

Report of the Regional Seminar on
**MARKETING OF FRUITS & VEGETABLES
THROUGH COOPERATIVES**

Tokyo (Japan)

May 17 - 27, 1970



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia
43 Friends Colony, New Delhi-14, India

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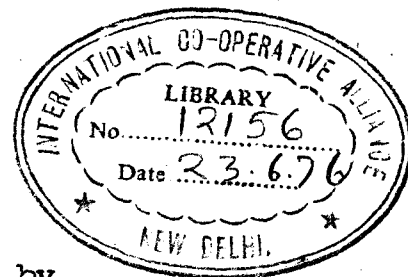
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REGIONAL SEMINAR ON "MARKETING OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
THROUGH COOPERATIVES"

HELD AT TOKYO (JAPAN) - MAY 17-27, 1970

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pk/21st September, 1970

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COOPERATIVES", TOKYO (JAPAN), 17th TO 27TH MAY 1970

R E P O R T

I. Introductory

A Regional Seminar on Marketing of Fruits and Vegetables through Cooperatives was held at Tokyo, Japan, from 17th to 27th May, 1970, under the joint auspices of the ICA Regional Office and Education Centre for South-East Asia and the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan. The Seminar which was attended by observers and resource persons was held at the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia in Tokyo. The countries represented at the Seminar were Ceylon, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand. Observers were from the FAO, ILO and the APO, USA and Japan. Lecturers and other resource persons were drawn from Australia, Ceylon, Philippines, Japan and a consultant from the Asian Development Bank to present papers on specialised subjects at the various sessions of the Seminar.

Mr. K. Fujimoto, Chief of the International Department of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, Japan, while welcoming the delegates and observers to the Seminar, stressed the need for continued collaboration between the ICA and the CUAC in organising joint activities from year to year. He mentioned the gradual shifting of emphasis in the seminars jointly organised by the two agencies towards more technical

subjects and added that the Commodity Conference and the Regional Seminar were the two examples signifying this trend.

Mr. M.V. Madane, Joint Director (Technical Assistance and Trade) of the ICA RO & EC, welcomed the observers on behalf of the ICA and explained the background efforts which led to the organisation of the two activities in Japan this year. He thanked the CUAC and its leadership as well as the past and present Managing Directors of the IDACA for their active collaboration in organising the joint activities in Tokyo. Mr. H. Togawa, Managing Director of the IDACA, welcomed the delegates to the Seminar and expressed the hope that the deliberations would lead to more practical results in the field. He added that IDACA was always happy to welcome the delegates from Asian countries and provide them facilities available in the Institute.

II. Present Position in the Region

The delegates attending the Seminar reviewed the present position concerning the marketing of fruits and vegetables in their respective countries and highlighted some of the problems they are facing in developing this activity. A number of delegates also mentioned the development programmes which they intend to undertake for strengthening the marketing activity in this field. The following is a brief summary of the factual position in the countries represented at the Seminar.

1. Ceylon

The organisation of fruits and vegetables marketing in Ceylon was based on the overall programme formulated by the government. The Ceylon Agricultural Producers Cooperative Societies Union, which is the apex organisation of cooperatives producing fruits and vegetables was providing transport and marketing facilities both on a wholesale and retail basis.

Sixteen per cent of the total vegetable production in Ceylon was at present marketed through cooperatives. The Federation also provides agricultural inputs and credit to the producers of fruits and vegetables.

The cooperative organisations in Ceylon are facing severe competition from the merchants who not only buy from the farmers but also ensure delivery of the produce by giving advances to the producers before the crops are harvested. There was also a lack of proper management with the cooperatives marketing fruits and vegetables and their pricing structure was not geared to competitive business. There was a lack of publicity effort and the secondary organisations expected to undertake these activities were rather weak. There was a lack of marketing and intelligence services for the cooperatives. There were also too many societies in Ceylon doing this activity and most of them were functioning as uneconomic units. The consumer cooperative societies' unions are not at present handling perishables.

