

The Strategy for Expanding Export of Agricultural Products and Foods

Kunio Nishikawa

College of Agriculture, Ibaraki University, Japan

INTRODUCTION

The Japanese government promotes to expand export of agricultural products and foods as a way of enhancing international competitiveness of Japanese agriculture and the strategy of national economic growth. However, there are many difficulties in it because many countries set trade barriers to agricultural products and foods from Japan. Especially, after the government made the regulations stricter after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster on March 2011. And, it is pointed that promoting activities by Japanese government have been insufficient. On 25th November 2011, the study committee for the strategy of exporting agricultural, forest and marine products and foods established by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, published one report. In this term, we will summarize and translate it. If you would like to know the details, please look at the website as follows.

http://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/export/e_senryaku/pdf/teigen_honbun.pdf

This translation isn't the official publication by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

TRANSLATION

Toward Expanding Export of Agricultural, Forest and Marine Products and Foods (Summary)

25th November 2011

The Study Committee for the Strategy of Exporting Agricultural, Forest and Marine Products and Foods

INTRODUCTION

The domestic market for agricultural, forest and marine products and foods tends to shrink because of the aging society with fewer children. But, there are expanding and promising overseas markets. For the development of Japanese agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food

industries, it is necessary to bring in the world of economic growth, especially the Asian one, and to try to expand export. However, export of these products and foods made in Japan has decreased because of the recent appreciation of the Japanese yen and the nuclear disaster in March 2011. Based on these situations, and integrating national sectors with private ones, we have to reconstruct the strategy of export which includes various tasks, and to effort to achieve 1 trillion Japanese yen as export value. And, we have to review the time of the achievement, based on the effect of the nuclear disaster.

Strategy 1. Responding to the effect of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster

Because of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, many countries have enhanced import restrictions from Japan. Export from Japan have decreased due to harmful rumors. In recovering the trust to Japanese agricultural, forest and marine products and foods, it is basic to cope with persistently, timely and sincerely, and cooperate with the national government and stakeholders. We have to offer information about our efforts for securing safety, to approach foreign countries to deregulate and abolish import regulations, and to inform safety and at the same time promote the attractiveness of Japanese products and foods through holding of public relations events.

1. Offering information about safety to foreign countries and regions, and approaching to deregulate strongly.
2. Coping with import restrictions by foreign countries rapidly, for example, improvement of the publication system for certifications.
3. Clearing up harmful rumors at domestic and foreign, and holding timely public relations and promotion events for recovering export.

Strategy 2. Marketing activities as a national strategy

For competing foreign countries and expanding export more and more, it is necessary to construct the best marketing system as the Japan brand by items. In that case, we have to make the plan of the best practice which corresponds to the characters and situations in export destinations, and to do strategic promotions based on this plan. For expanding export, we have to support businessmen carefully through offering information and training human resources, corresponding to their experiences and situations. Furthermore, it is necessary to reinforce the support system by diplomatic and JETRO at export destinations¹, especially the function of JETRO on international business conferences and foods trade fairs. We have to construct the continuous support system based on the accumulation of the network and know-how at the actual spot.

1. Establishing the Japan brand, and improving the system of promoting export.

¹ JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization) is the sub-organ of Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, which supports Japanese companies to do businesses at overseas.

2. Promotions which make a point of the story of Japanese uniqueness.
3. Enhancing various support to exporters.
4. Strengthening the support system.

Strategy 3. Constructing the system which supports export as business

For rearing the export business of agricultural, forest and marine products and foods as a growth industry, we have to construct the scheme which promotes export, for example, establishment of the fund, and utilization of skills and know-how accumulated in the industrial world. Furthermore, under this scheme, we have to promote the construction of a new business model.

1. Constructing the support scheme for export, for example establishment of the fund.
2. Constructing the business model for expanding and advancing exports.

Strategy 4. Securing safety and quality, and responding to risks on trade practices appropriately

Based on the situation regarding the image of Japanese products, “safety, relief and high quality”, is shaken because of the effect of the nuclear disaster, it is necessary to get out of the past position which was satisfied with the myth of safety. We have to exert effort to secure safety and certain quality, and to recover the trust to Japanese products. And, we have to protect the image of the Japanese brand by promoting the protection of intellectual property. Furthermore, for trying to expand the chance of export, we have to exert efforts aggressively to review foreign restrictions and to improve the publication system of sanitary certifications on marine products.

1. Pursuing the global standard.
2. Preserving and improving the Japan brand.
3. Appropriate response to risks on trade practices.

Strategy 5. Informing the Japanese food culture at overseas

Variety and richness of the Japanese food culture are something that the Japanese people are proudest, and their great contents show the Japanese’s brilliant powers. For succeeding it to the next generation, we have to promote the Japanese food culture is registered as the Intangible Cultural Heritage². Furthermore, for expanding export of Japanese products and foods, we not

² The Japanese Foods (“*Washoku*”) was registered the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO, on 4th December 2013.

only just have to sell products and commodities, but also to inform and spread its contents, that is, original food culture reared under the tradition and the natural and cultural environment. And, it is important to get attention to the food culture and the food material, and increase consumption and purchase overseas. In order to achieve this, we have to promote multiple efforts, for example, informing the attractiveness of the Japanese food culture, and training foreign human resources who can understand and support them. Before informing them, it is important to make the foundation, for example, deepening understanding about the attractiveness of the Japanese food culture in Japan.

1. Registering the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
2. Cooperating with other fields and industries, for example, tourism.
3. Strengthening the function of informing culture.
4. Training the world class human resources.

CONCLUSION

These strategy should be practiced as soon as possible to expand exports and to forecast the future of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food industries. We expect that the government and stakeholders efforts will rapidly and continuously pay off.

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