

Aiming at Working for Life

Many elderly people wish to be healthy and to continue working as long as possible. There have emerged a number of fresh approaches in various parts of Japan that are intended to help the elderly feel happy and lead active lives.

Among them is a rural food maker, named Ogawanosho Oyaki Village, which is located in the village of Ogawa in northern Nagano Prefecture, central Japan. Ogawanosho Oyaki Village, which was launched in 1986 as a project to revitalize the village economy, operates businesses such as "Oyaki Village" that handles "oyaki" vegetable-stuffed dumplings and "Sansai Village" that deals in "sansai" wild vegetables. Mail-order sales began in 1987 at the request of customers.

More than half of the company's some 90 employees are 60 years old or older. The popular product at Oyaki Village is of course "oyaki," a local food item in Ogawa. The "oyaki" dumplings are wrapped in wheat-based dough and roasted



Women employees at the Oyaki Village.

Senior citizens in Ogawa Village, Nagano Prefecture make "oyaki," vegetable-stuffed dumplings. The dumplings are slowly roasted over an open flame in an "irori" hearth. The end result is a simple, homespun flavor that has been enjoyed here for ages.