

제3발표논문(영어본)

Japanese Organic Standards and the Private Effort to Build Domestic Structure to Strengthen Organic and Environment-friendly Agriculture

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ABSTRACT

First, I'd like to express my great respect to the highly developed environment-friendly and organic agriculture in South Korea, especially in this region of Yangpyong. I've heard that rural farmers and city people cooperated together to develop the environment-friendly agriculture in Yangpyong. I believe Japanese farmers and people can learn a lot from the experience of your people. We'd like to exchange our knowledge and experience to develop environment-friendly and organic agriculture in both countries, for we share a lot in common.

In this paper, I'd like to introduce how the Japanese have been developing organic and environment-friendly agriculture, and how we are working with the official organic standard and building the social structure to encourage the overall development of organic and environment-friendly agriculture.

I. Background "Organic" in Japan from 1960s

After the World War II, Japan aimed to recover itself by rapidly developing the strong economic. To encourage workers to come to the cities to support the growing industries and to make large farming population the consumers of mass production of

industries, the modernization and industrialization of the agriculture sector was rapidly enforced under the new Agricultural Basic Law of 1961. The authorities told farmers to depend on new machines, new chemicals, and new technologies to produce more “food commodities” with less labor.

By 1970s, Japanese farms became most polluted by pesticides and chemical fertilizer. Farmers became sick and many died because of the pesticide pollution on farm. Some doctors and academics noticed those sickness was caused by the “chemical farming”. At the same time, public pollution became serious social problems in Japan in early 1970s, with the outbreak of severe pollution disaster like Minamata, Yokkaichi asthma, Itai-itai byo, etc. Socially aware farmers, doctors, and academics, gathered and found the Japan Organic Agriculture Association(JOAA) in 1971.

Organic farmers in those days did not go into the mainstream of crops and vegetable marketing system. Instead, organic farmers found groups of consumers who are concerned in food safety. Farmers and consumers, mainly led by JOAA, made the direct producer-consumer relationship called “Teikei system”. Farmers and consumers discussed together how their food should be produced, and the quality of products was guaranteed by their personal trust. With such relationship, no official label or certification was required. Boxes of organic crops and vegetables were delivered from farmers to consumer groups, and the consumers divided the harvest equally among themselves.

It became a big movement especially the novel “Multi-combined pollution” by Sawako Ariyoshi, alarmed chemical pollution on farm and in food, and suggested organic food as one of the solution. Then, several distribution agencies specialized on organic rice and vegetables were formed like “Daichi wo mamoru kai(Association to protect the Earth)”, “Japan Agriculture Community” and “Polan”.

Women and housewives were the main consumers of Teikei movement. But as more women began to work outside and families became separated from local communities in 1980s, buying the organic crops in groups became inconvenient for some people. In 1988, “Radish Bo-ya” began the home delivery service so that individual consumer can have a box of organic food delivered at night at their door step. Daichi-wo-mamoru kai and other groups also followed the suite.

At the beginning of 1990s, this kind of member-supported organic distribution agencies kept about 80% of organic crops and vegetables market in Japan. This kind of “closed” market without any official regulation or labels, faced changes as the general

public began to seek organic products and ordinary food manufacturers and supermarkets began to deal with organic.

Huge confusion occurred as the general public who knew little about "What organic means" began to handle organic products. To clear this confusion, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery(MAFF) published the guidelines for labelling organic and less/none chemical vegetables. Some certification agencies were established privately and began certifying organic products based on their own standards. But more "fake organic" products were sold and consumers were puzzled with wide variety of standards.

Therefore, the Japanese government established the legal system on organic certification by revising already-established Japan Agricultural Standards system in 1999. After some adjusting period, the official Organic certification system became fully effective since April 2001.

II. JAS - official organic standard

The Japan Agricultural Standards Organic Certification system, the first official organic certification system in Japan, became fully effective in April 2001. It applies only on agricultural products and agricultural products processed foods for now. About seven hundreds producers and manufacturers have been certified "JAS Organic" and the general public began to find the JAS Organic logo in their near-by supermarkets. Still, there is lots of misinformation inside and outside of Japan, and the system itself still remains full of "gray area" which is left for each certifier to decide what to do.

"Standards and Labelling Based on the Law Concerning Standardization and Proper Labelling of Agricultural and Forestry Products(the JAS Law)" was originally established in 1950, and has controlled the standards and labelling of variety of general food products.

