

## The Mountain Spring That Kept People Alive Inaribayashi, Iriya District



▲ Welling up since ancient times at the foot of the mountains in the Iriya District, the clear water of Inaribayashi spring  
For about a month after the earthquake, three times the normal amount of water gushed out,  
supporting residents who were suffering due to the water outage.

Photo courtesy of Minamisanriku Tourism Association

Iriya District, an inland area, is blessed with spring water coming from deep in the mountains. In a village at the foot of Mt. Doji, one of these mountains, is a spring known as Inaribayashi. It has been maintained by people living in the village since times of old.

With the damage caused by the tsunami, water supply was cut off for a long time. It was not completely restored until August 2011. During the period without water supply, something mysterious happened at the Inaribayashi spring. The March 11th earthquake made the spring water well up in three times the usual amount. The villagers took this spring water to evacuation shelters and other places during the entire period. People living in houses on high ground, which were left untouched by the tsunami, also came to fetch water from this spring.

On the night of April 7th, when the water supply was almost restored thanks to the work of the Self-Defense Forces and others, a severe aftershock occurred. Triggered by this aftershock, the level of water flowing from Inaribayashi spring returned to its previous level, as if nothing had happened.

The life-giving water that saved the residents continues to well up quietly, even now.