

May 2006

Japan Family Farmers Movement, *NOUMINREN*

Draft Declaration of Food Sovereignty for the Japanese Farmers and Consumers

Change of the policies that drive food and agriculture in Japan and the world into a corner

Since WTO Agreement of Agriculture (AoA) was appeared, it has been 11 years. In this period, the Japanese farmers and consumers have faced on the increase of import of agricultural products, sharp fall the prices and a massive reduction of rice acreage that have never experienced. Great anxiety among people has widely spread toward food safety caused by flooding imported food poisoned by post harvest agricultural chemicals and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Fig1).

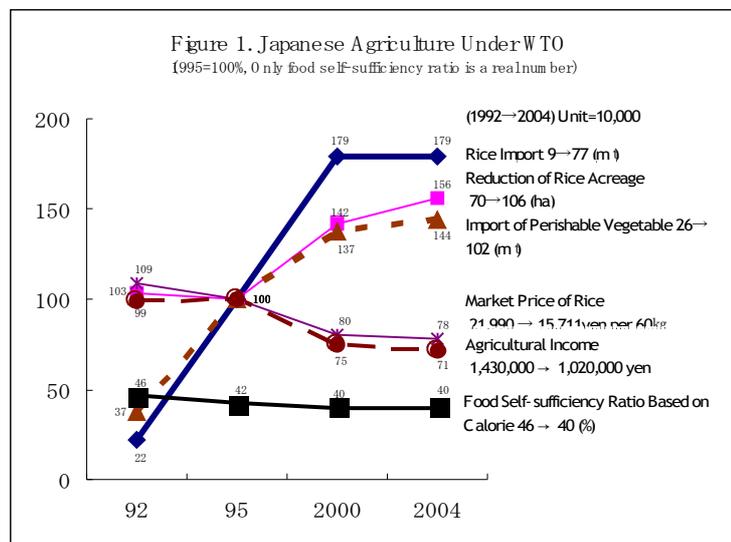
Nevertheless, Prime Minister Koizumi irresponsibly says, "Japan cannot continue on the 'national isolation in agricultural markets' anymore (Oct. 2003)."

Soon after, he pulled the trigger with targeting at domestic agriculture under the name of Structural Reform in Agriculture. "Council of Food, Agriculture and Rural Area Policies" of the government made a decision to publish the policy called "New Agricultural Policies 2006 for the 21st Century" on April 4, 2006. The policy promotes (a) "East Asia Agribusiness Consolidation Project," that makes big corporations like transnational corporations (TNCs) easy to hunt for food in oversea markets, (b) opening market through WTO/FTA negotiation instead of "Export" of the Japanese agricultural products, and (c) Structural Reform in Agriculture, that requires three fourth of farmers to quit farming according to calculation of the government (*1). In addition, the council has announced, "We need to promote this policy with max speed."

"We should protect sectors that should be protected, we should yield sectors that should be yielded, and we should attack the sectors that we need to attack." With this slogan of *New Agricultural Policies 2006 for the 21st Century*, "protected" sector is profit of big corporations that are pursuing more benefit through out the world, "yielded" sector is markets of the Japanese food and agriculture, and "attacked" sector is farmers and consumers in Japan and the Asia.

"We cannot afford 'opened agricultural market' anymore." This is an urgent request of the Japanese farmers, stakeholders and consumers. However, if the above policy keeps on being promoted speedy, a great crisis in the Japanese agriculture will be inevitable.

Furthermore, the Asia has become "the largest agricultural product import area in the



world” (*2) with having high dependency on import of crops and soybeans from other region. Instead of the massive import, peasants of the Asian countries are forced to produce cash crops for export. The current policy of the Japanese government advances this tendency.

Although the promise that the population of poverty and starvation in the world is changed into half or zero has been made in international society, the population keeps on increasing in the year 2003 and 2004 (*3). The situation happening now in the Asia, the richest agricultural area in the world is one of the major causes.

We believe that alternative method against the destructive direction in food and agriculture promoted by the government and WTO/FTA is “Food Sovereignty.” We propose this draft of "Declaration of Food Sovereignty for the Japanese Farmers and Consumers" in order to inform people to realize that agriculture and food are facing to the critical moment whether they will be destroyed or not and open our eyes toward the Asia and the world. We believe that the Japanese people cannot be happy in true meaning without people in the Asia and the world are happy.

