

Summary of Farmland Consolidation into *Ninaite*

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INTRODUCTION

Consolidation of farmlands into *Ninaite*¹ is important challenge for Japanese agriculture, because it can contribute to the improvement of competitiveness of Japanese agriculture in the international market. The Japanese government now promotes farmland consolidation through various policy reforms. For example, there is the amendment of the Agricultural Land Act and the establishment of the Organization for Temporary Farmland Management (OTFM)². The Japanese government sets the target of raising the ratio of farmland consolidation into *Ninaite* from 49.1% on FY 2010³ to 80% on FY 2020⁴.

In this article, I will translate the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)'s brief documents in order to review recent farmland consolidation into *Ninaite*⁵. This translation isn't the official publication by the MAFF. I did not translate parts of tables and figures to avoid duplication.

¹ *Ninaite* is a farmer who not only manages large-scale farm units efficiently but also maintains regional society by receiving extra farmlands at the cost of efficiency. By the FY2010 annual report, the MAFF had expressed this terminology as “Principal Farmer”. In the FY2013 report, however, it expresses as “Business Farmer” because it focuses on the former aspect of *Ninaite*.

² If you are interested in it, refer to my previous article on the FFTC-AP website.

http://ap.fftc.agnet.org/ap_db.php?id=374

³ The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2014), 10.

⁴ The Vitality Creation Headquarters of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Region (2013), if you wish to read it in English, refer to Dr. Sakuyama's article on FFTC-AP website.

http://ap.fftc.agnet.org/ap_db.php?id=295

⁵ This translation is based on below PDF materials on the MAFF's website.

<http://www.maff.go.jp/j/keiei/koukai/pdf/sutokku.pdf>

<http://www.maff.go.jp/j/keiei/koukai/pdf/furoh.pdf>

TRANSLATION

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- The farmland area consolidated into *Ninaite* has increased gradually because of the establishment of the Certified Farmer Scheme on 1993 and “the Super L Fund” limited to certified farmers on 1994. Furthermore, until FY2009, it had continued to increase because of introduction of “the Program to Stabilize Farmer’s Income” on 2007 limited to certified farmers.
- However, after “the Income Support Direct Payment Program for Farmers” was introduced in 2010, the number of certified farmers started to decrease and the farmland area consolidated into *Ninaite* stopped increasing. This figure is now 2.2million ha on March 2014.
- After the change in government, the Liberal Democratic Party reviewed the above policies and established “the Act for Stabilizing *Ninaite* Management⁶” on the 2014 National Diet. As this law will introduce “the Scheme for Stabilizing Farmer’s Management” limited to certified farmers after 2015, we can expect that the number of certified farmers will increase. Furthermore, we can expect an acceleration in the speed of the farmland consolidation because of the OTFM which was established on 2014.
- It recently featured the area of farmlands owned or contracted farm operations which have decreased while rented farmlands have increased. This trend is caused by the change of the contract type from farm operations to rented lands which was affected by the additional payment for scale expansion, and by the reduction of owned farmlands which certified farmers cultivated.
- In 2012, the amount of transfers on farmland right was 105,000 ha. This dropped by 1,000 ha from 2011, but still rose compared to the 2009 figure.
- The area of the land-use right (the component of net increase) was 74,000 ha and dropped 1,000 ha. However, comparing with 2010, it rose by 10% due to the additional payment for scale expansion introduced in 2011. We can explain the increase in the transfer of owned farmland by focusing on the transfer of the property right after the elimination of land-use right in Hokkaido.

Reference

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (2014) *FY 2013 Annual Report on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas in Japan (Summary)*.

The Vitality Creation Headquarters of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Region (2013) *Vitality Creation Plan of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Region* (in Japanese).

⁶ This is not a MAFF’s official translation but a tentative one. MAFF hasn’t published its official translation yet.

