PRIMAFF
Policy Research Institute,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
As the compass of agriculture, forestry and fisheries policies

— convinced future by convinced analysis —

In response to the changing times, we conduct policy research in order to achieve our mission to hand down "food" to future children as a basis of human life and an "environment" that allows us to live in peace.
The Policy Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (PRIMAFF), was established in April 2001, as the sole national policy research organization engaged in the study and research of the policies related to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by the reorganization of the former National Research Institute of Agricultural Economics (NRIAE).

Recent years have seen important changes in the areas of Japanese foods, agriculture and rural areas. In this movement, to ensure the continued development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and rural areas in the future, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan has been working on planning and promoting relevant policies adapted to the new age, under the Basic Law of Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas.

PRIMAFF attaches importance to the cooperation and coordination with administrative offices of the Ministry more closely than before and responding to new policy directions through its policy research. From this standpoint, it carries out research and studies on the situations and policies of foods, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and rural areas inside and outside Japan, by making use of social science approaches including economics, law and sociology as well as natural science approaches.

**History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Nov.30</td>
<td>National Research Institute of Agricultural Economics established, 8 Azabu-shinryudo-cho, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Nov.10</td>
<td>Moved to Nishigahara, Kita-ku, Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Mar.30</td>
<td>Library was designated as a branch of the National Diet Library; the NRIAE Branch of MAFF Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Oct.1</td>
<td>Three branch offices integrated into the main office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Apr.1</td>
<td>NRIAE reorganized into the Policy Research Institute, MAFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Aug.20</td>
<td>Branch office established in Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Nov.1</td>
<td>Main and branch offices moved to Central Government Building No. 4 in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Basic concepts of research activities**

- **Research activities meeting demands from administrative offices of the Ministry**
  Every year, the institute sets policy research topics under sufficient collaboration and coordination with related administrative offices and carries out research and studies necessary for policy making and international negotiations.

- **Basic and prospective research**
  The institute carries out the following basic and prospective research, by using its expertise and knowledge, aiming at making highly academic achievements.

  1. Foundational and pioneering research that contributes to the study of a large framework for policies and systems pertaining to food, agriculture, and agricultural villages, focusing on the next step in policy developments.
  2. Research on the agricultural policies and strategies of important countries and regions, in terms of global food supply and demand, international negotiations, and study of Japanese agricultural policy.

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**Ideal systematic cycle on policy research**

- Research and studies quickly responding to policy topics
- Basic and leading research assuming policy development in near future
- Timely and appropriate provision of research outputs responding to administrative demands
- Coordination with administrative departments
- Reflection into policies
- Mobilized response
Prioritized areas of research

Research on agricultural strategies of major countries

The institute investigates and analyzes situations, policies and strategies of major countries and regions on agriculture and trading. The research results provide vital information for formulating Japan's agricultural policies, conducting international negotiations, and so on.

While the WTO Doha Round negotiations are stalled, countries actively seek conclusion of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with other countries. In order to secure Japan's national interest in international negotiations, it is vital to collect adequate information on agriculture, agricultural trade situation, and related policies of the negotiating countries as well as to conduct in-depth analyses on the strategies that form the bases of those countries' policies.

In aiming to create strong agriculture and beautiful, dynamic agricultural villages based on the new Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, it is important to learn from the advanced initiatives of other countries and to employ those lessons in Japanese policy.

Additionally, as Japan is dependent on overseas sources for most of its food, it is also important for food supply stability to make accurate predictions about global food supply and demand, based on trends in supply, demand, and policy in major countries.

Based on such issues, extensive research will be conducted with priority-setting on the following countries and regions.

- Countries and regions whose policy trends have a large impact on the framework of international negotiations or can bring new ideas for Japan's policies (e.g., EU, USA, Korea)
- Countries that have huge food demands and their sufficiency levels have a large impact on the global food supply/demand (e.g., China, India)
- Countries that play important roles as agricultural commodity suppliers to the world market (e.g., Brazil, Russia, Thailand)

Moreover, highly accurate predictions of food supply and demand will be obtained through an independently developed global food supply-demand model.

A soy field and center pivot irrigation in Brazil

A food distribution shop in India
The institute focuses on the following five research areas in order to promote appropriate research that reflects the important topics related to the policies on agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the direction of policy development.

Research on food supply chains

The institute performs research on trends in food consumption in a declining and aging population, as well as with the aim of creating new value in each stage of the food supply chain: production, processing, distribution, and consumption.