We strongly wish this declaration to be the basis of discussion and study among the people who wish everyone in Japan, the Asia and the world can live with true happiness and wealth and eat safe and hearty food sufficiently with protecting land and nature that have been cultivated by agriculture, fishery and forestry for a long time.

I. What is Food Sovereignty?

Food Sovereignty is the right that every nation and people can decide their own food and agricultural policy by themselves. That is, everyone has the right to have safe, healthy and proper food in each culture and religion and the right to produce these foods by sustainable method that has been practiced by family farmers and peasants. Food Sovereignty includes not only nation’s sovereignty to regulate interventions from powerful countries, TNCs and international organizations but also people’s sovereignty to be able to decide domestic food and agricultural policy.

To realize Food Sovereignty, required policies are the followings.

- Control import to protect domestic production and consumers
- Give priority to supply food locally and domestically rather relying on trade
- Guarantee stable prices that can cover all cost in production
- Forbid dumping with massive export subsidies
- Regulate agribusiness to not be able to monopolize in trade and insist cheap prices
- Apply true and completed agrarian reform

These points have been decided by peasant’s organization and stakeholders and NGOs in the world for these years as the alternative policies(*4).

In 1996, a year after WTO was established, international peasant’s organization La Via Campesina has advocated this alternative and fundamental idea as Food Sovereignty to resist WTO and neo-liberalism.

WTO precedes profit of TNCs who control agricultural trade and violates many countries’ right to decide its own food and agricultural policy by forcing free trade. As the result, a goal based on humanism like termination of hunger from the world has been put in the second, and industrialized agriculture including GMOs and “globalized anxiety on food” have been promoted. Both “South” and “North” farmers have given up farming, committed suicide or been forced to move into urban area. To stop the destructive effects on the world

agriculture and food, WTO must get out from these sectors, and we should build alternative trade rule based on ensuring Food Sovereignty.

“Food sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather, it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production.” (*5) For building an international system to support trade rule based on Food Sovereignty, existing the UN organizations like FAO, UNCTAD and ILO need to be more democratically and systematically, and it is necessary to establish an organization that actually operates and the international agreement with Food Sovereignty.

II. Food Sovereignty Creates an Alternative Movement in the World

1. The Word “Food Sovereignty” Has Filled with Streets of Hong Kong

In last December, the fifth WTO Ministerial Meeting was held in Hong Kong. From all over the world, peasants/farmers, workers and consumers gathered. Everyday, many forums for agriculture and food were hold. In each event, the things commonly discussed were prices of agricultural products dropped under WTO, livelihoods of small farmers and peasants were destroyed and Food Sovereignty was violated. Then, people seriously discussed how to achieve realization of setting a price ensuring farmer’s livelihood, regulating agribusiness not to lower the price, prohibiting the dumping of agricultural products with massive export subsidies, restraining export-oriented agriculture and supporting farmers properly in order to make sustainable agriculture possible. They started to seek the way to ensure Food Sovereignty for real.

2. Agricultural Organizations from All Over the World Including JA Start to Discuss about Food Sovereignty

“Food Sovereignty” has been filled with streets of Hong Kong because of not only the above reasons. Agricultural organizations from 43 countries including JA Zenchu, Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives from Japan have reached an agreement to publish a “Joint Declaration,” that included the idea of Food Sovereignty.

“All countries must be able to ensure their food sovereignty... Trade rules must allow for policy measures which promote food sovereignty and stability of food supplies and prices, including supply management and safeguard measures.” (*6)

JA Zenchu points out that these organizations of 43 countries represented the group from “128 countries and area, 90% of WTO members.” It also says, “It is the first time that such many countries and organizations agreed to publish a joint declaration.” (*7)

3. The Vision of Food Sovereignty adopted by the United Nations

This movement has become to be real among the organizations of the United Nations. In spring, 2004, the United Nations 60th Commission on Human Rights was held. In the commission, people discussed the relationship between “Food Sovereignty” and “Right to Food,” that was the idea established based on Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Mr. Jean Zigler, who was appointed as “the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food” by the committee advised like below.

