

JAPAN Series supports the future of agriculture



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Contribute to the realization of sustainable agriculture by solving agricultural issues and improving productivity through the JAPAN Series

In 2026, we will launch all new models of tractors, rice transplanters, and combine harvesters in the JAPAN Series of flagship machines for professional farmers. What issues will the JAPAN Series, which has contributed to Japanese agriculture, solve for farmers in the future, and what value will it provide? Three veteran employees, one each from the Product Planning Department, Development Department, and Sales Department, who were involved in the development project, discussed the JAPAN Series and the future of ISEKI & Co., Ltd.

History of the JAPAN Series and each participant's involvement

Izutani: ISEKI & Co., Ltd.'s flagship model, the JAPAN Series, began with the combine harvester, and "Frontier Japan," which was launched in 1995, was the birth of the JAPAN Series. We plan to launch the new "HJ Series" in December 2026 as the culmination of the "high accuracy, high efficiency, and high durability" pursued over the subsequent 30 years. Beginning with the "TJ Series" in 2001, the JAPAN Series of tractors evolved into large tractors that can be used not only for paddy fields but also for dry fields. In 2006, the "TJW Series" was launched, in 2010, the "TJV Series" was launched, and in 2013, the "TJX Series" was launched. In June 2026, the "BJ

Series" was launched as a fully remodeled version of the "TJV Series." Rice transplanters began bearing the JAPAN Series name with the "PRJ Series" launched in 2020, and the fully remodeled "PJ Series" will be launched in July 2026.

At present, I am in charge of promoting the commercialization of tractors in the Product Planning Department, but before that, I belonged to the Engineering Department and engaged in design work mainly for tractors. My involvement with the JAPAN Series began in 2006 with the design of the first model of the aforementioned large tractor "TJW Series," and after that, I was in charge of the design from the first model of the "TJV Series" and "TJX Series" to minor changes, and have a long-standing attachment to the JAPAN Series.

Yamashita: After undergoing training in the Production Engineering Department at a plant for approximately one year after joining the Company, I have been engaged in the design and development of large tractors in the Large Tractor Group of the Tractor Engineering Department since 2015. There were times when I worked together with Mr. Izutani, and while receiving various instructions, I was in charge of the electrical systems and control systems of the "TJV Series" and "TJX Series." I am also in charge of designing the new "BJ Series." Since joining the Company, I have been consistently involved in the JAPAN Series.

Onozato: The Agricultural Machinery Promotion Group to which I belong is a department that is mainly responsible for marketing and sales strategies. Its role is to identify and analyze user needs through market research and interviews with sales subsidiaries prior to new product development, and then provide information to the Product Planning Department and Engineering Department. In addition, after the launch of new products, we prepare sales promotion tools, etc., and conduct sales training within the Company and for sales subsidiaries. With regard to the new JAPAN Series, while conveying the requests of the sales division, we held repeated discussions with the Product Planning Department and the Engineering Department.

When I first joined the Company, I was in charge of working machines at the Agri-Implements Department, and I was involved in the JAPAN Series, including confirming the matching of tractors and implements. Currently, as the head of a group that brings together members in charge of each model, I am deepening my involvement in the JAPAN Series.

Background to the launch of the new JAPAN Series

Izutani: In response to the decrease in the agricultural population and the aging of farmers, the accumulation and consolidation of agricultural land and large-scale farming are progressing. As a result, there is a need for large-sized agricultural machinery so that work can be done by a small number of people. In addition, against a backdrop of labor shortages, there is a need to introduce advanced technology so that even inexperienced workers can perform operations equivalent to those of skilled workers. The new JAPAN Series has been developed to meet these needs.

Onozato: As field plots become larger, longer work hours caused by the increase in farmland area are increasing the burden on workers. Agricultural machinery is required to have functions that prevent fatigue even after long hours of work, and to ensure reproducibility so that anyone can work in the same way as a countermeasure against labor shortages. For this reason, in addition to the "high accuracy, high efficiency, and high durability" pursued so far in the new JAPAN Series, greater emphasis is placed on operator comfort, including ease of operation and a low-noise cabin design.

Yamashita: With regard to tractors, there were strong calls for increased horsepower and hydraulic lift, and in response to this, the top-of-the-line model of the "BJ Series" was set at 105 horsepower. The first model of the "TJV Series" has a maximum of 95 horsepower, which means that it has increased by 10 horsepower in 16 years through repeated model changes. In order to respond to customer demand for high horsepower and high output in an environment



where the amount of work is increasing as a result of larger-scale farming, the Engineering Department pursued optimal forms for engine selection and the system configuration of the entire tractor.