It was mentioned that the Government of Ceylon had appointed a Royal Commission to enquire into the problems of the cooperative movement and suggest measures aimed at future development and it was expected that the recommendations of the Commission, when implemented, would lead to the effective reorganisation of the movement.

2. India

The horticultural industry in India, although spread all over the country, is not yet organised in most of the places. As almost all varieties of fruits and vegetables are produced, there was a big potential for developing effective production and marketing to nutritionally supplement the diet of the large population. At present only 20-25% of the fruits and vegetables were marketed by local producers whereas

almost 50% was handled by private traders. There was a great difference in the price paid to the producer and the price charged by the trader from the consumers. Due to lack of an organised institutional structure, marketing activity had not developed to the extent possible. There was a marketing cooperative at the National level as well as federations at the State level. Marketing cooperatives at the district or sub-district level provide marketing facilities. Some of the multipurpose cooperatives undertake marketing of produce for their members. A few specialised cooperatives have also been organised for marketing of fruits and vegetables such as bananas, oranges, apples, etc.

There were quite a few good examples of cooperatives handling fruits and vegetables and they were also engaged in their export. As the returns to the producers were much higher, in respect of horticultural crops and vegetables, it was possible to organise successfully cooperative activity in the country provided sufficient incentives and assistance were assured to the producer. The lack of adequate grading, processing and cold storage facilities have added many difficulties to the present marketing activity. The delegate from India felt that as horticultural production needed special facilities for grading, packaging, processing and marketing, it was necessary to have specialised types of cooperatives for this purpose. India has a number of small processing units for fruits and vegetables, and there are plans for developing large-scale plants in the country.

3. Iran

Iran was a large fruit growing country and a wide variety of fruits and vegetables are produced under the different climatic conditions prevailing in the northern and southern parts of the country. Cooperatives in Iran were multipurpose institutions undertaking various activities for

the benefit of farmers. Apart from credit, some marketing facilities are being provided by rural multipurpose cooperatives under the general guidance of the Central Organisation for Rural Cooperatives of Iran. The activities extend to storage as well as grading and packaging. Efforts are being made to develop communications and transport systems with a view to facilitate effective marketing of agricultural produce through urban centres. The export of fruits and vegetables is being undertaken by cooperatives through a number of centres established in Teheran, Isfahan, Shiraz, etc. The CORC extended credit to producers until last year but now the work has been transferred to the Agricultural Cooperative Bank of Iran. There was a yearly review by a Committee concerning the problems of cooperative business.

4. Japan

The marketing of fruits and vegetables as well as exports by cooperatives are handled under the general supervision of the National Marketing Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan (Zenhanren). The activities at the national level are coordinated by Zenhanren which also organises direct marketing through some of its distribution centres. The Prefectural Federations at the provincial level also have their marketing outlets for the benefit of the producers and the multipurpose cooperative societies.

Marketing by the cooperatives is done through two methods, one of which is through unconditional consignment and the other through conditional marketing. With a view to achieving economies of scale and increasing bargaining power, the system of planned marketing and pool accounting is followed. This enables the national and the prefectural marketing organisations to sell products at the various terminal markets and other centres in a balanced manner

ensuring the delivery of stable quantities of produce and assisting in the stabilisation of prices. The main aim of the marketing structure in Japan is to enable the small farmer to obtain advantages which normally would accrue only to large producers. This is being done by joint marketing of the produce in the most efficient manner.

There is a very effective link between the marketing and the production of these commodities at various centres in Japan. The market intelligence and market research services provided by the National and Provincial federations enable the multipurpose cooperatives to plan production of certain categories of fruits and vegetables on an organised basis. There are extensive grading and storage facilities throughout the country for these products and a few processing plants have also been established for converting the primary produce into marketable commodities. With a view to ensuring a continuous supply of fruits and vegetables throughout the year, green house production has become a very common practice in Japan and it is now possible to produce a large variety of fruits and vegetables in the winter months. The system of rotating the crops around the year has also been developed taking into consideration the supply and demand position in the markets. The rotation of the crops as well as acreage is changed from year to year according to the market situation.