“The Special Rapporteur urges Governments to respect, protect and fulfill the right to food in accordance with their human rights obligations. Imbalances and

inequities in the global trading system that can have profound negative effects on the right to food should be urgently addressed. It is time to examine new and alternative models for agriculture and trade, such as that provided by the vision of food sovereignty, which places priority on food security and the right to food, for all people at all times.” (*8)

This advice report was overwhelmingly supported by the great majority as 51 countries including Japan. Only the U.S. opposed and Australia abstained. That is, the UN organizations and most of the countries in the world have started to accept the “Vision of Food Sovereignty.”

The Special Rapporteur criticized WTO directly like below in the report of September last year, just before the Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting started.

“The rules of WTO, particularly the rules on trade in agriculture, also have a significant impact on the policies that Governments can choose in terms of maintaining their food security. WTO has had an important impact through the way it “locks in” and formalizes liberalization measures, leaving countries unable to reverse measures that might have significant negative impacts on food insecurity and malnutrition.

The Special Rapporteur is also concerned that the economic models of development currently promoted and imposed by international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization are threatening the right to food of small farmers across the world.” (*9)

This is a kind of “generous” expression, but WTO has never been criticized like this before from the UN organizations. It is obvious that the direction of the world movement is heading toward Food Sovereignty, the alternative idea toward WTO.

III. Food Sovereignty for Food and Agriculture in Japan

The Japanese agriculture and food have repeatedly been damaged by Structural Reform in Agriculture, and WTO/FTA. The government tried to make this country as “Open for Agricultural trading.” For this country, Food Sovereignty becomes not only an alternative way against WTO but also showing people the fundamental way to resist a series of corruptions of the Koizumi regime. Especially, it is significant for protecting people’s life and health from the dangerous import like the beef affected in BSE (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, “Mad Cow Disease”), various genetically modified (GM) foods and many agricultural products with heavy post harvest chemical residues. Based on the idea of Food Sovereignty, we demand the government to have a strict regulation for big corporations that controls prices of agricultural products to be low, guarantee the prices support for farmers, stop the flood of imported agricultural products, improve food self-sufficiency ratio and never let the corruption of Agrarian Land Law. These are the focus points on the Food Sovereignty in the Japanese food and agriculture.

1. Overcome the Crisis in “Food Safety”

From the BSE issue, people can see the weak attitude of the Japanese government toward the U.S. government that has been arrogantly behaving, and it is shame to say as Japan is an independent country. USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) reported opinions of “Farm Bill Forum 2007” on March 29. According to this, “some wanted a permanent and comprehensive ban on downers entering the food supply.” (*10) In spite of the fact that the U.S. government could not have prevented the beef with the vertebrae that was prohibited in beef trade with Japan to be found, the U.S. government announced, “It is

much lower percentage to be variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD), compared to the percentage of traffic accidents.” The government demands Japan to decide to reopen import of the U.S. beef until the U.S. - Japan summit on this June.

The U.S. increases production of undesired GMOs against the requests from “customers.” The Japanese consumers have been the mice for experiments on human beings under the situation that 94% of corns and 78% of soybean are imported from the U.S.

Everyone has the right to access safe and nutritious food proper in each food custom, culture or religion. Overcoming the crisis on food safety and regaining safe and fresh food are the strong people’s wish.

2. Improve Food Self-Sufficiency Ratio

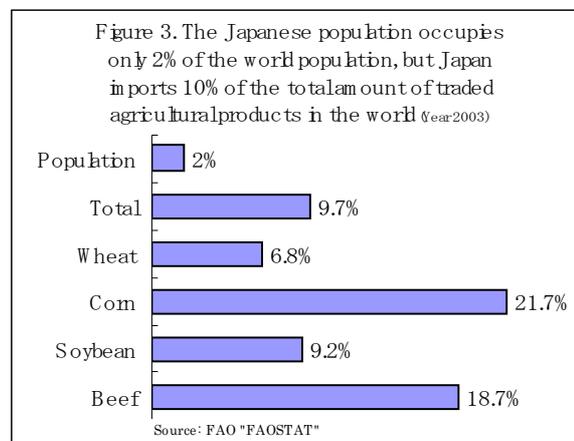
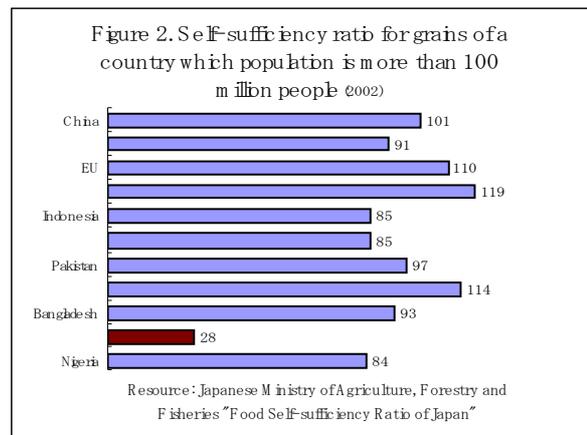
Crops are the most fundamental foods for human beings. The Japanese food self-sufficiency ratio for grains is 27%. It will be 40% if it is calculated based on calories(Fig2). The ratio is too low to use the phrase “self sufficiency.”

