

I have a special recipe I want to share with you all today. But only if you promise to tell everyone about it. I love eating white rice. Whenever I eat it, I feel happiness spread from my mouth through my body and out into the world. It's so special for me. I often eat organic rice grown by my friend's family. It's so delicious. But, it's even more delicious with a special ingredient.

That ingredient is Fukui's delicious, natural water. There is a famous natural water source in Echizen called 'Akadani.' Anyone can collect water there. My family uses it to cook white rice. I've been enjoying Akadani's fresh, delicious water since I was a baby. And many people have cherished its water for years before I was born. But now, Akadani's natural water is in danger.

Have you ever heard of 'forever chemicals'? These chemicals are found in many things we use every day. They are used in pots and pans, food wrappers, paint, clothing, and pesticides. They are called 'forever chemicals' because they take an incredibly long time to break down. In that time, these forever chemicals find their way into our water, our air, and into our bodies. We understand now that these chemicals hurt our health, leading to cancer or other serious illnesses.

Recently, my mother showed me a map of Japan. That map shows us the level of forever chemicals found in our rivers and underground water. My city, Echizen, was bright red. That means that our city is over the limit set by Japan's government. I was so shocked to see that. When we learned about this, my family began to feel worried about drinking Akadani's water.

We decided to keep drinking Akadani's water, but we started to think about how we can fix this problem. In Japan, we put over 400,000 tons of cooking oil down the sink every year. Just one liter of cooking oil can pollute over one million liters of water with dangerous chemicals like forever chemicals. People do this not because they don't care, but because they don't know about this fact.

After learning about forever chemicals, my brother decided to start studying about trash. We went to a beach in Tsuruga and in just ten minutes we picked up over one hundred pieces of trash from all over Japan and China. We took them home and learned there are many kinds of plastic trash with forever chemicals on our beaches. We threw that garbage away, but it will take many more people to make our beaches truly clean. Our mother also cleans our pots and pans with paper towel before washing them to stop oil from going down the sink. If we all work together in small ways like this, we can make a big difference.

Forever chemicals are a big problem, but it's an even bigger problem that people don't know about them. When I asked my classmates if they knew about forever chemicals, only one said that they knew about them. That student was my friend, who learned about forever chemicals from me. If even one person in this room changes their behavior after hearing about forever chemicals, then we have made a difference here. We can only fight forever chemicals when we know about them.

So everyone, do you remember our promise? Now you know about my special recipe and its two important ingredients. Fukui's white rice, and it's delicious, natural water. It's time to spread the message and protect this recipe so that we can enjoy it forever.

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Fukui's Delicious Water