The farm block system developed for ensuring efficient production has helped the cooperatives to be very consistent in ensuring smooth marketing activities on a continuing basis. The changing food habits of the people in Japan and the consumption of non-traditional types of fruits and vegetables has given a great filip to the production of fruits in the country.

5. Korea

The Republic of Korea is a big producer of apples and of a variety of fruits and vegetables. However, the proportion of marketing through cooperatives was rather low. Most of the fresh vegetables and fruits are sold in the market direct to the consumers. Agricultural cooperatives have established marketing centres in five major cities of the country where wholesale trade is undertaken in competition with the private traders. Although there were a few storage facilities they were a small percentage of the total demand in respect of storage, grading and processing. Except for the apple growing cooperatives in the central part of the country, specialised cooperatives have not been developed for handling various fruits and vegetables. Transport, packaging and standardization have also not been very much developed although efforts are being made to develop domestic and international trade through the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation.

6. Malaysia

Malaysia has a number of tropical fruits which are sold both in the domestic as well as foreign markets. The acreage under fruits and vegetables is insignificant compared to the vast areas covered by commercial crops like rubber, coconut, palm oil, etc. Most of the fruits were seasonal in nature and owing to the lack of storage facilities it was not possible to sell them round the year. Vegetable gardens were not very developed and the choice vegetables were not available in plenty. Some vegetables such as onions, garlic and tomatoes were imported on a large scale. The climate was not suitable for most of the popular varieties of fruits except in some areas in the Cameron Highlands. Popular tropical fruits such as pineapple are processed and exported to a number of countries. The cooperatives hardly play any

role in this operation except in Southern Johore where direct marketing of pineapple is undertaken by cooperatives. However, there was potential for developing fruits and vegetable marketing through cooperatives in Malaysia. There was also not much development in respect of grading, transportation, market research and intelligence. The cooperatives lack funds to undertake marketing activities of this nature. The delegate from Malaysia stated that there was a need for developing a wholesale market, such as the one organised by Zenhanren in Tokyo. There was also a lack of adequate cooperative retail outlets which could effectively market fruits and vegetables.

7. Pakistan

Pakistan had a variety of fruits and vegetables but most of the commodities are sold fresh in the markets nearest to the producing centres. Most of the fruits were seasonal and a few items are processed to meet the domestic demand. Grading is done only by retailers and marketing has not been organised very efficiently even in the private sector. The agents were directly connected with the producers and had a command over the produce even before the produce was harvested. In each district there were three to four markets which provided an outlet for selling fruits and vegetables by the farmers. Owing to the lack of proper transport and communication facilities, it was not possible to market the produce at the best possible centres. Packaging, storage and grading had not so far been organised by cooperatives. The West Pakistan Consumer Cooperative Society which is at present organising cooperative super markets plans to organise processing and marketing activities for fruits and vegetables also. Pakistan has regulated markets which restrict the freedom of private traders to market produce at their discretion and ensure fair prices to the farmers in the disposal of their agricultural produce.

8. Philippines

Philippines was a major producer of tropical fruits, 80 to 90 per cent of which were sold fresh direct in the market. There were two canning factories which produce their own raw-material, such as pineapple. A few international companies have agreements with local companies for producing tropical crops on a commercial scale. This has ensured constant supply of fresh fruits to the international companies such as Delmonte. The delegate from the Philippines mentioned that there was a great scope for developing marketing of tropical fruits through cooperatives in the country.

The present pattern of producing vegetables is mainly through home gardens, rotation with cereals and on a commercial scale. There are limited specialised facilities for quality control, packaging, storage and transport and most of the packaging is done in bamboo baskets. There is a severe competition from private merchants. Mention was made of the Greater Manila Terminal Food Market costing US\$ 27 million and which is being developed on an area of 120 hectares. It was hoped that the creation of this market would greatly assist the development of marketing of fruits and vegetables.

