

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the men, women and children of rural places world-wide, who contribute to, and strive to share in, the vitality of global prosperity and security.

Acknowledgements

The book is made possible by the foresight of the Institute for Rural Revitalization in the 21st Century (IRR21), reorganized as the Organization for Urban-Rural Interchange Revitalization (OUR), and the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF), which acting together organized funding and motivated social scientists in Japan and Canada to enter into comparative research on rural revitalization.

We thank the hundreds of rural people in Japan and in Canada who facilitated and patiently responded to a household survey, sharing their knowledge and perceptions with the researchers. The mayors, councils and municipal managers of Iitate, Awano, St Damase, Ste Françoise, Tweed and Usborne were instrumental in accommodating the research in their communities. Leaders in business and volunteer associations within these municipalities offered hours of advice and insight. Without you, this book would have been impossible.

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council both financed and legitimized this Canada-Japan (CJ) Project within the framework of the New Rural Economy (NRE) Project in Canada. In Japan, financial support was gratefully received from the Japan Racing Association and through the program for Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B) of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The Canadian Studies Development Program of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs also supported this project through the Embassy of Canada in Tokyo.

The research underlying this book would not have been possible without the collegial and administrative support and facilities provided by Concordia University in Montreal, the University of Tsukuba in Tsukuba, the Rural Development Institute of Brandon University in Brandon, and the Department of Rural Economy of the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

Professor Naraomi Imamura, Hiroshi Shibata, Teruo Hino, Mami Nagata and Professor Nobuhiro Tsuboi played key roles in this enterprise in Japan. Professors Bruno Jean, Bill Reimer and Peter Apedaile were dedicated supporters in Canada.

Finally, the editors and authors acknowledge the personal support from their families, and the university faculties and departments in both countries for the long days away from home and for understanding the challenges of interdisciplinary work.