

Promotion of the Local Consumption of Local Products

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INTRODUCTION

Japanese food self-sufficiency ratio on a calorie basis is 39% in FY2012. This value is one of the lowest figures recorded for developed countries. This situation is caused from the increase in import agricultural commodities corresponding to the change of food consumption, and from the weakening of domestic agricultural production.

The Local Consumption of Local Products (LCLP) is the movement practiced by the co-operation which local farmers, local consumers and local dealers build. This movement emerged spontaneously in rural areas, but is currently being promoted by the Japanese government.

In this article, I will introduce the main points of the LCLP in Japan and of the Japanese policy for promoting. I will summarize the document¹ by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and translate it into English. Finally, I will make a brief comment as conclusion.

WHAT IS THE LOCAL CONSUMPTION OF LOCAL PRODUCTS?

The LCLP is the work² that people call the Local Agricultural, Forest and Aquatic Products (LAFAP) in the local areas. This work links not only to the rise in the food self-sufficient ratio, but also to the sixth industry promotion³ for agriculture, forestry and fisheries. We can show, as examples of the LCLP, the direct marketing of the LAFAP in direct sale stores, the development of processing products made of the LAFAP, the utilization of the LAFAP at the

¹ You should refer following the MAFF's website.
(http://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/gizyutu/tisan_tisyo/pdf/chisan26_8.pdf)

² The MAFF doesn't explain the LCLP as the movement.

³ The MAFF explained "sixth industry" as follows. "The term 'sixth industry' is derived by multiplying the industrial sectors as follows. First (primary) × second (secondary) × third (tertiary) to come up with the 'sixth industry'. The sixth industry is expected to synergistically create new added-value through effective use of agricultural, forestry and fishery products, as well as land, water and other resources in farming, mountain and fishing villages, by integrating production, processing and distribution activities." You should refer the MAFF's annual report on FY2011, p.17.

(http://www.maff.go.jp/j/wpaper/w_maff/h23/pdf/e_all.pdf)

school and company lunch, the exchange and experience activities with local consumers, and so on.

We can show examples of effect as follows. First, the bond between producers and consumers will be strengthened. Consumers can certify the situation of producing in “the face to face relationship” and consume fresh products. Producers can produce products in response to consumer needs. The exchange between consumers and producers contribute to the promotion of *Shokuiku* (food education) and link to the succession of traditional local food cultures. Second, The LCLP can vitalize the local society. The partnership between producers and travel agents expands the consumption of the LAFAP. Furthermore, the LCLP can make opportunities for getting income. Third, it can reduce the distribution cost. Reducing it, take-home for producers can be secured. And, because it shortens the distance for transportation, it also can contribute to the settlement for the global warming.

THE SITUATION OF THE LCLP

The Act on the Sixth Industry Promotion and the Local Consumption of Local Products⁴ enacted on 2010 stipulates that the national government has to enact the basic principle concerning the LCLP, and that prefectural governments and municipality bureaus also have to enact the promotion plan for utilizing the LAFAP. 70% of prefectural governments and 30% of municipality bureaus have already enacted or have plans to enact the LAFAP at the end of September 2013.

Direct sale stores where producers sell the LAFAP to consumers directly exceed about 23,000 and annual sales amount reaches about 840 billion Japanese yen in FY2012. The utilization ratio of the LAFAP to the school lunch is about 25% in FY2012. The annual amount of guests who accommodate at farmer’s hotels for green tourism is about 9.03 million yen in FY2012.

Direct sale stores which wish to increase the transaction of the LAFAP occupy 60% of all direct sale stores in FY2009. We can clarify, as tasks which direct sales stores should solve, securing the number and amount of items, securing buyers, securing participant farmers and so on. Many consumers are attracted to the LCLP because of its freshness, the sense of safety, tastiness, feeling close to producers, cheapness and so on.

The amendment of the School Lunch Act on 2008 stipulated the efforts to utilize the LAFAP in the school lunch. The 2nd Basic Plan for *Shokuiku* Promotion enacted on 2011, based on the Basic Act on *Shokuiku*, stipulated the objective which the utilization ratio of the LAFAP to the school lunch would raise above 30% until FY2015 (25.1% in FY2012). The amendment of the basic plan on 2013 added further objective which the utilization ratio of the domestically produced agricultural, forest and aquatic products to the school lunch would raise above 80%. The utilization of the LAFAP on school lunches has meanings that students can understand the local nature, the food culture and the local industry feeling reality, that students can understand

⁴ This is a tentative translation because MAFF hasn’t announced official translation yet.

efforts by people who are engaged in producing and distributing foods. This is something that students acquire – an understanding of the food chain.

POLICY MEASURES FOR SUPPORTING THE LCLP

Japanese government takes measures as follows for supporting the LCLP.

- The payment for the network activity on the sixth industry promotion (an included number of 2.131 billion Japanese yen)
- This payment is paid for the network activity within local areas, for example, holding promotion meetings, project surveys, building processing equipment and so on.
- The project for supporting the network activity on the six industry promotion (an included number of 224 million Japanese yen)
- This payment is paid for the network activity beyond prefectural borders, for example, holding promotion meetings, project surveys, building processing equipment and so on.
- The project for rediscovering attractions and promoting the utilization of Japanese foods (an included number of 1.518 billion Japanese yen)
- This payment supports the utilization of the LAFAP on school lunches.
- The award for the superior activity of the LCLP
- The contest for the LCLP menu of school lunches
- The newsletter of the LCLP

CONCLUSION

While the LCLP is the movement which has emerged spontaneously in local areas, Japanese government is promoting its progress now. It is noticeable that this movement will spread more and more and contribute to the sustainability of Japanese agriculture.

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