

# The future of agriculture in growing Asian countries

— Experience in Japan and issues in China —

Moderator: Kei Kajisa (Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University)

Presentation 1: Evolution of Agricultural Policy in Japan: Lessons for Growing Asian Countries

Masayoshi Honma (Professor, Seinan Gakuin University and Professor emeritus, The University of Tokyo)

Presentation 2: Agricultural Transformation and Policies in China: Past Performance, Current Challenges and Future Direction

Jikun Huang (Professor, Peking University)

Commentator: Junichi Ito (Professor, Kyoto University)

The rapid growth in industrial and service sectors has triggered an economic “take-off” in many Asian countries. As a result, not only the economic migration of laborers from rural areas, but also the diversification of occupations within rural areas has accelerated. In order for agriculture to be sustainable under these circumstances, a structural change to labor-saving farming is necessary. Related issues include mechanization, farm size enlargement, use of advanced information technologies, and shifting to high value crops and food processing in the agricultural sector. Unless a smooth structural change proceeds in agricultural sector, the economic growth of an entire country could be hampered.

However, the detailed process of agricultural transformation and, consequently, strategies to ensure it are not yet well understood. In fact, it is difficult to find successful examples of agricultural transformation and to draw lessons from them. Japan has been a forerunner in addressing this issue, and hence its policies have undergone a lot of trial and errors, providing useful lessons for followers. China has been rapidly catching up to this stage and in some aspects appears to be solving the emerging problems more effectively than Japan.

The purpose of this symposium is to deepen our understanding of the mechanism of smooth agricultural transformation and related policies through a comparative study of Japan and China. First, we will review Japan’s agricultural policies and their consequences in the long-run. Second, we will review China’s past performance, identify its current challenges, and discuss its future direction. Third, after the comments from the commentator, we will discuss the future of agriculture in both countries and attempt to draw lessons for other fast-growing Asian countries. We look forward to the active participation of the audience.

This symposium is placed as an introductory event to the 11<sup>th</sup> Asian Society of Agricultural Economist (ASAE) International Conference to be held in Tokyo in March 2023.