In recent years, thanks to the development of the impression method, differences have been found between the plant evidence obtained by water-rinsing selection and the composition of materials found by earthenware impressions. In order to understand the flora surrounding the site, and the use of plants by its inhabitants, researchers are increasingly aware of the need to take into account impression materials as well as plant residues. We conducted impression research of Jomon ware excavated from the Shimo-yakebe site, and this paper examines the plants used in the site from earthenware impressions. We also conducted earthenware impression investigation for the same period Hinata-kita site, adjacent to the Shimo-yakebe site; the purpose was to compare the composition of the impression materials found at the two quite different site locations, one on a low swamp, and the other located on high ground, a short distance away.

In both sites, small-sized seeds were detected as impressions, rather than large-sized plant seeds detected as plant residues. Moreover, in the Shimo-yakebe site, impressions of the genus Glycine (soy beans) were confirmed for periods that had not yielded such plant residue evidence previously, and it was revealed that during the period from mid-middle to mid-late Jomon, legumes were continuously used. The Shimo-yakebe site and Hinata-kita site had no common materials; therefore, no significant association between the sites was noticed. In addition, in the Shimo-yakebe site, bean cotyledons of genus Glycine were found at the handle joint of an earthenware container with a spout, which suggested the possibility of an intentional mixture. The reason for such a mixture still requires more discussion; however, it can be said that the clarification of such special characteristics of impression materials has been achieved by the development of recent earthenware impression investigation.

The examination confirmed that in order to understand the actual state of plant use in an entire site, it is important to compare the materials obtained through several collection methods, and comprehensively assess plant use.

Key words: Impression replica method, Shimo-yakebe site, Jomon period, plant seeds, genus Glycine, adzuki type beans