The expanding “anxiety over food” is mainly caused by massive food import. One of the principals of Food Sovereignty is “domestic production must be prior to trade.” It is necessary to produce agricultural products as much as possible in domestically in order to ensure safety and secureness of food.

Starvation is the issue of food distribution. The world like “finally, only those who have money to purchase food will be able to eat (*11)” might be come in the future. The Japanese people occupy only 2% of the world population, but Japan purchases about 10% of food in the world market (Fig3). This can be neither sustainable nor affordable.

Adam Smith, the father of economics mentioned in his book, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, as “a rice paddy is more productive than the most fertile wheat field in Europe” and “nevertheless the hardest work is required for the production, people can get more harvest than wheat production.” In fact, the Japanese farmland that is mainly rice paddies has the Carrying Capacity that is three to four times more than Europe and 13 times more than the U.S. This high productivity can be seen all around in Asia, the region producing rice mainly. (*12)

In spite of the fact that Japan has such high capacity, its food sufficiency ratio is low almost same as the ones of the desert or the tundra area. Reversing this uncommon tendency is the only way to solve the extending anxiety among food. Robbing food from other countries is not forgiven.



IV. What We Need

What we need for realizing our demands of securing food safety and improvement of food self-sufficiency ratio has four urgent assignments.

1. Reinstall the price support system, and stop sharp fall of price in rice, vegetable and fruit

The drop of prices of agricultural products is serious in not only in Japan but also in the world.

The impact of acceptance of minimum access and the abolishment of Staple Food Control Act hit hard on farmers. The price received by farmers has dropped 35% compared to the highest in 1993. If you assume that 500 milliliters of water costs 100, the same amount of rice will become less than 70. One friend from abroad astonishingly said, "The Japanese water is so expensive but rice is so cheap." Farmers work half a year to grow rice with shivering by cold wind in the early spring and sweating under the strong sun almost same strength as the tropical region in the summer. Is the price high enough to reward their work?

The government announces that pushing down the price more is the main "reform" rather dealing with this price corruption. By this "reform," the price support system for all farmers was abolished by being criticized as "over protected" and useless. The government gives "direct payment" to certified farmers with filling up with the gap caused by the import of the "prime cost" of wheat and soybean.

There are two main reasons responsible for this tendency. The one is disorganization of family farming under the name of "reform." Another is because of the possibility that the price support might be banned by the international rule in the WTO negotiation. WTO has not reached the decision yet, and the negotiation faces on the serious deadlock. A powerful congressman in the U.S. pessimistically said, "There is no way out to fill up with the gap between the U.S. and EU. The only way is stopping negotiation and giving energy to FTA (*13)." In the situation, threatening people by saying, "The international rule will be more and more stricter!," is not be permitted.

Why we need the price support?

We demand the reduction and abolishment of minimum access and the price support for agricultural products including rice.

Our request is simple. The value of rice should be higher than water at least, and the "daily wage" of a farmer that is almost same as the "hourly wage" of a factory worker should be matched with the minimum wage in each local community.

According to the former Basic Law on Agriculture, that was repealed as the same time of the establishment of WTO, "As supporting the disadvantage in the production and trading in agriculture for certain significant products, a nation should promote policies in order to stabilize the prices of the products by considering with the conditions of production, demand, price or other economical factors (Article 11)."

