

そして笹竹を、飾りや自分の願いを書いた紙で美しく飾ります。子供達も、学校や家でこの笹飾りを作り、星に祈ります。

We decorate a bamboo branch with many paper strings. Our wishes are written on those strings and we pray to the stars to make our wishes come true.

<お盆>Obon (Summer Festival)

8月13日から16日までお盆です。

The Summer Festival is a traditional Japanese festival held between August 13th and 16th.

正月と同じように大切な伝統行事で、なくなった先祖のお墓参りをします。

お盆は仏教と古くから先祖信仰が結びついた行事です。

It is an event where Buddhism and ancestral piety are combined.

家族で墓参りに行きお墓を掃除したり食べ物をお供えたりします。

Families visit the family gravesite to clean the grave, bring flowers and food to their ancestors, and pray for them.

また、墓参りのために多くの人々がふるさとに戻り、離れている家族もこの時はみんな集まります。

During Obon, many people return to their hometowns and gather with their family members.

<稲刈り>Inekari (Rice Harvesting)

5月に田植えした稲は、暑い夏どんどん成長し、秋に収穫します。

Rice planted in May promises a good harvest in the fall (the hot summer weather causes the rice to grow bigger).

9月下旬から10月上旬の稲刈りが行われます。

Rice is harvested from the end of September to the beginning of October.

田植えと同じように大切な作業で近年は機械化されましたが、小中学生も手伝って、天気が晴れている間に一気に作業をします。

These days, harvesting is done by machines. Local elementary and junior high school students help the farmers with the harvest, and they try to finish harvesting quickly while the weather is nice and dry.

稲刈りがすむと、農家では一年間の最大の仕事を終え、収穫を祝う秋祭りや芋煮などで労をねぎらいます。

After the harvest has been brought in, which is the most important work of the year, the farmers relax and enjoy a fall festival celebrating the harvest.

芋煮は、秋に収穫した里芋や大根、きのこなどを煮てみんなで食べたり酒を飲んだりして楽しく過ごす野外パーティーです。

“Imoni” (a soup with taros, pork, carrots, radishes, and mushrooms) parties are held outside, and people enjoy eating and drinking.

<冬至>Toji (the Winter Solstice)

12月22日あたりが冬至になります。

The winter solstice is around the 22nd of December.

1年で一番昼の短い日です。この日が過ぎると本格的な冬を迎えます。

It is the shortest day of the year and is the sign that more severe weather is on the way.

冬至には「冬至かぼちゃ」を食べます。

People eat pumpkins on the winter solstice.

これは長い冬を迎える会津地域の栄養食です。

Pumpkins are a nutritious food for the Aizu people who must endure a long winter.