9. Thailand

Many varieties of fruits are produced in Thailand, most of which are tropical. The climate which is warm and humid prevents the fruit from lasting for a longer period and the handling of such fruit is therefore very difficult. The cooperatives which have created facilities for marketing of cereals have not yet ventured into the field of fruit and vegetable marketing on any significant scale. There is a reluctance to handle perishable items, since there is keen competition and so much risk. Mention was made of the establishment of the National Marketing and Purchasing

Federation in Thailand which is expected to be in a position to undertake marketing of agricultural produce including fruits and vegetables at a future date.

10. Australia

Australia was a big producer of a variety of fruits and vegetables and 90 per cent of the fruits were sold by seven cooperative organisations. Almost the entire quantity of dried fruits were sold by cooperatives, as also 98 per cent of pineapple. There were extensive facilities for processing of citrus fruits and pineapple. The prices for the commodities marketed are fixed by the National Boards created for various commodities and the producers cooperative arranges for the packaging and delivery of the fruits to the markets. Cooperatives have stalls in city markets on an individual basis. In respect of apples and pears, although the fruits are produced by cooperatives, the export is regulated by the Boards created by the government. In respect of vegetables the cooperatives in Australia handle a very small percentage of the total volume marketed. They also have a few processing facilities for vegetables. The farmers do not get any special or concessional credit from any cooperative agency and have to obtain their financial requirements from normal banking agencies. Processing cooperatives, however, get concessional finance from the Reserve Bank of Australia.

11. Remarks by Observers

The observers from the Asian Productivity Organisation and the UN/FAO made a few opening remarks on behalf of their respective organisations and mentioned the areas in which special interest has been taken by their organisations for improving production, processing and marketing of fruits and vegetables. The representative of the APO made a special

mention of the Agricultural Division established in the APO in 1966 and added that a number of projects aimed at providing agricultural inputs to farmers are being initiated through his organisation. The representative of the FAO referred to the special interest of the FAO in developing agricultural production, processing and marketing in respect of all the commodities including fruits and vegetables and emphasized the need on the part of cooperative organisations for developing the necessary capacity and organisational structure for undertaking the production and marketing of fruits and vegetables. He added that FAO would be willing to offer technical assistance in the above fields.

III. Planned Production for Effective Marketing

At present, marketing of fruits and vegetables was based mainly on the surplus available from out of the total production by agricultural producers. The cooperative organisations, by and large, engaged in such marketing activity have so far attempted the marketing of the produce in the markets nearest to their cooperatives. The only exceptions in the Region were in respect of Japan and Australia which have a highly developed marketing and market oriented production system for fruits and vegetables. The other countries in the Region have a long way to go in reaching the required standards which are a pre-condition to effective marketing in respect of any of the agricultural commodities. This being the case, the Seminar devoted considerable attention to the question of organised production with a view to developing effective marketing.

1. Kigezi District Vegetable Growers Cooperative Union

Before the question of production was discussed two case studies were presented- one on a cooperative in the Kigezi district of Uganda and the other of a cooperative marketing

organisation in Ceylon. The experiences of the Kigezi District Vegetable Growers Cooperative Union presented at the Seminar related to the organisation of marketing of vegetables in the most effective manner. The production of non-indigenous vegetables in Kigezi district, which was started in 1914, has been growing steadily and the local inhabitants developed a taste for these varieties. A vegetable scheme initiated in 1951 provided a spring-board for initiating cooperative marketing activities through the above organisation. In 1961, the Department of Cooperative Development assisted in the formation of a cooperative for this purpose and the membership of this organisation was recorded to be growing from year to year. Later in 1965, the Kigezi Union started operating through its seven primary societies. The decentralisation was attempted mainly with a view to dividing responsibility for buying, grading, packaging and other services. The main features of the working of these organisations was that they marketed top quality vegetables and provided extension services, agricultural inputs and other facilities in order to achieve the targeted quality production. Agronomic practices were introduced which resulted in systematic crop rotation, disease control and education of farmers. Quality control was strictly enforced and detailed grading by primary societies as well as additional grading control before weighing and buying was introduced. The Union staff also checked the grades while buying the product from the primary society. The primary societies were assisted in developing their accounting and book-keeping systems. The pricing policy was aimed to adjust prices to those of competing crops in order to encourage production of the desired vegetables. The Union, in a very few cases, had to ask the primary societies to accept a lower price owing to fluctuations in market prices. In case of over supply, the

society always gave the option to the producer to sell the excess quantity to the society at a reduced rate. The government assisted this process by declaring vegetables as controlled commodities which automatically restricted all the transactions through licensed dealers. The Union has a modest publicity campaign through pamphlets, exhibits, newspapers and radio.