The phrase "the disadvantage in the production and trading in agriculture" means like the following. That is, (a) in cold weather or a long spell of rainy weather, car production cannot be "lean," but not for the organic production like agriculture. The agricultural products directly affect from the natural conditions like climate, and there is an imbalance from industrial products. (b) Besides a farmer originally cannot earn so much, the equal

value exchange does not occurred because of the situation like agricultural products are sold in cheap prices, but farmers need to purchase expensive agricultural inputs and needs for their livelihood. The price support had been practiced to fill the gap of these disadvantages of farmers for having “healthy and cultural life like other people (Preamble of the former Basic Law).” Of course, it is unnecessary to launch the price support if the market price is constantly high enough to cover the production cost.

The price support that had been practiced after World War II was applied for all farmers who sell agricultural products and contributed to recover the production of wheat and soybean that had been cornered into “euthanasia.” What the government aims at now is the direct payment support for only the farmers whom the government certifies. This is a policy for screening farmers, there is no country choosing the policy like this. The system will be applied based on the acreage of paddy field in the past, so it will contribute for neither increase production nor improvement of food self-sufficiency ratio.

The U.S. and EU widely export surplus agricultural products in dumping prices, so it is reasonable for them to promote the “unproductive” policies. However, the countries like developing countries that many people are suffering by starvation and the countries have the unusually low food self-sufficiency ratio like Japan need to increase their production more. WTO Agreement on Agriculture promotes prohibiting the “productive” policy, especially banning the price support system, and it never solve the issue of starvation and improve food self-sufficiency ratio. The true “agricultural policy” should have been for compensating for disadvantages that farmers had and protecting family farmers and small farmers to develop agricultural production. The policies of WTO are not suitable for the name “agricultural policy.”

Like a crab digs a hole based on the shape of its shell, the WTO rules on agriculture have been made for the U.S. and EU. The “unproductive” and “rough” policies can be applied for the U.S. and EU that are the countries having cool and less rainy climate. However, forcing the Asia, the region having hot and humid climate, to have similar policies means that land will be damaged by growing weed or bush. The domestic agriculture will collapse.

Food Sovereignty and Domestic Subsidies

The discussion of “turn the price support into the direct payment” has spread as if the major flow of the world, and all forms of agricultural subsidies of developed countries are considered as intervening to the agriculture of developing countries. These points of view are one-sided and not helping to solve the issues of food and agriculture in the world.

The direct payment that the U.S. and EU are practicing now is a set of price support and direct payment. Mexico and other countries take the same way. There is no country like Japan that tries to abolish price support only with introducing direct payment.

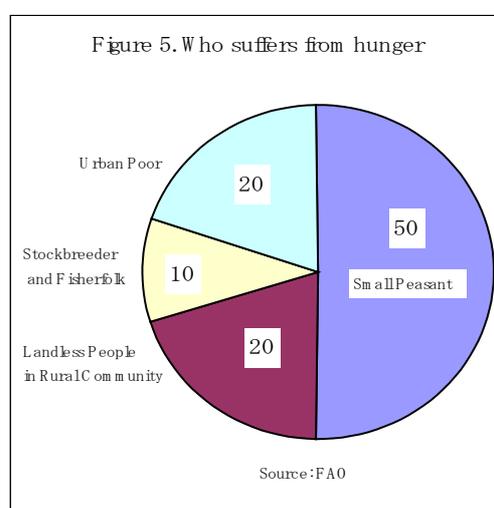
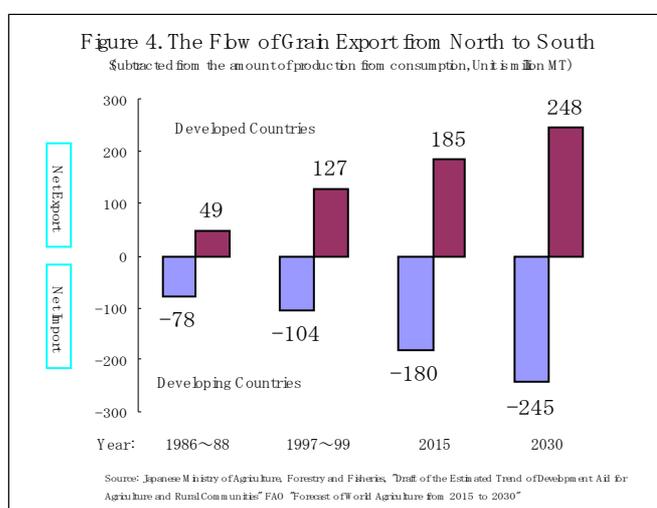
These support systems of the U.S. and EU have the destiny to link with export subsidies that are dumping agricultural products. The reason is these countries are major export countries of agricultural products. The export price turns to be the price that is not enough to cover production cost, and these countries try to fill the gap caused by this from direct payment. For the countries exporting agricultural products, these domestic support systems become to be export subsidies.

