



日鉄興和不動産



日鉄興和不動産農業

News Release

May 8, 2026

To Members of the Press

Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Co., Ltd.

Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri Co., Ltd.

First Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri Co., Ltd. Project Launched Apple Tree Planting Ceremony in Muroran, Hokkaido

— 3,199 Seedlings of Three Varieties Planted —

We are pleased to announce that Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri Co., Ltd. has commenced apple production using high-density planting methods (*1) in Muroran, Hokkaido, on May 8, 2026, marking its first cultivation project. This agricultural business subsidiary was established by Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Co., Ltd. (headquartered in Minato-ku, Tokyo; led by President and CEO Masahiro Miwa; hereinafter “the Company”) in partnership with Nihon Agri, Inc. (headquartered in Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo; led by CEO Shohei Naito), a next-generation agriculture company promoting smart agriculture and global expansion.

To commemorate the opening of the farm and the start of cultivation, an apple tree planting ceremony was held on May 8. The event was attended by approximately 80 participants, including Muroran Mayor Takeshi Aoyama, Director Mitsuru Makino of the Iburi General Subprefectural Bureau of the Hokkaido Prefectural Office, Muroran Deputy Mayor Shinichi Nara, and Muroran city officials, as well as local kindergartners and their families.



▲ (From left) Muroran Mayor Takeshi Aoyama, Director Mitsuru Makino of the Iburi General Subprefectural Bureau, Representative Director and Executive Vice President Keiichi Yoshizawa of Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate, President and CEO Seiji Suzuki of Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri, and COO Shuto Kawai of Nihon Agri



▲ A planting experience event for local kindergartners

During the current fiscal year, we plan to plant a total of 3,199 apple trees across the 0.75-hectare portion of the approximately 5-hectare orchard scheduled to open in FY 2026, comprising 1,029 Fuji trees, 2,142 Gunma Meigetsu trees, and 28 Shinano Sweet trees. High-density planting is characterized by its ability to achieve earlier and higher yields, and we expect to begin harvesting and shipping small quantities of apples as early as 2028, two years from now. The trees are expected to mature and reach stable, maximum production approximately six years after planting, around 2031.



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In addition, the Shinano Sweet variety has been introduced on an experimental basis to evaluate its varietal characteristics and suitability for local growing conditions. Going forward, we plan to consider gradually expanding the number of trees while monitoring growth conditions, yield, and quality.

Muroran, Hokkaido, is a region where Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate has developed a strong relationship of trust with the local government through years of community development. We chose this site for our orchard because it provided an environment in which we could quickly and flexibly proceed with discussions on land use.

In addition, after working with Nihon Agri to closely study the climatic conditions and land characteristics of the region, we determined that Muroran could be suitable as a new site for apple cultivation in light of the recent northward shift of production areas due to rising temperatures. In addition, we view apples as a promising crop for the future based on a comprehensive assessment of factors, including their potential for high-density planting, a cultivation method also used by Nihon Agri that supports more intensive cultivation and greater productivity, as well as robust domestic demand and marketability for growing export opportunities.



▲ High-density planting
(Photo courtesy of Nihon Agri)

As an agri-developer, we will look beyond the business sites operated by Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate and expand across a broader area going forward in order to cultivate crops suited to each location. In doing so, we aim to establish a large-scale production system spanning 100 hectares within the next decade. In addition to expanding the scale of production, we also plan to develop distribution infrastructure and branding, as well as tourist farms in the vicinity of the orchards.

*1: High-density planting is a cultivation method that aims to increase profitability and efficiency. The method is becoming mainstream worldwide. The average yield of apples grown using methods widely used in Japan is approximately 20 tonnes per hectare, while high-density planting can triple the yield to approximately 60 tonnes per hectare. In high-density planting, each tree is maintained in a slender form, allowing more trees to be planted per unit area. The trees are also arranged in straight rows, helping improve the efficiency of farm operations. (From the Nihon Agri website)

■ Apple Tree Planting Ceremony in Muroran, Hokkaido: Event Overview

- Date and Time : From 11:00 a.m. on Friday, May 8, 2026
- Venue : Planned apple orchard site in Muroran, Hokkaido (Address: 77-2 Horomoe-cho, Muroran-shi, Hokkaido)
- Event Program : Remarks from the organizers, remarks from guests, photo session, apple tree planting experience, apple tasting
- Participants : Takeshi Aoyama, Mayor of Muroran, Hokkaido
Mitsuru Makino, Director of the Iburi General Subprefectural Bureau of the Hokkaido Prefectural Office
Shinichi Nara, Deputy Mayor of Muroran City, Hokkaido
Keiichi Yoshizawa, Representative Director and Executive Vice President of Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate
Seiji Suzuki, President and CEO of Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri
Shuto Kawai, COO of Nihon Agri
City officials of Muroran, Hokkaido
Local kindergartners and their families



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▲ Planting ceremony participants



▲ A planting experience event for local kindergartners

■ Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri Co., Ltd. Profile

Trade Name : Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate Agri Co., Ltd.
Address : 1-4-4 Nakajima-honcho, Muroran-shi, Hokkaido
Representative : Seiji Suzuki, President and CEO
Established : December 12, 2025
Capital : 100 million yen
URL : <http://www.nskre-agri.co.jp/>



■ Apple Cultivation Project in Horomoe-cho, Muroran-shi, Hokkaido

Project Site : 77-2 Horomoe-cho, Muroran-shi, Hokkaido (lot number)
Cultivation Area : 4.75 hectares of planted area (approximately 0.75 ha in spring 2026 and approximately 3.98 ha in spring 2027)
Cultivation Method : High-density planting of apples

Location Map