As the quantity of food in Japan saturates domestic consumption, the number of single-person households rises, and lifestyles change, there is a need for a supply chain built to be suited to the shift toward externalization of our diet and other changing food consumption patterns. Thus, in response to consumer needs, the institute performs research on major agricultural products (e.g. wheat, soybeans, vegetables, fruits, marine products) for the purpose of securing demand for especially Japanese agricultural products oriented toward processed foods and ready-made meals. Research is also conducted for the purpose of creating new value through utilization of "geographical indications" and other means of offering differentiated Japanese agricultural products.

For the Japanese population to enjoy a rich and healthy diet, an obvious problem has arisen regarding the need for sufficient access to food at the household level. For this reason, the institute conducts research on the proper state of a "food system" in a highly aged society, such as quantitative assessments of food access that reflect the actual state of consumption, and the effect of food access problems on food intake and health of the elderly.

### Estimates of the Future Composition of Food Expenditures, by Commodity Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cereals</th>
<th>Dairy products &amp; eggs</th>
<th>Meat</th>
<th>Fish &amp; shellfish</th>
<th>Fruits &amp; seaweeds</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Oils, fats &amp; seasoning</th>
<th>Beverages</th>
<th>Alcoholic beverages</th>
<th>Meals outside the home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. For years through 2010, the graph represent actual data processed from sources including the Family Income and Expenditure Survey and the National Survey of Family Income and Expenditure. Numbers for 2015 and later years are estimates.
2. The actual data in the graph above is expressed in 2010 prices.
Prioritized areas of research

Research on agricultural structures and production entities

The institute performs research on the formation and reorganization of agricultural production entities as appropriate for regional characteristics and changes in regional agricultural structures, as well as research on overall trends in Japanese agricultural and rural villages with aging and declining populations.

With national population decline and aging among agricultural producers expected to continue on into the future, the formation in local agriculture of new production entities and the reorganization of existing entities have become urgent challenges. Additionally, it is expected that there are differences between regions in terms of the distribution and composition of village farming organizations, farmers aiming for large-scale optimization, and farmers engaged in the so-called "sextiary sector" (i.e. farms also engaged in processing and sales). Consequently, there will be regional differences in the effects of policy and the problems of policy implementation.

For this reason, the institute works (1) to provide an overall, comprehensive image of Japanese agriculture and rural villages using macro-level analysis of census data and other sources, and (2) in local regions selected on the basis of location, population trends, major crops, and the status of agricultural production entities, the institute works to conduct micro-level analysis on the current state of agricultural structures and rural village communities as well as predicted future structural changes, viewing the entire region as a whole. After this micro-level analysis, the institute presents issues to be tackled in the future in the interest of the formation and reorganization of agricultural production entities suited to regional characteristics.
Research on rural areas

The institute performs research that analyzes the current state and future trends of rural villages, which contain the foundation of the diverse value of agriculture and are intimately linked to agricultural production. It conducts research on policy for the maintenance and revitalization of agricultural, mountain, and fishing villages.

With population aging and decline progressing in rural villages, it is expected that an increasing number of villages will shrink in size and their very existence will be threatened. Urgent issues in these regions include not only agricultural production activities but also the maintenance and revitalization of the lifestyles of these village societies, including their resources and environments.

Therefore, the institute works to analyze the state of the following initiatives, assessing their outcomes and presenting challenges to be overcome: (1) Efforts to maintain the deteriorating functions of villages through village reorganization and the creation of broad cross-village regional organizations; (2) Efforts to maintain and revitalize local resources and the functions of regional communities by social welfare organizations, NPOs, and a variety of other entities both inside and outside agricultural, mountain, and fishing villages; and (3) Efforts to revitalize agricultural, mountain, and fishing villages in areas struck by the Great East Japan Earthquake. The institute also performs research to determine policies and systems that ought to be erected in the future to maintain and revitalize agricultural, mountain, and fishing villages.
Japanese agriculture and rural villages are not only a stable source of food; they also serve a variety of functions in the conservation of national land, water resources, and culture. In addition to these various functions' contributions from an economic perspective, there is also a focus in recent years on rural villages' environmental and social roles.

In this era of the "return to rural" that sees people coming and going between cities and rural villages, the institute conducts research that demonstrates the function and value of agriculture and rural villages that the Japanese people sympathize. With the understanding and support of all Japanese people, including urban residents, the institute also studies and supports policies that seek to maintain and promote these functions.

Additionally, there are also initiatives to create new value through the maximum utilization of local resources existing abundantly in rural villages. In particular, initiatives are increasing, which create a local economic cycle through utilizing biomass and other local resources sustainably.