Without considering direct or indirect, export subsidies lower the price below production cost. It is also the root for bankrupting peasant’s and farmer’s livelihood in both “South” and “North,” especially in developing countries and food importing countries. We demand the total extermination of export subsidies causing serious issues in the world and working

as the most “imbalanced trade.”

By equating export subsidy with the support needed for sustain livelihood of peasants and family farmers, demanding to eliminate all agricultural supports of “North” is not appropriate at all. This demand is not following the movement for food sovereignty and leads to a solution on any issue in the world. By assuming all kinds of subsidies to the dumping subsidies that would be reduced at once and by reducing tariffs of agricultural products of “North,” livelihoods of the peasants and family farmers would be destroyed, and developing countries would become to depend on the “export-oriented agriculture” more and more. Besides, these developing countries would become to produce cash crops for fulfilling the luxury of the Western world.

The current flow of the distribution of crops that are needed for every human being to survive should be from “North” to “South,” and the most suffering people by hunger in the world are farmers who produce food (*14)(Fig4,5). “Export-oriented Agriculture” is useless for not only solving starvation but ensuring Food Sovereignty.



Our position follows the direction of international debate on Food Sovereignty written in the below.

People in every country must have the right and ability to define their own food, farming, and agricultural policies, the right to protect their domestic markets and the right to maintain public subsidies that support peasant-based sustainable production.

Rather than a blanket call to abolish all subsidies, we call for distinguishing between support for small-scaled food producers and the poor, and those that advance the interests of corporate agribusiness. Public subsidies must support sustainable agriculture, food production and distribution, and social and economic equity. At the same time, all forms of direct and indirect subsidies that contribute towards lowering prices and encouraging dumping should be identified and forbidden (*15).

2. Stop the Policy, “Kick Out Uncertified Farmers” and Protect Land and Local Community

The government aims to carry out one policy from the next year, but it has already been heading to failure. The issues of farmers who are aging and lack of youth in agriculture have become more serious. Under the situation, the number of the certified farmers will be only a quarter of the commercial farm households. This is a “kick out” policy for both

certified and uncertified farmers. In France, the supporting system for youth farmers has been introduced from the middle of 1970's, and "late 30 to early 50 years old farmers have become the core producers in agriculture (*16)." The Japanese agricultural policy has been the "kick out" policy. The Japanese government should respect the policy of France at least.

We demand that the government withdraws the "Bill of Structural Reform in Agriculture" and changes to support farmers who work hard.

"Who can be a farmer without producing food?" We put a first priority on protecting local land and agriculture. We call for working together in various ways based on respecting local conditions and farmers' will and sharing agricultural machines and working together. We promote to establish "Cooperative Organization in Local Community" with the wide network of food process, local consuming of local products and markets together with local Agricultural Co-operatives and asking for support of local authorities (*17).

3. Never let Disorganize of Agrarian Land System and Agricultural Co-operatives

The land reform has not been applied fully yet in many Asian countries including South East Asia. Furthermore, big corporations including foreign capitals rob the farming land from farmers and enlarge their owning plantations. (*18)

In Japan, Agrarian Land Reform has been totally implemented during the post-war period. The family farmers who were formed by the reform have been protected by the three pillars as (a) the price support that is able to cover the production cost, (b) right to hold title and use of the farming land for only farmers in order to prevent recovery of big capitals and landowners, (c) cooperative organizations in agriculture that develop production by hands of farmers.

