

# Iwaki Agricultural Tour

Greenhouse cultivation is prosperous in Iwaki, utilising this city's long-hours of sunshine. For this edition of Iwaki Vision's Agricultural Tour, we introduce something that is very popular with children, *strawberries*.

Iwaki has three agritourism locations where you can enjoy strawberry picking: Ono Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens, Agripark Iwaki Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens and Tabito Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens. You can try out strawberry picking between late December and early June. Many people from not only Iwaki but outside of the prefecture visit the strawberry facilities as Iwaki strawberries are known for their freshness and high quality, and the strawberry gardens are brimming with customers during the holidays.

All of the greenhouses in Iwaki don't use soil but utilise elevated hydroponics cultivation, and the greenhouses maintain the most ideal environment for the strawberry's growth. The elevated cultivation has been adjusted to a height so that children can reach and adults don't have to bend their waists. Wheelchair-bound people and those with prams can also have fun picking strawberries. Iwaki Vision visited these three strawberry gardens to learn more.



## Ono Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens

One of the places we visited was Ono Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens and spoke to Masayuki Owada, the Representative Director of Ono Hydroponics Producer's Association. Established 25 years ago, Ono Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens produces Fukuharu-ka, Akihime and Beni-hoppe type strawberries in their 5000m<sup>2</sup> greenhouses.

Fukuharu-ka strawberries are an original type made and only sold in Fukushima Prefecture. It has a balanced sweetness and acidity and a pronounced scent. It is worth trying out a range of strawberry types. You can also buy tomatoes as well as strawberries as souvenirs from their direct sales store.

**Location:** 23 Aza Moriuchi Tamayama Yotsukura-machi Iwaki City  
Fukushima Prefecture  
**TEL:** 0246-33-3434

**Admission:** 1500 yen for adults. 1200 yen for primary school age. 1000 yen for infants and those over 70 years old. Free for children 3 years old and younger. All prices decrease from April to June.

**Open period:** 23 December to early June

**Hours:** 10am to 4pm (closed Wednesdays unless it is a Public Holiday)



## Agripark Iwaki Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens

We also visited Agripark Iwaki Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens where we spoke with Chiharu Kujiraoka, the Representative Director. Agripark's greenhouse is approximately 4000m<sup>2</sup> and also produces Fukuharu-ka, Akihime, Beni-hoppe as well as Tochtotome strawberries. You can taste and compare a wide variety of strawberry types here such as the firm and balanced flavour of Tochtotome or Fukuharu-ka strawberries compared to the softer and sweeter Akihime type. One of the special features of Agripark Iwaki is their two levels of height for strawberry picking: a higher level for adults and a lower level for children.

**Location:** 25 Aza Minaminaiki Shimokabeya Taira Iwaki City  
Fukushima Prefecture

**TEL:** 0246-68-7203

**Admission:** 1500 yen for adults. 1200 yen for primary school age. 1000 yen for infants and those over 70 years old. Free for children 3 years old and younger. All prices decrease from March to June.

**Open period:** Late December to early June

**Hours:** 10am to 4pm (closed Mondays unless it is a Public Holiday)



## Tabito Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens

Finally, we visited Tabito Sightseeing Strawberry Gardens and spoke with Hidemi Hiruta, the Representative Director. Utilising Japanese cedar for their culture medium, they cultivate Akihime strawberries which are known for being long and slender and for their sweet flavour, making them very popular with children. Since the fruit itself is quite soft, they aren't suitable for transportation and are usually only eaten after picking or sold directly at the facility. Tabito Strawberry Terrace also has a specialty product, homemade Strawberry Gelato. It is a recommended stopover whenever you visit Tabito.

**Location:** 70 Aza Shimohiraishi Tabito Tabito-machi Iwaki City  
Fukushima Prefecture  
**TEL:** 0246-69-2448

**Admission:** 1200 yen for primary school age and above. 1000 yen for infants below primary school age. Free for children 2 years old and younger. All prices decrease from May to June.

**Open period:** 3 January to mid-June

**Hours:** 10am to 4pm (closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays)

