

Transfer of Farmland Rights after Retirement (Part 2)

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2. Intermediate and conservation organization for farmlands

There are opinions regarding the problems of farmers and farmlands which experts say would be easily resolved if there were a reliable coordinator who would mediate for farmlands. The Intermediated and Conservation Organization for Farmlands (ICOF) therefore, has been established in each prefecture since 2014.

The basic role of ICOF is to borrow farmlands from farmers who are going to retire and to lend them to leading farmers. The main operations of ICOF are as follows.

- ICOF borrows farmlands, including abandoned ones, in the case that the uses of farmlands in a region are disorganized and need to be coordinated.
- ICOF makes land improvement, if necessary, and lend them to leading farmers (agricultural corporations, large family farms, group farms, and enterprizes) in such a way that they can use them efficiently.
- ICOF conserves farmlands until other farmers who want to borrow are found.
- ICOF can outsource part of their jobs to municipal offices. ICOF and related organizations should work together in solving problems of farmlands such as coordination of farmland uses in a community or reuse of abandoned farmlands.

When aging farmers are going to retire, they can lend their farmlands to ICOF. The farmlands are transferred to young farmers through ICOF in consideration of farmland gathering and consolidation in a region. Even if it is difficult for farmers to find others of their kind who borrow their farmlands, the farmlands will not be abandoned since ICOF borrows them and finds a tenant for them.

It would be most desirable if farmers in a region agreed in a discussion for LPFF (The Local Plan of Farmers and Farmlands) and lent their farmlands to ICOF in a group. In doing so, the uses of farmland in a community could be reorganized and the efficiency of farmland uses would be increased. For this purpose, it is important to review LPFF regularly and continuously, at least once a year.

(To be continued)

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