However, the government and business circle have tried to abolish the price support after establishment of WTO. Continuously, they aim to destroy the land system and disorganize Agricultural Co-operatives. Hiroshi Okuda, the president of Toyota and the top of the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations, *Keidanren*, said, "We cannot wait for the adoption of the Structural Reform in Agriculture because of many reasons. We have to reform completely the old fashioned business model 'family farming,' that have been practiced for thousands of years (*19)." This announcement means breaking up family farming and giving more business opportunity for big corporations to be able to control agricultural production. Council for Regulatory Reform and Privatization of the Japanese Cabinet Office calls its Structural Reform in Agriculture as "the Second Agrarian Land Reform" and requests the repeal of the land system that only farmers can possess and use of farming land. (*20) The Agricultural Co-operatives are denied to have the characteristics as agricultural cooperative organizations, required to disorganize, and called big corporations to succeed their projects.

"Land is a part of the planet Earth and the absolute basis from life to production of human beings. It is not the product from work, so it is not limitless.... The core of land issue is how to stop a few big corporations or rich people take advantage for using land to make more their profits and how to make a common sense for all people." (*21)

The Second Agrarian Land Reform called by the government and business circles has moved to the opposite direction from the development of the history. We struggle against this backward flow with all people who are related to agriculture and all other people.

4. WTO Out of Food and Agriculture! To ensure Food Sovereignty

To promote the globalization that make priority to big corporations and TNCs, WTO was established as a super country and super organization of the United Nations. WTO is the root for the issues on agriculture and food in the modern world and responsible for the expansion of poverty. That is why WTO has met a great counterattack from people in the world.

When WTO met the first defeat in Seattle in 1999, Mark Ritchie, president of Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) said, “We did not have any hope to change WTO before Seattle. After the incident in Seattle, the situation has suddenly changed. If WTO cannot progress trade negotiations in agriculture, WTO would fall into the situation that can barely survive with a ‘life support system.” (*22) The fourth Ministerial Conference in Cancun, Mexico in 2003 was also failed, and the fifth conference in Hong Kong ended up with “failure” and “revealed the malfunction in multilateral trade negotiations.” (*23)

Super powers and TNCs are the ones being oppressed, and the ones who are hunting down them are developing countries and people in the world.

Forcing Free Trade is against International Rule and History

“Free Trade” is not the eternal and ultimate idea. The U.S., EU and Japan used to be the countries of “Protective Trade,” and even now these countries sometimes become protective. It is totally unfair in the international rule and history that these “North” countries force Free Trade to developing countries that have no choice to develop their economy because the development has been delayed by the series of invasions and plunder of “North” countries. “In the contemporary world, without considering whether developed or developing countries, should we rely on free trade treated like ‘eternal and ultimate truth’? Once these three countries has implemented the protective trading to develop the industries with having a time limit, but the rest developing countries has been totally shut down to take this measure. Is this desirable for people?” (*24) This criticism is reasonable for the side of “globalized” countries.

Demand to Stop Closed and Undemocratic Negotiation

The super powers and TNCs are not waiting until the end with doing nothing. In Hong Kong, they have counterattacked in the sector of service and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA). Nowadays, the side supporting WTO tries to overcome the deadlocked situation by “Green Room Meeting” of a few countries with ignoring the rest of member nations that are the great majority.

We can never accept this closed and undemocratic way. We demand to stop forcing opening market to developing countries, especially in agriculture and food. Also, we strongly oppose to make agriculture put in free trading system including setting up “Tariff Cap” and great tariff reductions. We desire a moratorium in the WTO negotiations.

“The Japanese Government’s Proposals” Have a Fundamental Error

The Japanese government has proposed “the coexistence of various types of agriculture (*25)” at the start of the WTO negotiations. To make this proposal to be real, “it is significant for respecting food and agricultural policy in each country, ‘reforming’ the rule of WTO that violates sovereignty and domestic policy from the basis, and ‘ensuring Food Sovereignty of each country.” (*26) However, Japan, the U.S. and EU force developing countries to open markets in service and industrial sectors. These counties take developing countries’ opportunity for the true development. This must be changed. In the agricultural sector, the Japanese government behaves as “poor importer,” but in the service and

industrial sectors, the government becomes to arrogantly behave. This is not allowable at all.

Furthermore, the Japanese government has proposed to enlarge the amount of Minimum Access of rice to 35% at most. That is, the government accepts import of 104 metric tons of rice. (*27) This amount will be 12% of total domestic consumption, and the price of rice will continue on dropping.

This can be said as “protected” sector is profit of big corporations but not market of Japanese food and agriculture. We demand the government to change its direction to establish “various types of agriculture and economy to be able to coexist.”