2. The Palugama "Link-up" Scheme

The Palugama "Link-up" Scheme in Ceylon (also known as the Udapalatha "Link-up" Scheme) consisted of providing the credit needs of the farmers both for production and subsistence purposes, the determination of the credit needs of the producers sufficiently in advance, the issuing of loans in kind, the delivery of the produce to the societies' collecting centres through a marketing agreement, and the adjustment of the sale proceeds against the credit of the societies and the members through a systematic linkage among the financing and marketing agencies. In other words, the "link up" scheme was based on a high degree of cooperation among the cooperatives as well as of the extension department of the government. The resistance provided by the private traders could be met only because of the effective coordination of these agencies. The link-up scheme was an attempt to bring together all the forces operating in the fields of production and marketing. The scheme also relied on education of the members, credit on personal security, and efficient management through a committee. The whole process of marketing was supported by an efficient system of collection and transport of vegetables to the marketing centres. The funds for the operation were provided through the People's Bank.

3. An Example from Japan

To provide a basis for discussion on the question of planned production for better marketing, the Seminar was also given an opportunity to visit the Yaizu City Agricultural Cooperative Society and study its various facilities. In addition to this, a reference document was also prepared on the working of the society with special emphasis on the needs of production planning for better marketing. The society has attempted planned production through the organisation of commoditywise groups of producers within the society and by installing important facilities for grading, cooling and storage. A very thorough commoditywise production planning programme undertaken by the society has resulted not only in production of uniform commodities but has also assisted marketing operations in fruits and vegetables. The commoditywise groups of producers, through the assistance provided by the specialised management, have been able to effect a planned distribution of various kinds of vegetables on the basis of the skills and interests developed by the members.

The delegates to the Seminar were in general agreement concerning the need for planned production for effective marketing. On the basis of the examples discussed at the Seminar, the delegates felt that no cooperative marketing activity would be meaningful unless the first consideration was given to the question of targeting a market. Unless the cooperatives aim at a particular market, investigate requirements concerning quantity, quality, standards and specifications, they would not be able to make any impact in a new market. The competitors in the field, their capacity to sell as well as their weaknesses will have to be thoroughly analysed by the cooperatives if they were to be successful in such a competitive set up. It was

emphasized that most of the markets for these commodities were buyers' markets.

The Seminar felt that the cooperatives must therefore attempt a planned production of the commodities which they want to sell in the domestic as well as the foreign markets. Planned production could be undertaken through the reorganisation of farming patterns, establishment of farm blocks, modernisation of production techniques, improvement of seeds and the supply of suitable agricultural inputs. It was felt that unless the cooperatives are in a position to supply produce of the required quantity and quality, it may be futile from a long-term point of view to attempt the marketing of products which may not continue to hold the market in the face of competition from suppliers of superior qualities.

4. Extension and Role of Government

The delegates discussed the question of planned production in the context of present capacity and resources of the cooperatives in the Region. It was felt that for a planned production of fruits and vegetables the cooperatives would need adequate credit as well as agricultural inputs from the national or secondary organisations. The question of adequacy of credit was discussed in the light of requirements of the producer for production and consumption purposes. The delegates were of the view that inadequate credit is more harmful than no credit, and production credit should therefore include credit for the day-to-day needs of the producer. Experiences from many countries were narrated concerning the practice of private traders who can make advances to producers before the harvesting season. If the cooperatives were to advance adequate funds to the farmers for all their needs, it may not be necessary for them to seek financial accommodation from the traders. The extension

services available through government departments or similar agencies should be availed of by the cooperatives and an effective coordination should be developed between the two with a view to achieving timely production of the desired commodities. The cooperatives should also coordinate their extension activities with those of the government by timely supply of seeds, fertilizers as well as adequate irrigation facilities.