Table 1. Trend in farmland consolidation into *Ninaite*

		(million ha, thousand entities)										
		Mar-1996	Mar-2001	Mar-2006	Mar-2007	Mar-2008	Mar-2009	Mar-2010	Mar-2011	Mar-2012	Mar-2013	Mar-2014
<i>Ninaite</i>		86.3	134.3	180.6	197.6	209.5	215.1	221.1	220.7	218.5	222.0	220.8
	Certified Farmer	46.0	99.9	157.1	174.0	182.9	188.5	195.5	195.3	195.6	195.6	198.6
	Equivalent to Certified Farmer	40.3	34.5	17.5	11.8	11.1	9.9	9.7	10.0	7.3	11.0	8.8
	Community Based Farming			6.0	11.8	15.5	16.8	15.9	15.5	15.6	15.4	13.5
	Owned Farmland Total	65.7	91.8	112.8	116.9	120.5	120.8	124.6	121.7	118.8	119.6	117.1
	Certified Farmer	31.5	63.8	99.4	108.3	112.8	113.9	117.8	115.0	113.9	112.7	111.4
	Equivalent to Certified Farmer	34.1	27.9	13.3	8.6	7.7	6.9	6.8	6.7	4.9	6.8	5.7
	Rented Farmland	15.4	30.2	47.1	54.0	59.9	63.3	66.2	68.7	69.7	75.5	79.1
	Certified Farmer	10.0	24.5	43.6	51.3	56.9	60.9	63.7	66.0	67.8	72.2	76.7
	Equivalent to Certified Farmer	5.4	5.7	3.5	2.6	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.7	1.9	3.3	2.3
	Farm Operation Contract	5.2	12.4	20.7	26.6	29.1	31.0	30.3	30.3	30.0	26.9	24.7
	Certified Farmer	4.4	11.5	14.1	14.3	13.2	13.7	14.0	14.3	14.0	10.6	10.5
	Equivalent to Certified Farmer	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7
	Community Based Farming			6.0	11.8	15.5	16.8	15.9	15.5	15.6	15.4	13.5
	The Ratio of Farmland Consolidation into <i>Ninaite</i>	17.1%	27.8%	38.5%	42.3%	45.1%	46.5%	48.0%	48.1%	47.9%	48.8%	48.7%
	The number of Certified Farmer	68.8	149.9	200.8	228.6	239.3	246.1	249.4	246.5	237.5	233.4	

Source: MAFF "Survey on Community-based Farm Cooperatives", Surveys by Management Improvement Policy Planning Division and Agricultural Land Policy Planning Division in Management Improvement Bureau.

Figure. Trend in *Ninaite's* share of farmland (stock)

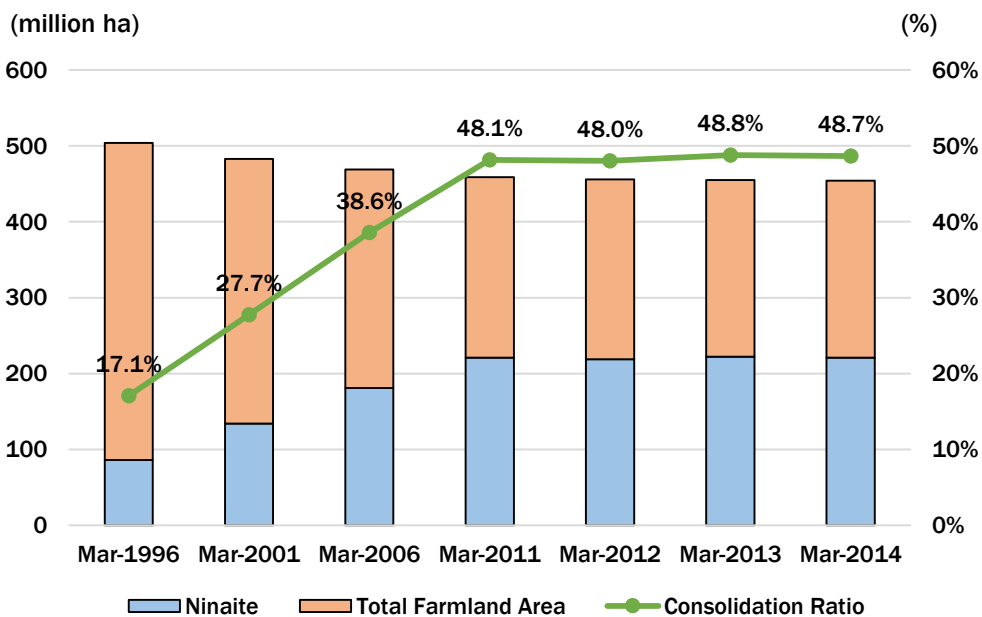


Table 2. Trend in transfer of farmland right (flow)

	(10 thousand ha)			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total	9.3	9.3	10.6	10.5
Transfer of Land-use Right (Net Increase)	6.2	6.5	7.8	7.4
Transfer of Property Right	3.2	2.8	2.8	3.1

Source: Survey by Agricultural Land Policy Planning Division in Management Improvement Bureau, MAFF

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