In the interest of promoting such initiatives, the institute also conducts research to develop quantitative evaluation methods to contribute to the use of sustainable local resources both within and outside of Japan.

**Distribution of Happiness Levels by Living Environment**
Operational system for research

- **Research operation under the research area/team system**
  Research teams are organized across the research areas for more mobilized and effective research and studies according to topics.

- **Collaboration with administrative offices**
  Policy research coordinators and assistant policy research coordinators keep track of administrative demands and closely coordinate with the related administrative offices at every steps from the selection of research topics, carrying out research and to producing outputs.

- **Collaboration with other research institutions**
  The institute seeks an open research environment by promoting interactions of researchers and joint research with other research institutes and utilizing a visiting researchers system.

Extramural Research Program for Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Policy Research

The institute are required to promote policy research in new and long-term perspectives, while situations and conditions are changing not only in Japan but also globally so as to greatly affect agriculture, forestry and fisheries and their related policies. Under the circumstances, the institute operates the extramural research program where project proposals are invited from universities, think tanks and other research institutions to make use of their wide range of knowledge.
Publication and dissemination of research outputs

Seminars

The institute hold seminars and debriefings to announce research results and widely disseminate the latest information to the world. Through free discussion involving a broad range of participants, the institute works to bring vitality to its research activities and increase the level of quality of its research.

- **Open seminars**
  The institute holds debriefings for researchers to announce their latest results. These debriefings serve the purpose of bringing vitality to research and increasing the level of quality of research through an exchange of opinions between participants and the researchers themselves.

- **Seminars/Lectures**
  The institute invites experts and relevant policymakers from Japan and abroad to conduct lectures. These talks serve as an opportunity to learn specialized knowledge and interdisciplinary findings that can contribute to the institute's research activities.

Forum for Agricultural Policy Research in North East Asia (FANEA)

In March 2003, PRIMAFF, the Korea Rural Economic Institute (KREI) and the Institute of Agricultural Economics and Development, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science (IAED/CAAS) founded the Forum for Agricultural Policy Research in North East Asia (FANEA). The three institutes cooperate in studying various issues including agricultural structure, agri-environment and agricultural trade in North East Asia. As part of the research cooperation, the institutes have took turns holding annual international symposiums since 2003. Each year, the institutes report their outputs and discuss under particular subjects regarding agriculture and agricultural policies in North East Asia. The 3rd, 6th and 9th symposiums were held in Japan.
The institute reports research activities and outputs in various publications. Information on seminars and publications are announced on a timely basis at the website and by e-mail newsletters.

**Publication and information activities**

**Online information**
- Website
- Mail magazine (in Japanese)

**Publication of research outputs**
- Journal of Agricultural Policy Research
- Research Monograph Series
- Research Reports

**Publication of information magazines**
- PRIMAFF Review
The library has collected and provides lending services for approximately 200,000 volumes from a wide range of disciplines, mainly those related to the policies on agriculture, forestry and fisheries, including agricultural economics, economics, law and sociology. It also possesses many historically valuable books and documents published inside and outside Japan.

### Special collections

#### Amery collection

Dr. G.D. Amery (1890-1955), British, Lecturer of Oxford University, who wrote a bibliography of the works of Arthur Young, the famous British agricultural economist, had a collection of 2,403 volumes, mainly on agriculture, sociology, economy and history in UK and Europe in 18th and 19th centuries. After his death, the institute purchased the collection from his wife. It contains some valuable materials that had never been available in Japan.

#### Tobata collection

Dr. Seiichi Tobata served as the first Director-General of the institute from 1946 to 1956, while maintaining his professorship at The University of Tokyo (and also served as the Chairman of the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Research Council, the President of the Institute of Asian Economic Affairs, the Chairman of the Research Committee on Basic Issues Concerning Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Chairman of the Agricultural Policy Council, the Chairman of the Committee on Tax Systems, etc.). From his collection of 20,000 books, he selected and donated 5,073 to the institute, most of which were books in English and German on agriculture, sociology and economy of Germany and other countries, which he had collected until his retirement from Tokyo University in 1959. Some of these books were collected in early Showa period during his study years in the US and Germany.

In addition, the library has various statistical reports, DAI NIPPON NOKAI HO (Journal of the Agricultural Society of Japan), kanseki (classical Chinese books) and books and journals in Russian, Chinese and Korean.
Visitors to the PRIMAFF (Central Government Building No.4) are required to show their identification cards (e.g. driver license, company ID card) at the main entrance.

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URL http://www.maff.go.jp/primaff/e/index.html