

Discussion: Toward a Realization of Food Security from a Viewpoint of Agricultural Multifunctionality: Viewpoints and Issues

Hideki Hagiwara¹

1. Introduction

Concerning food security, policies that increase domestic food production are emphasized because food produced within the scope of Japanese sovereignty will be supplied to the people in Japan. However, since it is not possible to produce and supply all food demanded by people in Japan, it is necessary to depend on imported food. Therefore, the situation of both domestic food production and imported foods should be taken into account when examining the ideal way of food security towards building a sustainable society in 2040.

Consequently, the main factors that may affect domestic food production as well as the world food supply and demand must be analyzed as Japan depends on imported food. It is vital to place high importance on the quantity of food due to the fact that the food is stably supplied to people as the food is consumed every day. However, it is necessary to take a broader view of the subject and take up the new concept of multidimensional values of food, agriculture, and rural areas in consideration of not only the safety but also the concept of food quality so that they can contribute to a sustainable society in order to examine the ideal path to food security towards the construction of a sustainable society in 2040.

Firstly, the world food supply and demand as well as domestic food production that may affect food security will be examined. Secondly, the relationship between multidimensional values and food security will be examined particularly from an international and national perspective. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s view of food security as an international perspective and Japan's view of food security as a national perspective will be examined. Thirdly, the relationship between trade disciplines based on the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)/Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and food security, which are thought to affect Japan's food security, will be organized. Lastly, my

ideas on sustainable food security in Japan will be presented.

2. Environment Surrounding Japan's Food Security

1) Major factors that may affect the world food supply and demand

First, the impact of the increasing world population needs to be taken into account. Second, the impact on food production due to the progress of global warming needs to be considered. Third, the impact of rising incomes in emerging countries such as China needs to be factored in. Fourth, the effect of food exporters being allowed to temporarily impose export restrictions or bans to meet domestic demand in case of an unforeseen event in their own countries needs to be taken into account.

2) Main factors that may affect domestic food production

First, the impact of the progress of EPA / FTA needs to be evaluated. Second, the influence of food security awareness needs to be taken into account. Third, the influence of the actual state of domestic food production needs to be considered.

3. Multidimensional Values and the FAO's and Japan's Food Security Concept

1) Multifunctionality and food security

The limited food supply should be addressed, including methods of dealing with production, distribution, and consumption in a sustainable and stable manner so that the environmental burden is minimized.

2) Multidimensional values and the FAO's approach to food security

The FAO shows the idea that food security can be achieved when food is available at any time. The concept of multidimensional values may not be included in the definition of food security by the FAO.

¹Cabinet Office
hideki.hagiwara.y7p@cao.go.jp

3) Multidimensional values and the concept of food security in Japan

Regarding the concept of food security in Japan, it is provided in a broad sense in the Basic Law itself.

4. Trade Discipline and Food Security

In order to ensure food security, Japan is engaged in (1) grasping the situation regarding food security, (2) ensuring / improving the stable supply of food during normal times, and (3) responding to unforeseen circumstances.

1) WTO

The term food security itself is used in public stockholding for food security purposes. In addition, payments under environmental programmes and payments under regional assistance programmes are considered to be related to the multidimensional values in food security.

2) EPA / FTA

The EPA / FTA does not require disciplines for domestic support unlike the WTO. Therefore, Japan is taking measures for food security that can be reflected in the EPA / FTA agreement.

3) Food sovereignty and the right to food

As the WTO and EPA / FTA negotiations are aimed at promoting free trade, and it is highly unlikely that the ideas of food sovereignty and the right to food will be accepted. Despite the above situation, in case that it is beneficial for the construction of a sustainable society, it is necessary to attach greater importance to food security than to promote free trade.

5. The Ideal Path to Sustainable Food Security in Japan

1) Domestic agricultural production

It is necessary to thoroughly implement production, distribution, and consumption efforts so that the burden on the environment is as low as possible. It is necessary for the people concerned to understand and cooperate in order to proceed with such efforts. For example, in the case of producers, they may face a decrease in yield and in the case of consumers, they may face a rise in prices. However, both sides should accept those differences.

2) Imports

As a response based on a qualitative perspective, for example, it is important to provide consumers with information such as food production and transportation processes to

demonstrate whether the burden of the environments is as low as possible by using the ITC. It is necessary to increase the number of consumers who choose foods that have the least impact on the environment in order for these efforts to succeed.

3) Stockholdings

As for the food stockholdings, the WTO agreement basically requires purchasing and selling according to the market price. However, India has been insisting on purchasing food as a stockholding at a price higher than the market price as a measure for the poor from the viewpoint of food security, even though such measures are not in conformity with commitments covered by the reduction of domestic support under the WTO agreement. This is an argument under the issue of whether trade-distorting policies or food security policies are more important. The claim of India can be evaluated in terms of building a sustainable society, because India recognizes the importance of the value of food security.

6. Conclusion

It is required that food security be achieved by recognizing its importance during ordinary situations with good preparation. It is not appropriate to recognize its importance in the event of an unforeseen situation. Building food value chains domestically and internationally is thought to be due to the efforts of many stakeholders, as there is a situation in Japan where people can easily get the food they want when they want it. However, it is undeniable that Japan's food security may be affected by current situations such as the global supply and demand for food due to the increase in the world population and the progress of global warming, as well as the actual situations of Japan's domestic agricultural production. Therefore, an analysis of the ideal of food security within a sustainable society in 2040 was conducted, based on the concept of multidimensional values.

As a result, it is concluded that domestic agricultural production, distribution and consumption for food should be done in such a way as to minimize the impact on the environment. If many Japanese people act entirely in sympathy with this idea and recognize it as a global problem, food security will become more sustainable and contribute to building a sustainable society.