

Boys be ambitious

-An inspirational story from Ambitious farm-

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Introduction

What is considered a perfect job? Everyone has his/her own answer. Factors such as salary, workplace, colleagues, recognition, etc, are a part of the consideration. On top of that, one's personality and career goals may affect a lot.

In this article, we introduce Mr. Kashiwamura and his perfect job. Mr. Kashiwamura is running a vegetable farm in Ebetsu with fellow workers after working for a long time in a trading company. What is he seeking in this field and how is he taking steps towards it? Let's take a look.

Mr. Kashiwamura and his Ambitious Story

Mr. Kashiwamura, who is the president of Ambitious Farm, studied agriculture at Rakuno Gakuen University(Hokkaido, Japan), and

after graduating from the university, he went to work for a specialized trading company. While working for the trading company, he had a strong desire to work as a farmer later in his career. A few years after he started working, he decided to start farming to do what he really wanted to do, which was to create something from scratch.

In launching his farming business, he and his friend, Mr. Ito (co-founder), established an agricultural production corporation, Ambitious Farm Corporation, in 2014. When he started Ambitious Farm he had a clear agricultural vision. The vision is to have a business model where they can directly connect with their customers.

It took a lot of effort to achieve that business model. At one business meeting, a buyer from a supermarket said to him, "What is the difference between your products and the

products of the farmer next to you?" He could not reply. As a company, he was strongly aware of the fact that a certain reason is required for them, to win the competition with other farms, to have the consumers choose Ambitious Farm. To approach their vision, Ambitious Farm coordinated the variety of crops to meet consumers' needs, reduced the use of pesticides, and took a series of steps to improve the soil. These improvements have built the base of the new Ambitious Farm.

“Futari no Marché” -Marché for the farmers, Marché for the consumers.-

Another cellar of Ambitious Farm is Futari no Marché. Futari no Marché is a direct sales shop run by Ambitious farm in the center of Ebetsu City. From May to October, every Saturday morning, Mr. Kashiwamura's wife and Mr. Ito's wife sell various kinds of vegetables grown in the farm. This business was Mrs. Ito's idea and she was inspired by the change after Ito farm became Ambitious farm. It didn't go well but showed rapid growth in recent years. Although the business is still small in terms of sales, the members of Ambitious farm all feel that it "has more value than sales." Marché does not only deliver fresh vegetables but also the philosophy of Ambitious Farm to the consumers.

The name "Futari no Marché" was from the fact that it was opened by

two farmers' wives, but the meaning has expanded to the connection between the two, “farmers and consumers”.



“Futari no Marché”

The secret of sustainable agriculture in Ambitious farm

Through agriculture, Mr. Kashiwamura, Ambitious Farm is not only producing the vegetables but also connections between the producers and consumers. With a great effort made by every individual, a number of activities, notably Futari no Marché, are showing the results. The story of Ambitious farm will surely inspire people who are thinking about careers in agriculture. What was the secret of

its success? During Mr. Kashiwamura's words, we could find it. It was Mr. Kashiwamura's affection for agriculture and his fellow workers.

In such an ever changing time, it seems that agriculture is required for plenty of change and development. Most of us think it is technology taking agriculture to the next stage, however, Mr. Kashiwamura had a different perspective.

Ambitious farm is planting more than 200 species of vegetables. At the beginning, they increased the rate of vegetables because it is easier to sell vegetables directly to consumers than crops. It has brought success and their customers even request for a wider variety. While other farmers are all narrowing down the variety for a more efficient way of farming, Ambitious farm is walking oppositely.

"It's true that we can invest more money on one thing if we specialize the species. We may be able to put in the right machines for the right crops, set up the right facilities. But won't that weaken the localness of our farm, of this area we are living in?" said Mr. Kashiwamura, "It is a kind of joy and motivation for farmers and workers to be involved with a variety of production. We will continue this and this needs manpower. It's natural to take good care of our fellow workers."

“Bringing Happiness to People through Agriculture”

The company philosophy of Ambitious Farm is “Bring people happiness by creating new possibilities of Agriculture”. Through a series of changes, changing the way of thinking, changing the way of farming, Ambitious Farm is protecting agriculture in a new way, by keeping agriculture attractive, by taking good care of the fellow workers.

“That's why we have a lot of people working with us. This will eventually become our strength.”

Mr. Kashiwamura's words awakened us. There may be a number of ways to approach higher-efficiency and higher-yield agriculture for sustainability, but the most basic and important factor is, how much the people who are involved in agriculture think about sustainability and how much attractive people could seek from working involved in agriculture.

Just at that time we finished the interview and were about to go back, a young man walked into the office. He graduated from the department of agriculture, Hokkaido university last year and became a new member here. Mr. Kashiwamura introduced him to us and joked, “You can follow your senpai and work here, too!”

It was such a warm moment that we could glimpse into the future of Ambitious Farm.



“People working at Ambitious farm”

Towards more ambitious Ambitious Farm

“I want to build a farm with various functions, such as a restaurant where people can experience farming and eat vegetables from the farm.” As a vision for the future of Ambitious Farm, Mr. Kashiwamura said so. This is not only Mr. Kashiwamura's idea, but also includes the opinions of other employees. He always thinks about making the farm a place where employees want to work. We were really impressed by how much he cares about his employees. Actually, they have already started working on it, such as an open Marché in the farm which is held in October. Also, Futari no Marché is now collaborating with several restaurants in Ebetsu, providing meals based in Ebetsu, and attaining good reputations. Ambitious Farm is seeking larger chances to create more new charms of agriculture.

On top of that, Mr. Kashiwamura had his own dream. That is, to expand the scope of his involvement from within the company to Ebetsu and Hokkaido. Not only the farming and agriculture in

Ambitious Farm but the whole industry of agriculture is where his affection is for.

Where is it? Perfect Job.

At the end, we asked Mr. Kashiwamura for a message to the young people who are reading this article. His love for agriculture just emerged in this part. “Farming is a job where there is no gap between work and life. It can be annoying but I found it attractive. Start the work at sunrise and feel the dark when finish the work. I am living with nature and living on a job I love, enjoying my life.”

How about people who are not interested in farming?

“If it's not farming, what I can say is, you should choose the job that you really want to do. It's not all about money. It's nonsense to put up with work you don't like for the most time, just for a short while of rest.”

What is considered a perfect job? Everyone has his/her own answer. The answer Mr. Kashiwamura gave us was amazing. Did you find it amazing, too? Hope this article will give you some inspiration to rethink agriculture and your future.