IV. Facilities Required For Effective Marketing

1. Storage and Grading

The Seminar delegates discussed at considerable length the question of providing grading facilities to the producers of fruits and vegetables. A basis was provided by an example taken from the Yaizu Agricultural Cooperative Society as well as the Chiba Prefectural Economic Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan. It was felt that in order to obtain maximum economic benefits for the members, the produce marketed by them must be brought to the marketing centres in the graded form rather than in bulk. The pre-graded commodities would have a better chance of obtaining fair prices than those in bulk. Quality control and grading facilities should be made available both at the level of the primary society as well as at the secondary organisations. These facilities will certainly help in increasing the commercial value of the product.

2. Processing

The delegates were of the opinion that processing facilities by cooperatives in the Region were far from adequate and were not sufficiently modern. The example of the Leeton Cooperative Cannery Limited in Australia was presented as a case in point for discussion. It was felt that processing activity undertaken by this cannery was

successful mainly because of the close relationship developed between the producer and the processing organisation, the contractual obligation agreed to between the two parties, the fixation of a minimum price for the fruit delivered by the producer, and the willingness of the cooperative to absorb surplus production during peak seasons. The Seminar felt that with the ever-changing eating and buying habits of the people in the Region, there will be a gradual increase in the demand for processed fruit and vegetables and so the cooperatives should now take this opportunity of entering this field so as to gradually build up their capacity to meet the expected demand. It was felt that the processing activity should be undertaken on the basis of a deliberate policy to process quality goods in quantities determined by the requirements of specific markets. On the basis of a market analysis of the area in which the products are to be sold the processing activity should be undertaken after ensuring a constant supply of raw-materials and rationalising the production process. In other words, a very close relationship between the producer and the processing unit must be developed and a contractual obligation must be placed on the parties concerned.

Processing activity undertaken only with a view to disposing of the surplus will not be effective but also will not operate on an economic basis. The Seminar discussed the question of utilising the idle capacity in the processing plants and suggested that in order to avoid under-utilization, a thorough study must be made of the rotation of crops in different parts of the country and of the availability of supplies from various sources. With proper planning it should be possible to maximise the utilisation of the capacity for processing seasonal crops. Where more than one crop is harvested it may be necessary to store one of them before the more delicate and perishable commodity

is processed. In order to maintain an efficient operation on a continuing basis, the processing unit should have a strong link with the producers through an effective transport and communication system, which will ensure the formulation of a realistic time-table for the delivery of the produce to the processing centre.

The Seminar also discussed the possibility of joint ventures among cooperatives and other organisations so as to develop technical know-how and undertake production of fruits and vegetables on a commercial scale. The Seminar suggested that the ICA should assist in exploring the possibility of establishing such ventures.

3. Cooperative Distribution Centre

While discussing the facilities necessary for effective marketing operations, examples of agricultural cooperatives in Japan were examined. The delegates also had an opportunity of visiting the wholesale centre for fruits and vegetables established by Zenhanren in Saitama Prefecture near Tokyo. The special features of the marketing facilities established by cooperatives in Japan were based on the principle of a clearcut division of responsibilities at different levels. There was no overlapping in the functions and the rationalisation of distribution of commodities through the central wholesale markets in Japan was planned on the basis of a network of market intelligence throughout the country.

The marketing activities at the village level involved planned production and shipment, grading and packaging, joint marketing on the basis of pooling account system, packaging, storage and workshop facilities. At the prefectural level the organisation prepared estimates of future demand and supply within the prefecture, organised production on the basis of the estimates and regulated the

shipments. They also prescribed the standards, organised the transport system, established distribution centres within the prefecture, established cold storages and operated the central wholesale markets in the prefecture. At the national level the organisation estimated the total demand and rationalised the system of production and shipment, not only regulating the marketing of produce through the central wholesale market but also organising exports.

