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Okayama Hakuto-the sweet and fragrant peach grown in ‘Land of Sunshine’

Okayama Prefecture is referred to as the ‘Land of Sunshine’ because of more than 2100 hours of daylight each year. This mild climate make Okayama well suited for the cultivation of peaches. Notably, approximately 50% of peaches grown in Japan are cultivated in Okayama with the most famous of the family of large peaches being the Okayama ‘Shimizu Hakuto’—a large, sweet peach with a distinctive fragrance and white peel and pulp. In fact, Okayama growers produce about 2,889 tonnes of ‘Shimizu Hakuto’ peaches per year using a cultivation area of 250 hectares.

The history of peach cultivation in Okayama can be traced back to the Meiji Period of the 1800’s when peaches were brought to Okayama from China. Attempts at large scale cultivation of the famous Hakuto started in the early 1900’s.

The reasons why the peel of Hakuto peaches is white and why they are so sweet are due to the unique cultivation process developed by the peach farmers of Okayama. As the peaches grow, they are covered with small paper bags that have an opening at the bottom to allow light to reach only the bottom end of the peaches. Another factor is careful control of water supply to the soil where his peach trees grow. So the combination of the long sunlight hours and careful crop management by the peach farmers results in sweet, fragrant peaches with a white outer peel and inner juicy pulp. The Hakuto are harvested in late July and early August.



Okayama ‘Hakuto’ peaches with distinctive white peel and pink regions.



An Okayama ‘Hakuto’ peach with the distinctive white peel and pink region ready for harvesting.

Further information

Okayama Prefectural International Tourism: <http://www.okayama-japan.jp/en/>