



MESSAGE

Holding Expectations of IDACA Participants



Mr. Mototsugu Shimasaki
Managing Director,
National Mutual Insurance Federation of
Agricultural Cooperatives

How are all of you who experienced life as IDACA participants?

I am sure that all of you are playing an active part in the governments or cooperative associations and other institutions of various countries and regions.

I work for the National Mutual Insurance Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, or

Zenkyoren, which is a member organization of the JA Group.

With mutual aid and “One for All, All for One” as its principles, JA Kyosairen conducts “a mutual insurance business pertaining to life, buildings and automobiles.”

The mutual insurance business is operated to cover the economic losses that are caused by the death or hospitalization of a policyholder in the event of an accident or illness, by using the fund created by paid premiums calculated based on probability.

The mutual insurance business is also a service for providing economic security through mutual aid. It contributes to enhancing the economic and social status of members and users.

We would like all participants to do their best, by all means, in spreading the mutual insurance business operated by the cooperatives in their own countries.

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As a member of the JA Group, JA Kyo-sairen will provide maximum support to IDACA (Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia), in which you all participate.

Please be confident and take pride in encouraging younger colleagues to participate in training courses. We will also pro-

vide help.

In closing, I expect that all you, IDACA participants, will put into practice even small ideas that you learned in Japan and that the people of your countries will conduct vigorous activities in accordance with the principle of cooperatives (mutual aid) so that they can lead happier lives.

REPORTS ON TRAINING COURSES / SEMINARS

32nd RECA Seminar Food Security – Seminar on Global Trends and Perspectives

The 32nd RECA Seminar took place for about two weeks from July 12 on the theme of “Food Security – Global Trends and Perspectives.” It brought together 20 senior bureaucrats (including members of the Secretariat) from 12 countries of Asia and Africa who were involved in agricultural development. At the seminar, following a keynote speech by the director of the FAO Liaison Office in Japan, broad discussions were held on such topics as “Global Food Supply and Demand Issue,” “Global Warming,” “Aging of Rural Communities and Farmers,” and “Fostering

Farm Successors” in line with the theme of the seminar. Recommendations were made on such matters as the importance of concrete support measures that would help poor farmers increase agricultural production in a sustainable way and secure more income.

The participants then went to Hyogo Prefecture for a study visit of the Hyogo Agri Life Center, Yashiro Office Complex, Kasai Agricultural Extension Center, JA Hyogo Minami, and Yahata Corporation for training future leaders of agriculture.



With the officials of JA Hyogo Minami

Learning Much from Seminar and Field Trips



Ms. Chou Miao-Fang
Senior Specialist,
Economic Section
Council of Agriculture,
Executive Yuan

Taiwan's agriculture is similar to Japan's. Through this seminar and field trips, I gained a lot of experiences and ideas. From the agricultural policy to the agricultural cooperative system learned during the 32nd RECA Seminar in Japan, the Council of Agriculture plans to improve the food security policy and actions in Taiwan, such as increasing the food self-sufficiency ratio, encouraging the consumption of locally produced food and securing the food stocks.

I totally agree with the opinion and views concerning Japan's agricultural policy and realization of multifunctionality and sustainability of agriculture that Japan asserts. Taiwan's agriculture sector has been facing many challenges, such as a low level of food self-sufficiency, aging farmers, the large acreage of set-aside farmlands, the small scale of farming, the soaring price of fertilizers, natural disasters accelerated by climate change, and the rapid changes in the world food economy. Agriculture is the foundation of sustainable development in Taiwan. The practical and timely solutions to the current problems are crucial for sustainable agriculture. Agriculture is not only providing agricultural production but also keeping the multifunctionality and sustainability of agriculture to people.