The Central Organisation had an extensive market research and information network on a nationwide basis. It had distribution centres in each of the large cities and operated the wholesale market mentioned above. Extensive research was undertaken to analyse the data received from various sources as well as from the prefectural federations. The success of the Japanese marketing system was mainly due to the close coordination among the various agencies and the very effective communication system developed by the agricultural cooperative movement.

The delegates felt that with a view to developing an effective marketing system in their respective countries, it was necessary to establish market intelligence facilities and to undertake extensive research. There was also an urgent need to reorganise the marketing structures in order to link the marketing centres with the producing centres for which transport and communication facilities must be effectively linked. While creating the facilities for various marketing operations, care should be taken to see that the capacities created for grading, processing and packaging should be fully utilised. The question of mechanising the grading and other operations should be dealt with taking into consideration the resources available within the movement as also the problem of surplus labour.

The delegates discussed the Zenhanren system of marketing without resorting to auctions. It was felt that this system not only eliminates middlemen, but also ensures the delivery of quality products at the appointed time to the private retailers, consumer cooperatives and other institutional groups. If proper storage and pre-packing facilities are available at such centres, it should be possible for marketing organisations to obtain higher returns for the producers. The delegates, however, cautioned that such a centre must be supported by effective market research and intelligence. The possibility of introducing cooperative products through bazaars was discussed and it was felt that this should be done only when organised marketing activity had not been developed. The bazaars could be used only to dispose of the surplus at the nearest outlets. However, in order to develop an efficient marketing function, the cooperative must aim at creating marketing facilities of its own and representing its producers at the terminal markets in each cities. The Seminar also stressed the need for developing institutional marketing by cooperatives.

The practice prevailing in certain countries in the Region of regulation of markets by governments was discussed. It was felt that in order to avoid malpractices by private traders and to encourage the open auction of the produce brought by the producers in the central market, the governments should be requested to regulate the markets for fruits and vegetables where they have not already done so. It was mentioned that regulation of markets in respect of certain commodities have helped the farmers to obtain higher returns. In the light of experience in regulated markets for other items, efforts should be made to include fruits and vegetables into the regulated market system.

Discussing the system of unconditional consignment and the pooling account system in Japan, the delegates felt that unconditional consignments was the most acceptable form of contract between the cooperative society and the producer in the prevailing circumstances. As the cooperatives were ensuring the distribution of produce by the members through centres offering the most favourable terms, the producer was not likely to lose anything through the system. The pooling account system also enabled the society to operate on a large-scale and to influence the flow of commodities in the market. Most of the cooperative organisations in the Region were also functioning on the unconditional consignment basis although in a few cases outright purchases had been effected.

The Seminar devoted considerable attention to the question of returns to the producer vis-a-vis the ultimate price paid by the consumer. It was felt that as the marketing cooperative societies were representatives of the agricultural producers, it was their responsibility to obtain the maximum prices for their members, for the produce sold by them through the society. While marketing cooperatives can attempt to eliminate the profits earned by the middlemen by linking the production centres with the consumer markets in metropolitan cities, it was doubtful whether they would be in a position to control the prices at the retailing centres. A question was raised whether the agricultural cooperatives should not take into consideration the interests of the consumers while fixing the prices for agricultural commodities marketed through them. It was felt that there were many factors beyond the reach of the agricultural cooperative organisations which operate in determining the price structure and it may not be possible for these cooperatives to pay as much attention to the interests of the consumers as that of the producer members.

V. Operational Techniques

1. Financial Aspects of Marketing

The Seminar discussed the aspects of marketing fruits and vegetables in the context of the financial implications which normally follow from such operations. Considerable time was also devoted to the question of stabilisation of prices and possible compensatory measures against price fluctuations. The discussion on general financial aspects was based on a case study from the Philippines on the working of the Atok Cooperative Marketing, Inc., which is one of the five actively operating vegetable growers cooperatives in the Mountain province of the Philippines.

