

Japan Experience

It was my second time to visit Japan, this time. I was in Japan back in 2013 for the same training. Then I was really nervous because it was my first time to be away from home, but this time I was looking forward to meeting people I knew and visiting places I knew before. It was 23-hrs.-flight from Addis Ababa International Airport of Ethiopia to Kansai International Airport in Japan, including transit time in Dubai.

I was the only participant in this course and it was a good experience to learn from proud Japanese people and to enjoy Japan which makes me feel at home.

I commuted every day from a hotel in Sakai City to the training place in Kawachi Nagano City. At Laboratory of Japan Ecotech Co. Ltd., located in Nihon Nohyaku Research Center Osaka, I received training regarding pesticide residue analysis of all agricultural food products including coffee beans, sesame seed, honey, fruits and vegetables. And I also had a valuable experience of operating very sophisticated instruments for analysis, such as Gas Chromatograph-Tandem Mass Spectrometer (GC/MS/MS), Liquid Chromatograph-Tandem Mass Spectrometer (LC/MS/MS), Gas Chromatograph with Electro-Capture Detector (GC/ECD), and High Performance Liquid Chromatograph (HPLC), etc. I would like to thank all instructors.

My Impression

There are diversified terms to express Japanese people. They are kind, polite, hard worker, respectful, punctual, helpful, very formal and shy. Among these characteristics, the one that makes me very much impressed is their punctuality. Since I definitely

enjoyed this punctuality in Japan, I will never forget it in life. When Japanese says 8:57, it means exactly 8:57 it doesn't mean 8:55 or 09:00. This always surprised me. I never expect anything to start on time, but here in Japan one or two minutes have a meaning. Time is thought to be extremely important in Japan and that is why they are the most punctual people in the world, I believe.

What I am hoping

Now, I am doing the analysis of residual pesticides in coffee beans and currently sharing my knowledge acquired from Japan with my colleagues in our laboratory. Then, the new techniques and knowledge will be applied in the next step because currently we are doing only coffee sample analysis. Our next plan in the coming two months is to start analysis of sesame seeds, fruits and vegetables, so the new techniques will be directly applied for the analysis. I am looking forward to it, but for the time being I am doing my best to improve our technical levels.

My hope is to see our laboratory as a number 1 laboratory in terms of the number of samples and accuracy, and as a reference laboratory not just in Ethiopia, but in East Africa. I would like to make further efforts to carry out more precise and accurate analysis.

With regards,
Haymanot D.