Eliminate Minimum Access

Since WTO has started, Japan has imported 6.78 million metric tons of rice as minimum access. The amount that the consumers and companies who have been forced to purchase undesired imported rice by the government is 3.04 million metric tons less than half of the total amount. A quarter has become “defective stocks.” The government has kept on requesting farmers to produce “more saleable rice” and importing “unsaleable rice.” At last, the government has started to sell the imported rice as feed of livestock. Under the situation that the population of poverty and starvation is increasing in the world, selling rice that should be distributed for human beings to feed livestock is completely insane. The responsibility of this madness is in the government that blindly following WTO Agreement on Agriculture, which regulates Minimum Access.

The NGOs that demands for protecting Food Sovereignty in the world keep on saying, “The obligation of minimal market access and all other clauses regarding obligatory access to markets must be eliminated (*28).” We also demand the elimination of Minimum Access, the most unreasonable paradox in Agreement on Agriculture. Trade must be the exchange of products that what really people need. How people can say free trade by forcing to import needless products or surplus products flooding in domestic markets?

WTO Out of Agriculture and Food

WTO focuses on only exporting agricultural products that are 10% of entire production in the world with following the will of TNCs, but it must notice the great significance of domestic and local production. The earth is a planet having the serious situation that more than 800 million people are starving and some countries having unusual low self-sufficiency ratio for food. In this planet, denying “productive” policy and supporting WTO are fundamentally wrong. In addition, there are so many kinds of foods, customs and cultures in the world. It is unacceptable these various world food cultures to change to “McDonalds” by the system of free trade.

WTO must get out from agriculture and food. The alternative of agricultural policy and trade rule instead of WTO is Food Sovereignty. Let us strengthen our solidarity and movement to ensure Food Sovereignty by the people’s movement and solidarity in locally, nationally and internationally. We desire to have “alternative Japan,” “alternative Asia” and “alternative world.”

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 12. From the research from the analysis of NOUMINREN. The field area of the monsoon area in the Asia, 14% of the total area in the world, and the population is 54% of the total population in the world. This is caused because of the difference in productivity, especially rice paddy.
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 14. FAO. "The State of Food Insecurity in the World." 2004.
50% of the population of poverty and starvation is small-sized farmers, 20% is landless farmers, and 10% is fisherman and woodman.
 15. 45 NGOs including La Via Campesina, "Joint Declaration," November 2003.
 16. Sumiyoshi Harada. "The Position and Possibility of 'Family Farming' as the Basis of Economy." From "The Study of Agrarian Law vol. 39".
 17. Our demand is a concrete step for ensuring Food Sovereignty. "Strengthening people's food sovereignty requires many concrete steps toward a sustainable, peasant based agricultural production and a consumption essentially based on local, domestic food production, as well as policy changes at the local, national and international level." (From statement of La Via Campesina) 5 December 2005.
 18. For example, the annual increase of oil palm in Indonesia is 12%. This amazing speed of enlargement can be known by the fact that the plantation of oil palm increased from 0.6 million ha in 1985 to 3 million ha in 2002. On the hand, the domestic production of soybean decreased from 1.87 million metric tons in 1992 to 0.67 million metric tons in 2002. The number has decreased into one third.
 19. "Lecture of President Okuda in the 56th Conference of Managements in Tohoku Area," 30 October 2003.
 20. Report in Council on Economic and Fiscal Policy, 6 December 2005.
 21. Hiroo Ishii. "Guide to the reconstruction of the Japanese agriculture". 1991.
 22. "What people are questioning on WTO" Booklet of Public Sector Policy. April 2000.

23. "Newspaper NIKKEI." 19 December 2005.
24. Kenichi Ono, Professor of National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. "Globalization of Developing Countries"
25. "The Proposals of Japan for WTO Agricultural Negotiations." December 2000.
26. Proposals of the Committee of Agriculture in Toyohashi, Aichi. 11 July 2005.
27. "G10 Proposal on the Treatment of Sensitive Products." 18 April 2006."
G10 is a group of net-food-import countries, such as Japan, South Korea, Switzerland and Norway. The Japanese government assumes Japan is the leading country of this group.
28. Various NGOs. "WTO in Crisis: Groups Offer Alternative Plan to Protect People's Food Sovereignty." 28 July 2005.