The revised JAS Law made it mandatory to have the third party certification from the Registered Certification Organizations(RCOs) to label any agricultural products and processed food "Organic". The MAFF accredited 46 agencies as RCO by June 8th, 2001. The total of 673 organizations/people in Japan, and 71 overseas, are certified under the JAS Organic certification system by June 1st, 2001.

Official information on JAS Organic certification is published in English on MAFF

website.

http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_top.htm

Japanese Agricultural Standard of Organic Agricultural Products

http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_59.pdf

Japanese Agricultural Standard of Organic Agricultural Product Processed Foods

http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_60.pdf

Q & A on Inspection and Certification System of Organic Foods

http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_qa.pdf

III. How to export JAS Organic food to Japan

MAFF says there are three ways to export organic food to Japan.

- 1) Obtain organic certification from Registered Foreign Certification Organization.
Overseas certification agency can apply MAFF for Registered Foreign Certification Organization. Two Australian certification agencies were accredited as Registered Foreign Certification Organizations(Some Japanese subsidiaries of overseas certification agencies, like ICS, QAI and OCIA, are registered as Japanese Registered Certification Organization).
- 2) Via Certified Importer : The equivalency with JAS system(including the standard of organic agricultural products, etc.) is necessary for the export country's grading system. MAFF published the notice in March 2001 which gives the equivalency with JAS system to 16 countries ; Ireland, UK, Italy, Australia, Austria, Netherlands, Greece, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Belgium, Portugal, Luxembourg. The producers and processors may export their organic agricultural products and processed foods with the certification from the established certification agencies in these countries AND the official documents from their government.
- 3) Japanese RCO certifies Foreign producers and manufacturer in export country, based on the inspection data from the contracted certification agency or from their own contracted inspectors in the export country.

The detail can be found at the MAFF website :

How to export organic foods to Japan

[http : //www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_how.pdf](http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/organic/eng_yuki_how.pdf)

However, certification agencies and exporters/importers face lots of “gray area” in the system. It is advised to contact RCOs to discuss on each case. About nine RCOs out of 51 are registered to handle overseas certification and AFAS Certification Center is one of them.

IV. Developing the supplementary standards to encourage the organic and environment-friendly agriculture

The JAS Organic certification standard is to be reviewed within five years. Thus some adjustments are expected to be made after the first five years.

Organic certification on food other than Agricultural Products and Agricultural Product Processed Foods are coming effective in near future. Organic certification on livestock is expected to be introduced in Japan in a year or two, following the CODEX statements on livestock products. Organic certification on alcohol is already followed JAS by the statement from the Ministry of Finance in March 2001.

Certification will be required on less or none chemically grown crops and food in near future as well. These products, called “Tokubetu-saibai(specially grown)” crops and food is expected to become more popular than organic in Japan, because many believe organic agriculture and livestock is difficult in Japan.

However, the JAS structure is for labelling organic products. It does not automatically encourage farmers to go organic. On the contrary, the certification process requires lots of knowledge, effort, work time and cost. JAS standards are also said to unsuitable to Japanese climate and farming environment. Thus, other supplementary structure is required to encourage more farmers go organic and aim for more environment-friendly society.

To achieve this purpose, organic groups and environmentally aware organizations are taking action. The establishment of IFOAM Japan and building the exhibition standards for Bio Fach Japan, introducing ISO14001 to agriculture and food industry are examples of such movement.

V. Establish IFOAM Japan, to strengthen organic agriculture in Japan

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements(IFOAM), founded in 1972, is the worldwide umbrella organization of the organic agriculture movement, with about 740 member organisations and institutions in 103 countries all over the world. Several Japanese organizations have been active as IFOAM members and associates. There has also been some network or liaison organization among Japanese IFOAM members.

In order to boost up the organic agriculture, and to present opinions of farmers, venders, and certifiers from private field to Japanese government, and to the world, several IFOAM members in Japan came together and established a formal organization of "IFOAM Japan". IFOAM Japan is a regional organization of IFOAM world, and filed the application to be the legal body of non-profit organization under the Japanese law.

