Even meat lovers like me can help preserve the environment by eating vegan once a day, or even just once a week.

Rie Ishii
Bag Sales Floor, Shinjuku Marui Main Building
MARUI CO., LTD. (joined in 2019)
(As of August 2020)





A video of this conversation is available on MARUI GROUP's community site (Japanese only).

www.to-mare.com/tf/2020/i001.html