1st ICA/Japan Training Project for Capacity Building for Marketing

The 1st training course of the ICA/Japan training project for "Capacity Building for Marketing" for the current fiscal year (FY2010) was held from July 26 to August 19 with 18 participants from ASEAN member countries including Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The current fiscal year will be the final fiscal year for the project, which began in 2006 as a part of the "Japan-ASEAN Farmers' Partnership Project." In addition to lectures on the introduction of projects with emphasis placed on the JA's organization and marketing, the mechanism of distribution of agricultural products, and efforts toward securing the safety and reliability of agricultural products,



At the JA Oura Tatebayashi Collection & Shipping Facility

study visits were conducted for four days and three nights in Gunma Prefecture. Through visits to JA Tone Numata and JA Oura Tatebayashi, the participants learned about the practice of marketing, including joint shipping and direct sales.

Useful Training for the Co-operatives and Farmers in the Region



Ms. Savitri Singh
Advisor,
International Cooperative
Alliance – Asia & Pacific
(ICA-AP)

The course methodology and contents were thoughtfully designed by experts to fulfill the requirements of the participants. The emphasis was to get the participants to know how the Japanese agriculture marketing system works and what roles are played by agricultural co-operatives, the JA Group.

The course evaluation and feedback showed that participants were able to learn considerably and were satisfied with the training. Most of the participants found the training very useful for their profession as well as for their country. The participants emphasized the usefulness of the training

and desired that ICA and IDACA should continue with such trainings in the future for the benefit of the co-operatives and farmers of the region.

I had a great experience working with the IDACA team and the course management was excellent. The IDACA staff worked on every detail in order to make the program useful and interesting for the participants. A great deal of effort was put in by the course coordinator and the team in designing the course content, selection of resource persons and drafting of background notes.

The logistics arrangement including food and sightseeing trips were very good. The managing director and other staff took care of every need of the participants and were very quick to help, which created a warm, homely and comfortable learning environment.

Overall, it was a great experience for participants to stay and study at IDACA.

Training Course on Thai Community Leader Development

Based on the “Japan-Thailand Economic Partnership Agreement,” the JA Group has conducted a three-year project in Thailand starting in FY2007 regarding personnel contributions. As a part of that project, IDACA, commissioned by JICA, conducted a training course titled “Development of Community Leaders for Improving and Vitalizing Rural Communities and the Livelihood of Farmers in Thailand” at IDACA. This fiscal year, the Government of Thailand requested through JICA that a training course be carried out as a follow-up and wrap up to that project. The training course was held

from August 23 through September 16, 2010, on the theme of fostering community leaders and the improvement of liveli-



At A-Coop store "Cook Garden" in JA Kinan

hoods, with the participation of 16 people in total, including eight government officers and eight officials of agricultural cooperatives.

In study visits, the participants visited and observed JA Wakayama Prefectural Union, JA Kinan, Akitsuno Garten, the Persimmon and Peach Laboratory of the Wakayama Fruit Tree Experiment Station, JA Wakayama Education Center,

etc. in Wakayama Prefecture. In addition, the participants had a chance to exchange their views with the members of the JA Kinan Women's Association.

The participants were very impressed with the warm reception given by JA officials and the feelings that the people of the local communities had toward cherishing the natural environment of the sea and mountains.



With the experts of Thai Project at JA Zenchu

Learning How to Turn Crisis into Opportunity and Success



Mr. Prateep Homjunya
Director,
Cooperative Technology
Transfer Center
Cooperative Promotion
Department (CPD)

I had the chance to travel to Japan for the first time from August 23 to September 9, 2010. I have learned valuable lessons from IDACA, which performed the services with a heart and a smile. The case studies that are based on facts were used as the best practices, particularly how to turn crisis into opportunity and become success-

ful. I've transferred the knowledge and experience for training cooperative programs, focusing on the cooperative leaders in Thailand, at any opportunity.

Everyone wishes to have a good quality of life. Birth, aging, pain, death: none are avoidable; the important thing is how to find happiness through them all. The social program "Healthy for 100 longevity" is a project that I am very impressed with. You can find all the answers in Japanese society. I'd like to thank the institute of JICA, IDACA, particularly the Japanese people whose taxes paid for this training course.

Introducing JA Activities—Part 1: JA Platform

Agricultural cooperatives in Japan have established the “JA Platform” as management principles and the code of conduct to be shared by the members, the officials, and the employees.