In addition, as a result of the accumulation and consolidation of agricultural land, there has been a shift from individual farmers to large-scale agricultural management entities, and there has been an increase in the number of tractors, combine harvesters, and rice transplanters owned, operated, and managed by multiple persons. In that case, there is a need for a system that can centrally manage not only the agricultural machinery itself but also agricultural machinery and farming information. The "BJ Series" was also designed and developed in consideration of its compatibility with agricultural management systems, based on feedback from the Sales Planning Department and requests from the Product Planning Department.

Project Z driving the achievement of growth strategy targets

Izutani: Among the tractors in the JAPAN Series, the "TJV Series" mentioned above has responded to market needs as a model that can be used not only for paddy fields but also for field crops. It was a model that adopted a dual-clutch transmission system with high transmission efficiency, but there were calls for the installation of a continuously variable transmission with superior ease of use and smooth workability.

When we actually interviewed sales subsidiaries, they asked us not only to adopt a continuously variable transmission, but also to focus on cabin comfort, livability, and operability, as Mr. Onozato said. The "BJ Series," which was developed based on this, is a product that accurately captures the needs of the field, including the installation of a continuously variable transmission, changes to the engine, and the introduction of a straight-travel assist function and a touch panel to operate it.

Yamashita: Minor changes will be made if market demand can be met with the addition of parts or slight changes in specifications, but this development was a full model change in which a number of new devices and equipment were added, and functions and performance were radically renewed.

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Onozato: The launch of a model with significantly enhanced functions and performance will have a major impact on the market. In addition, the “BJ Series” is equipped with a continuously variable transmission, a specification that our sales teams have been eagerly anticipating, so we are looking forward to promoting it extensively.

Izutani: The “BJ Series” also encompasses all of the key focus areas for the domestic market identified under Project Z, “large,” “cutting-edge” “field crops,” and “environment.” It is positioned as a core product that will drive the achievement of the plan within the new JAPAN Series, which will be the axis of the growth strategy of Project Z.

Onozato: Project Z aims to increase the ratio of large-sized machinery to 50% or more of net sales of agricultural machinery products in Japan in FY2030. There is no doubt that the “BJ Series” will make a significant contribution to achieving this goal ahead of schedule and further increasing the ratio. The Sales Planning Department is in the process of closely examining plans for the maximization of sales results.

Development process of “BJ Series” tractors

Izutani: The period from the planning of a new product to its launch varies depending on the development theme, but it can be quite long. In the case of large tractors, we not only interviewed our sales subsidiaries but also listened to customers. In the development of the “BJ Series,” we began interviewing customers at the beginning of the planning stage about five years ago. During the process, the content of the interview is brought back to the Company, and after consulting and discussing with the Sales Department and the Engineering Department, the interview is conducted again as necessary, and the plan is elaborated over time.

Onozato: We receive a wide variety of requests from the market, including individual circumstances, which are analyzed and organized by the Engineering Department, and brought to the meeting with the sales company in a form that narrows down the main points. Collaboration with the Engineering Department and the Product Planning Department has greatly helped us understand the latest trends in touch panels and digital-related technologies.

Izutani: After that, we conduct trial manufacture of machines, field

tests, and endurance test based on the commercialization process of internal regulations. At the experimental facilities of the Tobe Office (Ehime Prefecture), there is also a test in which the transmission is run for approximately 1,000 hours. Once we have a clear idea, we will ask the sales subsidiaries to confirm the prototype with the actual equipment and hear their opinions. If there are issues to be addressed, we will address them. As we move toward mass production, we will consult with the Sales Department to set the price and number of units to be sold, and work out the specifications.

In the development of combine harvesters and rice transplanters, tests are conducted only during the harvest and rice planting seasons, and if development is delayed for one year, development will be suspended until the following year. Therefore, schedule management toward commercialization is more important.

Yamashita: The development period for normal minor changes is not that long, and model changes often take two to three years, but the development of the “BJ Series” was a project that began around the time of the COVID-19 crisis, and it took a long time to commercialize it.

As the project progressed, there were changes in specifications from the initial plan. The biggest change was the engine. Originally, we had planned to equip the model with an engine procured from an external supplier, as had been the case previously. However, every time a model was changed, after-treatment equipment was installed to comply with exhaust gas regulations, and the engine was becoming heavier and heavier, so there were requests for further weight reductions. For this reason, we decided to develop a new engine in-house and install it in order to satisfy both exhaust gas regulations and weight reduction needs. This is one of the factors that led to large-scale development.

Key features of the new JAPAN Series

Izutani: The product concept of the “BJ Series” is “a tractor you'll want to drive again tomorrow.” This was in response to requests for attention to comfort, as tractors work all day long, so that vibration and noise are reduced and fatigue does not remain after work. This was the main point of the model change plan.

