

Year-end aenokoto



- ①“Bales of seed rice” Seed rice is a lifeline for agricultural families. The bales are stacked in a pyramid, and decorated with a sakaki evergreen cutting (meaning also wealth for the family), so that the rice field deities can rest there and protect the seed rice until spring.
- ②“Black rockfish” The fish is prepared raw, with the tail and head still attached. A grilled fish is said to be a bad omen because it symbolizes ‘the fields burning and the water drying up’. Black rockfish have large mouths, symbolizing an increase in the harvest.
- ③“One and two-pronged daikon radishes” Two daikon radishes are offered with the leaves still attached. The two-pronged radish is for the female god and the one-pronged radish is for the male god, encompassing a prayer for many offspring.
- ④“Simmered vegetables and amazake” Much food is prepared so the rice field deities can eat their fill. In the olden days when ingredients were not plentiful, preparing enough food was the best they could do.
- ⑤“Harvested produce” In a large wooden rice box, 12 cups of rice is placed, along with produce from the sea and land, to give thanks for the harvest of the year. Ginkgo nuts, 3cm square pieces of kelp, chestnuts and black soybeans are also offered here. One reason for the abundance of nuts is said to be that before the rice farming culture began, they were preserved as a food source in the Jomon prehistoric period. They are displayed in an open basket. However generally it is common for fall vegetables and fruits to be offered.