HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

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SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

Problems of Farmers in Hokkaido Agriculture

Chairman's Address
Taka-aki Ohtahara
(Hokkado University)

Overall agricultural production in Japan is in the phase of recession as a consequence of the trade liberalization of agricultural product and lowered government subsidies. Although, as an exception, the producton in Hokkaido has been increasing, several problems remain to be solved. Among these are the decrease in the number of sucessors of farmers and the shortage of part-timers which may become serious problems in the near future.

We intend to discuss these problems in this symposium. The first report by Mr. T. Nihei deals with statistical analysis of the Agricultural Census in 1990. The second report by Mr. F. Kurosawa reviews the so called "Hokkaido Agricultural Guide Post" prepared by Hokkaido Provincial Government. The third by Mr. Y. Tomita concerns with the production of vegetables in Hokkaido.

The commentators are Mr. M. Nagaki, Mr. O.Ichikawa and Mr. M. Nagao. Please do not limit your comments to matters concerning these three reports only. Broader views and active discussion by everyone are most welcome.

The Situation and Problem of Vegetable Production in Hokkaido under Shortage of Part-time Labor.

Yoshiaki Tomita
(Cooperative Institute of
Regional Agriculture in Hokkaido)

Vegetable production in Hokkaido is not only important in promoting local rural community but it also recceives attention by consumers of the whole country. However, many problems about production and marketing exist, for example, serious shortage of farmers and labor.

In this paper vegetable production and marketing methods in Hokkaido are studied. An analysis of the present situation to secure and save labor through labor saving machines.

The Changes on the Structure of Agriculture and the Present Situation of Family Farm in Hokkaido — Analysis based on 1990 Agriculture Census Data —

Tsuneo Nihei
(Hokkaido National Agricultual
Experiment Station)

This paper surveys and deals with the

outlook of the changes in the structure of agriculture and the present situation of family farm in Hokkaido.

In Hokkaido,farms used to be cultivated by full-time farmers. However since 1975 the number of part-time farmers and aged farmers has increased.Resulting in outflow of farmers and a gradual consequently and a disappearance of rural society. This phenomenon happens at an alarming rate.

Consequently extensive agriculture is now turning into intensive agriculture and many farmers are attempting at regional group farming.

Hokkaido Agricultual Guide Lines — To Create a New Agriculture —

Fujio Kurosawa
(Hokkaido Prefectural Central Agricultural Experiment Station)

Hokkaido Provincial Govornment planned to use the "Hokkaido Agricultual Guide Lines" to assist farmers in raising their income or reducing their production cost at the time when there is a shortage farmers and part-time workers and government subsidies decrease.

The Guide Lines recommends that the best way is to group small farms into large size one for effective use of labor and machines. Flowers and vegetables are introduced as a new main crop in many areas. The project team consisting of the Hokkaido government, cities, towns, villages, farmers, etc. were successful in some places in Hokkaido.

Contract Work for Sorting and Counting Vegetables by Transportation Companies in Hokkaido

Masami Izumiya
(Graduate Student, Hokkaido University)

The purpose of this paper is to identify reasons for the existence and the cause of problems of the contract work for sorting and counting vegetables by transportation companies.

The agricultural cooperatives encourage contract work due to shortage in labor at the sorting and counting facility. Transportation companies contract with them in order to secure agricultural products to transport.

Two points can be indicated from this study.

1) A standard cost of sorting and counting is decided in irrespective to the ability of payment by farmers.

2) Relationship of employment at the sorting and counting facility is subsumed under the laws of capitalism.

From this it can be said that the laws of capitalism infiltrate into farm-household. As this contracting relationship is based on labor at a minimum wage in rural society, it cannot be so strong.