



OPERATION OF AGRICULTURAL WHOLESALE MARKETS

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Agricultural wholesale markets provide an important facility for meeting the diversified supply needs of large populations and for setting appropriate prices for better distribution. Traditional wholesale markets comprise a large area set aside and occupied by numerous assemblers/wholesalers, middlemen/traders, and retailers. The common result is large price differentials for the same products, which has a negative impact on producer income and consumer satisfaction. An alternative model is the central wholesale market where farmers sell their products to local assemblers, shippers, or cooperatives who in turn transport them to commission agents in the central wholesale market where the products are sold, usually by auction, to licensed wholesalers, retailers, and institutional buyers. Through this process, the prices for commodity items of the same quality are the same at any given time in the market.

To assess the present situation of agricultural wholesale markets in member countries and to enable participants to study the operation of the central wholesale market system in Japan, the APO organized a multi-country study mission on "The Operation of Agricultural Markets" in Japan in July 2000. This publication comprises a summary of the findings of the study mission and the resource papers and country reports presented at plenary sessions of the mission. It is a useful reference text for policy-makers, planners, and managers of wholesale markets.



ACCELERATING THE PROGRESS OF JAPAN'S AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHERIES RESEARCH (Video)

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Scientific research is a fundamental driving force in raising agricultural productivity. Japan has a long and successful history of developing comprehensive R&D systems for agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Nevertheless, recent changes in the socio-economic environment and technological developments demand that research become more effective, more advanced, and more focused.

Therefore, the Japanese agricultural research system was reorganized into a few independent research institutes. One group of reorganized institutes focuses on the development of technologies with practical use such as cost reduction, disease prevention, creation of new crop strains, etc. Another centers on more basic and fundamental research that in the long term will contribute greatly to the sector's development.

This video presents the history of the Japanese agricultural research system with particular emphasis on its recent transformation. Representative research results in major institutes are also briefly touched upon.

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