



Summary

Backgrounds

- The food self-sufficiency rate is declining, the spatial, temporal, and social distances from "agriculture" to "food" are expanding, and the distribution that connects the two is also widening.
- However, due to frequent disasters and abnormal weather, and the outbreak of COVID-19 on a global scale, such a food distribution system still needs to fulfill its food supply function within the country or even region, which exposed its vulnerability in emergencies.
- Efforts such as cooperation between different items and industries in rural areas and agriculture in urban areas have been seen. In addition, direct transactions between producers and consumers through electronic commerce are increasing. Therefore, the need for diversification and collaboration between food and agriculture businesses within the local area is even more significant in Japan.

Purpose

- To clarify the changes in food demand trends and consumption behavior accompanying the formation of new lifestyles due to the pandemic.
- To sort out and identify the problems of the existing food distribution system that have become apparent in the emergencies and challenges for stable supply.
- To verify how the various newly tackled agribusinesses and food businesses respond to the extracted issues and how well they respond.
- To find and propose the conditions for building a food supply chain that combines sustainability, stability, and flexibility based on the differences in product characteristics.

Major achievements

- Due to the pandemic outbreak, the movement of people, goods, and money across national borders stagnated, making it difficult to supply food to external demand. Yet, the response to the expanding domestic demand needed to be more. The shift in the importance of food production and distribution strategies for the external market has weakened the system's function to respond to domestic demand in emergencies.
- While oversupply and food loss, which appear as one of the results of downstream-led distribution such as mass retailers, have been observed, the imbalance between supply and demand has become even more pronounced, such as the shortage of foodstuffs for shopping refugees and children's cafeterias. Therefore, it is required to correct the power balance between the players in the food supply chain, strengthen the trading power in the middle and upstream, and realize cooperation.
- Given the long-term impact of COVID-19 and the possibility of future disasters, it is urgent to strengthen the supply system for domestic demand locally.



Prospects of collaboration & Selling point

We propose new values that bridge the gap between "food" and "agriculture," and derive a transformation from standardization of the supply chain to diversification of the value chain.

More details on Dr. Dai's work 

