

# Japanese harvest Nebraska know-how

By Tammy Kaup

Doc, Luke and Pocky may wear western boots, belts and blue jeans, but they are not typical Nebraska farmers. The young men are Japanese farmers participating in a UNL agricultural training program.

Doc, known in Japan as Hiroshi Nishimura, began the two-year program last year as a trainee at Hill Hatchery in Lincoln. He said he heard about the program from a friend who had been involved in it several years ago.

About 50 Japanese students attend the 12-week livestock and poultry production course offered by the UNL College of Agriculture. During the course, the farmers live with host families in Lincoln.

Nishimura said students are selected through written examinations and personal interviews. The trainees, who range in age from 20 to 27 years old,

have at least a high school education and are competent in the English language.

Luke, known in Japan as Riichi Nishikawa, said he thinks American agriculture is possibly the best in the world. Although soil differences may make some American farming methods impossible in Japan, Nishikawa said, the American farmer's way of thinking can be brought there.

"There is lots to learn here, but it is different from Japan," Nishikawa said.

For example, Nishikawa said, the American farmer thinks about production and selling methods. In contrast, he said, Japanese farmers think only of production.

He said each Japanese farm averages only about 2.5 acres. Expansion is difficult because of small profits and because land ownerships stay within families. Nishikawa said most farmers must have a job outside the farm.

However, northern Japan has larger farms, like those in the United States. Farmers use more machinery and they raise beef and dairy cattle, he said.

Pocky, known in Japan as Soichi Horigome, said Japan imports about 30 percent of its food and 70 percent of its grain. He said his country's major crop is paddy rice.

The Japanese often eat rice three times a day every day, compared to the variety of food eaten in the United States, Nishikawa said. Although he likes American food, Nishikawa said he does miss Jap-

anese raw fish.

Nishimura said Japanese working relationships differ from those in America. In Japan, he said, people cooperate more, possibly because they work for the good of a company rather than only for themselves.

Horigome said he thinks American young people are more independent than Japanese youth. This is especially true of young American women, Nishikawa said.

Dwight Stephens, a UNL visiting animal science professor and academic director of the training program, said that the trainees spend a year on a U.S. farm or ranch to get practical experience before taking the UNL course. They work with cattle, poultry or swine before going to UNL. Students who pass receive eight hours of college credit.

Since the program began 18 years ago, 750 students have completed the course. Stevens said this year's Jan. 9 to March 30 course is his 12th. He said he spent three weeks in Japan visiting 70 former UNL students, and most had become agricultural leaders of their country.

Nishikawa said Japanese students will share some of their country with Nebraskans at a culture night Feb. 18 at 7:30 p.m. at the Nebraska Center auditorium. Nishikawa, chairman of the culture night, said students will demonstrate their abilities in fencing, cheerleading, paper folding, variations of Japanese writing, country music, Japanese magic, and other activities.

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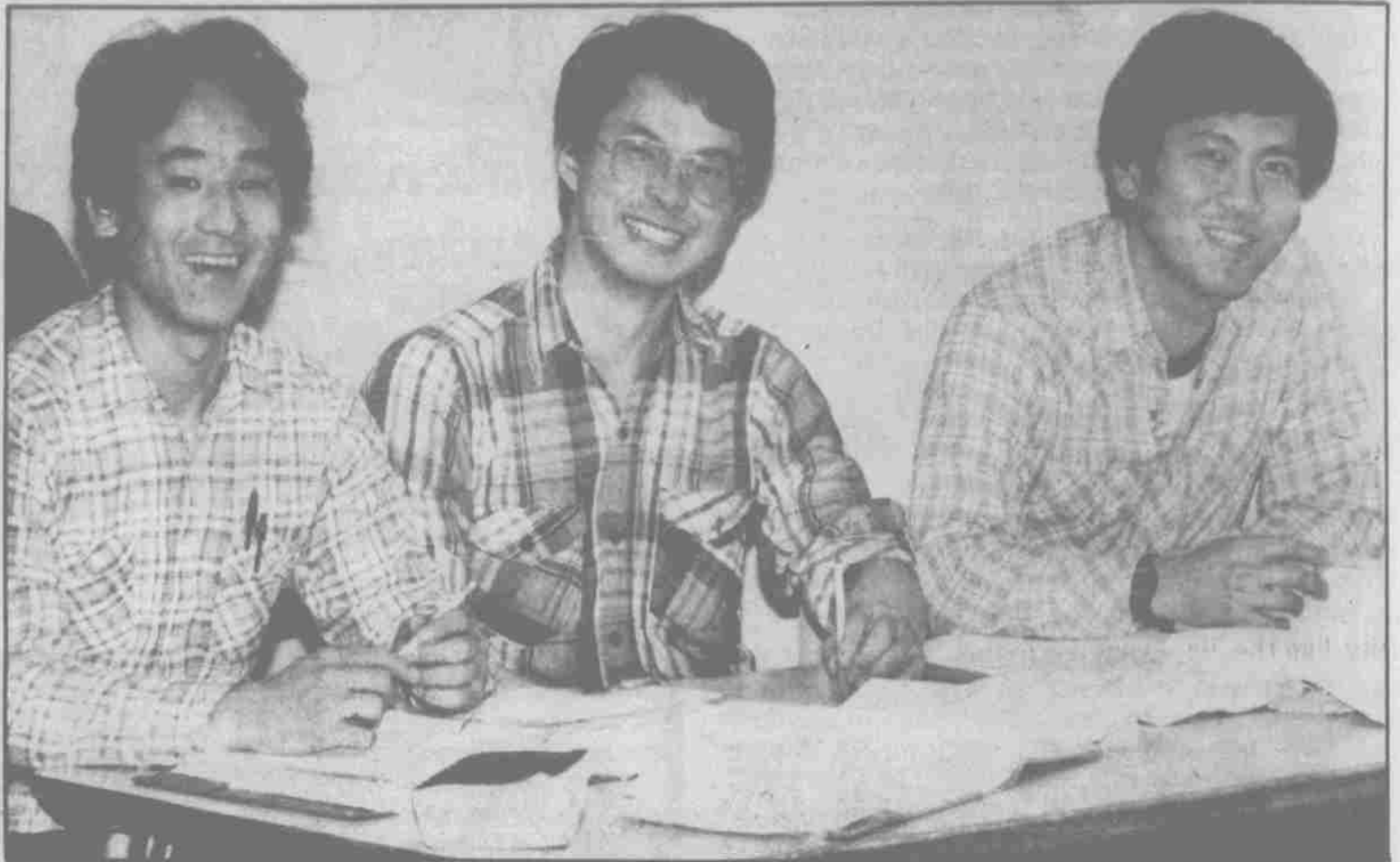
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Hirochi Nishimura (Doc), Soichi Horigome (Pocky) and Riichi Nishikawa (Luke) broaden their cultural horizons in UNL's agricultural training program.

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**Kissinger VP hopeful**

Mike Geiger, UNITE presidential candidate for ASUN, announced that Kevin Kissinger, a UNL junior English major, will run as his second vice president.

Kissinger replaces Liz Burden, a UNL senior in broadcast journalism, who quit before UNITE officially announced.

Kissinger has served as a Residence Hall Association representative for Harper-Schramm-Smith complex, RHA publicity chairman, RHA Hallways newsletter editor, and was a member of the RHA programming and lighting and security committees.

**It's NDSL check time once again**

Students can pick up their National Direct Student Loan checks for spring semester next week in the Cellar of the Nebraska Union.

The Cellar will be open 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 13 to 15. Students must have student I.D.

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