Yamashita: As already explained, the “BJ Series” is equipped with a number of new functions. Of these, I personally think the appealing functions are the aspects that make it difficult to get tired even after long hours of work and the ease of operation.

For example, there is a lever for operating a continuously variable transmission in the armrest on the right side of the seat. This is a newly developed multi-function lever that can be used not only for acceleration and deceleration, but also for raising and lowering working machines. It is also equipped with function buttons that allow the user to set functions. They are put together in an armrest, so you can operate and work in a comfortable position.

In addition, air suspension has been adopted for the seats, instead of the conventional mechanical suspension with springs, making it less tiring to sit for a long time.

Regarding the height of the steering wheel, the previous models had only an angle adjustment function, but we have added a function to adjust the front and rear positions.

These are the key features of this machine that we were able to weave in detailed specifications from the design stage so that users can work comfortably.

Onozato: As you have discussed tractors in considerable detail, I would like to touch on the key features of rice transplanters and combine harvesters.

The “PJ Series,” a new rice transplanter, has an engine mounted on the front, which was located under the seat in previous models. As a result, an optimal balance of front and rear weight is achieved, and driving performance in wet fields is improved. In addition, in models equipped with straight-travel assist, the variable fertilization function linked to map data is standardized, and fertilization is applied based on a fertilization map created in advance, instead of applying fertilizer uniformly to a single field, making it possible to apply fertilizer effectively and making a significant contribution to reducing production costs. In addition, a mechanism that saves labor in collecting seedling boxes and an assist function that automates not only straight driving but also turning steering are provided to reduce the burden of rice planting operations.

Final adjustments are being made to the new “HJ Series” of combine harvesters, which are scheduled to be launched in December 2026. While placing importance on reducing labor and ease of use, we also achieved reductions in noise and vibration through a review of the cabin, and ensured livability required for long hours of work. Models equipped with straight-travel assist will continue to be offered, supporting combine harvester operation, which has a heavy workload, such as checking the flow of rice plants.

I think the key features of the new JAPAN Series are not only “high accuracy, high efficiency, and high durability” in all products of tractors, rice transplanters, and combines, but also “easy to handle for anyone” and “reliable daily operations.”

Izutani: Another point I would like to mention is that we have been promoting a global design of the new JAPAN Series with a view to exporting it to overseas countries such as South Korea and Taiwan.

For example, South Korean laws have been amended to regulate agricultural machinery, requiring different specifications from Japanese ones, such as the installation of fire extinguishers and the ability to turn off batteries. In the past, we dealt with export by modifying products for the domestic market each time in accordance with the regulations of the export destination, and we incurred man-hours and expenses each time.

In order to avoid the burden of these factors, the new JAPAN Series has been designed and commercialized from the planning stage with a view to expanding sales channels overseas. This is expected to lead to the suppression of development and production costs, in addition to streamlining and speeding up overseas expansion.

Toward the future of agriculture and the advancement of ISEKI & Co., Ltd.

Yamashita: Agricultural machinery has continued to evolve by responding to needs. New needs will continue to emerge. Those of us involved in design and development must constantly capture new information and enhance our technical capabilities.



Recently, I have noticed that in the past, many products were evaluated based on numerical values such as horsepower and hydraulic lift, but in the future, evaluation will be based on factors that are difficult to quantify, such as ease of handling and comfort, and there will be a growing tendency for customers to feel attracted to these factors. With this in mind, we believe that identifying customer needs and identifying the designs and technologies that will create the value demanded by customers will lead to expanded opportunities for customers to choose ISEKI & Co., Ltd. products.

Izutani: As a value provided by agricultural machinery in the future, we can, for example, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by developing machines that curb energy consumption, including fuel consumption. In addition, I would like to further strengthen product development that leads to environmental preservation and resource conservation, such as curbing the consumption of fertilizers and agricultural chemicals. At the same time, in order to contribute to creating an environment where farmers want to continue farming in the future, I would like to aim to create products that allow farmers to concentrate on work that requires judgment and a sense unique to humans, leaving simple and dangerous work to machines.

To this end, we will continue to listen carefully to our customers and pursue truly desired products.

Onozato: The environment surrounding agriculture is expected to undergo further major changes in the future from the current situation in which measures are required to address issues such as farmland consolidation, shortages of farmers, and efficiency improvements, and customer needs are also expected to change. I hope to continue playing a role in understanding those changes from the sales perspective and incorporating feedback from the field into product development.

Toward the next 100 years of ISEKI & Co., Ltd., we will further increase the number of fans of ISEKI & Co., Ltd. who choose our products, and contribute to sustainable growth and improved corporate value. In this way, we will strive to ensure that ISEKI & Co., Ltd. continues to exist as an essential company in the world.

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