



AGRICULTURAL DIVERSIFICATION AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

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Many countries are diversifying their agricultural sector as a basic strategy to meet the challenges of globalization, enhance the stability and profitability of the sector over the long term, generate employment, ensure food security, and conserve resources. Agricultural diversification involves introducing high-value crops, enlarging the crop mix, and enhancing nonfarm activities. However, diversification is not an easy undertaking, particularly for small farmers. Although globalization gives greater access to export markets, it also brings about increased competition in the domestic market. For this reason, countries with diversification programs give special weight to those agricultural activities in which they have a competitive advantage.

The APO organized a study meeting on “Agricultural Diversification and International Competitiveness” in Japan in 2001 to explore ways to increase the competitiveness of agricultural produce through diversification. This e-book is a report of the proceedings of that meeting. It provides the highlights of the meeting and the text of presentations by four resource speakers and country reports by 15 participants. The four resource papers and their respective authors are:

- “Globalization and International Competitiveness: Concepts and Policy Implications for Agriculture,” Dr. Luc De Wulf, World Bank Consultant;
- “Diversification of Agriculture in a More Competitive Environment,” Dr. Pramod K. Joshi, Principal Scientist, National Centre for Agricultural Economics and Policy Research, India;
- “Agricultural Diversification in Japan,” Dr. Mitsugi Kamiya, President, Food and Agriculture Policy Research Center, Japan; and
- “Diversification with Vegetables to Improve Competitiveness in Asia,” a team from the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center and Development Center, Taiwan: Dr. Mubarik Ali, Head, Socioeconomic Unit and Economic and Nutrition Project; Abedullah, former consultant; and Umar Farooq, consultant.

During the meeting, the participants deliberated at length on how diversification could enhance the competitiveness of the agriculture sector in the context of a changing global trade environment. An extensive list of suggestions was generated which is included in the e-book.

This publication should be of interest to all involved in the promotion and implementation of agricultural diversification in Asia and the Pacific.

The APO has listed a number of e-books on its Web site (www.apo-tokyo.org). Some are also available in hard copy, while others, including *Agricultural Diversification and International Competitiveness*, are available only in the e-edition.

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