Taking into consideration the fundamental values and roles of the JA, the JA Platform shows the direction of develop-

ment of the JA movement. It also naturally takes the Cooperative Principles of ICA into consideration as well.

In addition, in order for the members, the officials and the employees of agricultural cooperatives to share the principles and fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities expected of them, the JA

JA Platform What we, JA, aim at

We, the members, the officials and the employees of the JA, hereby act based on the fundamental definition, value and principles of the cooperative movement, namely, autonomy, independence, participation, democratic management, fairness and solidarity, etc.

At the same time, we strive to reform the organization, business and management, forecasting the changes of socio-economic environment with a global perspective. Furthermore, we make utmost efforts to realize a more democratic, fair and equitable society in close linkage with cooperators in the local community, in the country and in the world.

To that end, we commit ourselves to sincerely playing a social role as an organization deeply rooted in agriculture and the local communities.

- To promote the development of regional agriculture, thereby protecting foods, greenery and water of our country
- To create an affluent local community where people can live with a sense of security through our contributions to the environment, culture and welfare
- To attain the fruits of cooperation through active participation in the JA and solidarity
- To ensure a sound management of the JA to live up to the expectations of the people based on the autonomous, independent and democratic management of the JA
- To pursue a life worth living through learning and practicing the principles of cooperation.

Platform has the features of a unified platform established for the members, the officials, and the employees.

The JA Platform was adopted as a renewed resolution at the 21st JA National Congress in 1997 by revising the “Agricultural Cooperative Members’ Platform,” which had been established in 1951 on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of the issuance of the Agricultural Cooperatives Law. The JA National Congress is a meeting held once every three years by the representatives of agricultural cooperatives across the nation to finalize the basic policy regarding the agricultural cooperative movement over the next three years. Prior to the Congress, the members, the officials, and the employees of agricultural cooperative organizations in various parts of the country hold organizational talks on the agenda of the Congress, in which their opinions are



The 25th JA National Congress held in October 2009

reflected.

In addition, efforts are made to have the JA Platform reflected in the daily activities of the members, the officials and the employees through such means as having the JA Platform posted at workplaces of agricultural cooperatives, recited at general assembly meetings, general representative meetings, and various other meetings, and carried on various publications.

VOICES OF FORMER PARTICIPANTS

Joy of Cooperation



Mr. Ardavan Nazari
Extension and Education
Manager,
Iran Cotton Union

When I graduated from university with an MSc of agriculture, I had a very slight vision about the cooperative movement in my country. After starting my job at the Iran Cotton Union in 2002, I found

out that cooperatives are the answer to the poor and small landholding farmers. Through these years I was in touch with 30 cooperative members around the country. I have been feeling and touching upon all their problems to establish and form a cooperative that is able to stand on its own without any governmental supports and as a result to keep away any possible interference. I have been visiting successful and unsuccessful cooperatives and always searching for the perfect results in my mind.

One day I was informed that ICA was conducting a course with the sponsorship of MAFF and I had no idea that this was the chance to get all my questions answered about cooperatives. After 47 days of studying and a visit in India and seven days of a study visit in Iran along with my 11 fellow participants from nine Asian countries, we had a chance to study and visit JAs in Japan. During our

stay in Japan I was able to finally see the fruit of hard work and cooperation in the form of JA.

It was an amazing opportunity to be a part of the ICA-Japan training course in 2009 and I hope that cooperatives in my country will follow in the footsteps of cooperators in Japan to enhance farmers' income and livelihood through cooperatives.

Request:

To all ex-IDACA participants

Dear Mr. and Ms. IDACA Alumni:

IDACA wishes, above all, that its ties with you remain solid and long-lasting. So, why not keep us updated on your recent status and how we can reach you.

Please write us if your place of work, your position or your address have changed. There is no specific form that you have to follow in sending the information, but the following may serve as an example. We would appreciate it so much if you could mail (or e-mail) or fax it to IDACA, for the attention of Eiko Oshita.

Name (nationality):

Training course / Seminar

Changes

1) New address (home, telephone number and fax number):

2) New place of work (office, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address):

3) New position:

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