



Historic Villages of Shirakawa-go

The historic villages of Shirakawa-go (UNESCO World Heritage Site), located at Shirakawa in Gifu prefecture, are famous for their gassho-zukuri style houses. The gassho-zukuri style is characterized by a thatched and steeply slanting roof resembling two hands joined in prayer. This unique shape is said to have evolved in order to allow for the easier removal of snow from the roof in this heavy snowfall region. Moreover, all the house roofs face east-west, enabling them to receive direct sunlight evenly and to fend off the strong winds blowing down the north-south valleys. The beauty of these gassho-zukuri style houses reflects a rational and reasonable approach to architecture in which their function is well adapted to daily life and natural conditions in this region.

Report/Development of Oligosaccharide-Producing Enzymes as Dietary Supplement Enzymes

Topics/Nagoya COP 10; The 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

Topics/Announcement of Completion of the Quality Assurance Center

Topics/Toward the Establishment of a Historical Archive of Enzymology