

# Japanese Cultured Pearl Farming

## Bred for Quality

Early pearl cultivation depended entirely on wild oysters. Now pearl cultivation is more selective. Japanese scientists isolated strains of oysters possessing superior pearl bearing qualities. These selectively bred oysters produce pearls of



exceptional lustre and colour clarity.



## Enter the Nucleus

Highly skilled technicians open the live pearl oysters carefully, and then surgically implant a small polished shell bead and piece of mantle tissue in each. The shell bead serves as the nucleus around which the oyster secretes layer after layer of nacre, the crystalline substance that forms the pearl.

## Back to the Sea

The nucleated oysters are returned to the sea. There, in sheltered bays rich in natural nutrients, the oysters feed and grow, depositing lustrous layers of nacre around their nuclei. In winter, the oysters are moved south to warmer waters.



## Pearl Rafts

The nucleated oysters are suspended from rafts such as these in order to provide the best growing conditions. Pearl technicians check water temperatures and feeding conditions daily at various water depths and then move the oysters up or down to take advantage of the best growing

conditions.

## Pampered Oysters

Periodically, the pearl-bearing oysters are lifted from the sea for cleaning and health treatments. Seaweed, barnacles and other undersea growths that might impede feeding are removed from their shells. Then the shells are treated with medicinal compounds that discourage parasites from injuring the oysters.



## The Birth of a Pearl

At last, the oysters are ready for harvest. Those that have survived such perils of the sea as typhoons, suffocating red tides, and attacks from predators are brought ashore and opened. If

everything has gone well, the result is a lovely, lustrous and very valuable pearl.