IFOAM Japan aims to promote the primary industry centering on organic agriculture both domestically and internationally, through its collaboration with other organizations and its participation in a variety of organic agriculture movements worldwide. The organization aims to bear the leadership in and around Japan to help enhance organic agriculture movements worldwide. The organization also seeks to restore the qualities of soil, water, and crops, which have been contaminated by synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers. This can be pursued by educating consumers, producers, processors and distributors, and supporting various efforts in the fields of organic agriculture and other sustainable and resource-cycle farming which aim to gradually convert to organic agriculture. Through such activities, the organization strives to make its contribution in the restoration of the living environments as well as the maintenance of the natural environment in which all things can cohabit.

By gathering forces under IFOAM Japan, we aim to present Japanese voice and Asian voice to the development of the global standards and structures. IFOAM Japan, for example, is working to comment on IFOAM's Basic Standard, the standard which holds a strong influence on CODEX and other global standards.

VI. Forming standards on various stages towards Organic

Another movement to develop the privately developed structure of organic and

environment-friendly agriculture is taken by developing the exhibition standard for Bio Fach Japan.

“Bio Fach” is the world's leading organic trade fair organized by NürnbergMesse GmbH in Germany. It has held one of the biggest organic trade fair in Germany, and is planning to hold Bio Fach Japan in coming December, 2001, for the first time in Asia region.

All the exhibitors and their products are strictly checked if they meet the organic and other standards, to participate the Bio Fach fair.

Bio Fach Japan had to develop its own exhibition standards because the official JAS organic standards covers only the limited field of products(does not include livestock, fish, forestry products, textile, cosmetics, etc.), and also because the number of “officially certified products” are very limited in Japan.

Therefore, IFOAM Japan and its members actively participated on the development of Bio Fach Japan exhibition.

The exhibition standard for the Bio Fach Japan 2001

Conventional farming	Specially grown farming (Less/non chemical)	Environmental & Recycling (Less/non chemical)	Environmental & Recycling farming +	JAS Organic	Organic+
		Has continuously improving program	Certified by a third party, and the lacking points to JAS is stated	Certified as JAS Organic	IFOAM standard, ISO14001
Allowed to exhibit at Bio Fach Japan					

This standard structure consists of “step by step development” and encourages farmers and society to aim “one step better” from their present situation. The Bio Fach Japan exhibition standard also includes “specially grown farmers who has the continuously improving structure” such as ISO14001 or other management system. Those farmers and producers who do not aim for improvement are not allowed.

The standards committee of Bio Fach Japan and IFOAM Japan is going to review this standard every year, and hope to present the privately-developed standard structure for organic and sustainable agriculture in Japan.

VII. AFAS-SEQ system : ISO 14001 on agriculture production

Agriculture and Foods Audit System Co. Ltd. and its sister company, AFAS Certification Center Co. Ltd. are also developing another structure to encourage farmers and society to go organic and environment-friendly agriculture.

Just following JAS organic standard does not contribute to the environment, although “organic movement” originally aims to tune with the Nature and contribute to the surrounding ecology. At the same time, majority of Japanese farmers believe JAS organic standard is difficult to reach in Japan because it is based on European farming practice and Japanese climate is humid, full of pests and mold, etc. Thus, some supporting system is needed to improve and encourage organic and decrease the damage on environment.

AFAS-SEQ system is established on that purpose. It applies the principles and technique of ISO14001 in agriculture to establish the system of continuous improvement by Plan-Do-Check-Action.

“SEQ” stands for “Safety, Environment and Quality”. On Safety, AFAS-SEQ system requires some method to check the safety of products, for example, checking the pesticide residue in soil, crops, and/or water. On Environment, AFAS-SEQ system requires producers to consider their eco cost and to establish the system to gradually improve their production practice in term of environment. On Quality aspect, AFAS-SEQ system requires producers to establish the quality structure, like JAS in case of organic production.

By introducing AFAS-SEQ system, it is possible that :

- 1) Producers can set-up their own standard on organic or less/none chemical production and set the aim to continuously improve the method. In this way, less/none chemical farmers and food manufacturers can first obtain certification of "Specially-grown" agriculture products based on their own standards, then improve their production practice to achieve JAS organic certification.
- 2) Anybody, even the heavily chemicalised, industrial farmers and food manufacturers, can begin their steps of improvement towards organic and sustainable agriculture in this system.
- 3) Organic producers who are certified by JAS, can improve their farming and production process to more sustainable and less environmentally damaging practice.
- 4) Since it is based on ISO documents, it will be easier to achieve ISO14001, ISO9001, HACCP and other international certification.

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