Formation of Yamagata Prefecture

On January 20, 1869, the four domains of Satsuma, Choshu, Tosa, and Hizen submitted a petition to return all domains to the Imperial Court (*hanseki hokan*). This was subsequently certified on the 23rd. On June 29, the former lord of the Yamagata domain, Mizuno Tadahiro, returned power over the people and land of Yamagata to the Imperial Court (*hodo jimin hokan*). As a result, he was appointed governor of the Yamagata domain by the new government.

The first Yamagata Prefecture was established on September 28, 1870, one year before the abolition of the domain system (*haihan chiken*). The land included the area of the former Yamagata domain, and the former Mizuno Domain *Shin-goten* building of the *San no Maru* (third enclosure) of Yamagata Castle was used temporarily as the prefectural office.

The land of the current Yamagata Prefecture includes the area of six other domains; however, *haihan chiken* was established in the following July, and domain governors were subsequently dismissed from their posts.

In the November following *haihan chiken*, administrative districts were reorganized. In the Yamagata region, Okitama, Yamagata, and Sakata prefectures were established. Thus, the second Yamagata Prefecture was formed.

On August 21, 1876, Okitama Prefecture and Tsuruoka Prefecture (Sakata Prefecture had moved its prefectural office to Tsuruoka) were abolished and merged with Yamagata Prefecture, establishing the present Yamagata Prefecture (third iteration). The first governor of this Yamagata Prefecture was the previous governor of Tsuruoka Prefecture, Mishima Michitsune.