The cooperative which was engaged in providing agricultural inputs as well as marketing of fruits and vegetables of the members has been getting technical as well as financial assistance from the Agricultural Credit Administration (ACA) for production and marketing under the ACA Cooperative Financing-Marketing Scheme. ACA also assists the cooperative in importing Irish potatoe seeds. The vegetables are sold by the society to local buyers, to truckers, middlemen and to some cooperatives and the Greater Manila Terminal Food Market (GMTFM).

The case study brought to the notice of the delegates the difficulties faced by the cooperatives in marketing the vegetables in view of the widespread influence of the local traders who normally advance loans before the harvesting season. There were many ways of marketing but in many cases middlemen dominate. Even where the marketing activity was organised by cooperatives on a collective basis, the scheme was not effective. The major difficulties faced were that the figures for receivables from vendors or retailers who obtained the vegetables on credit were unsatisfactory. Substantial deductions were made for

alleged spoilage. The cooperatives failed to sell substantial portions of the deliveries of the members and had also not repaid the loans received from the ACA. There was also the question of mismanagement in the organisations.

The GMTFM was organised to stabilise prices of farm produce and to introduce quantitative and qualitative improvements in food production with a view to raising the incomes of the rural population. To achieve this aim, the facilities in the market were designed to provide a convenient outlet for agricultural food products, to assure the farmers a reasonable return and prompt payment, minimise spoilage, eliminate undesirable practices and promote better quality production. The Atok Cooperative Society and the GMTFM had entered into an agreement under which specified quantities of cabbage and Irish potatoes were delivered to the terminal market. A guaranteed floor price was given to the society on behalf of the members if the actual selling price was below the agreed guarantee price. The marketing costs for goods marketed through private traders were rather high and the GMTFM attempted to eliminate the excess costs.

The delegates felt that the ACA Cooperative Financing-Marketing Scheme was peculiar to the conditions prevailing in the Philippines and might not be suitable in other countries, except with some modifications.

The group devoted considerable attention to the question of government participation in the financial structure of the cooperatives. Examples were given of the practices in different countries, such as government subsidies, loans as well as participation in the equity capital. The delegates felt that as far as possible efforts should be made to raise the capital from the members themselves. However, with a view to raising adequate funds

for various development activities, it might be necessary in certain countries for the governments to assist the cooperatives in some other form. Assistance could be through subsidies for various activities including management subsidy, loans for various development purposes, grants for construction of facilities etc. Some delegates felt that the loans should be given to the cooperatives through the normal banking channels and not through the government although exceptions may have to be made in certain countries.

As regards government's participation in the equity capital, there was a divergence of opinion and some of the delegates did not see particular advantages in such an arrangement. The Seminar, however, recommended that wherever possible, the cooperatives may invite the government to participate in the equity capital if the government is so willing under its normal development policies. Care should, however, be taken to ensure that the government share capital be gradually withdrawn and the members themselves be encouraged to increase their own contributions. Although government contributions to the equity capital might be necessary the governments should not exercise control over the normal democratic functioning of the cooperative organisations.

2. Pricing

The Seminar felt that the cooperatives should not overlook the fact that they have to function in a competitive set up and their business activities must be so formulated as to be able to function efficiently and without causing any loss to the organisation. Care should be taken to see that the member is not put to disadvantage as in such a situation the cooperatives are bound to lose the loyalty of their members. The delegates felt that with a view to

minimising the hardships of the members, the marketing cooperatives should give a greater proportion of advances to the members towards the produce to be delivered by them to the society. There should also be a short time lag between the time of delivery and its marketing and the period of reckoning for pooling purposes should be as short as possible.

3. Guaranteed Floor Price

Various practices concerning guaranteed floor prices were discussed and it was felt that when the producers follow planned production according to the cooperative marketing scheme, the cooperatives should be able to offer, with government support, a guaranteed floor price to the producer for all his produce sold by them. The price so paid should not, however, result in over-supply and production of inferior quality. Such a guarantee should always be related to the quality of the produce. In no case should such a scheme be allowed to disturb the equilibrium of supply and demand in the market.

4. Price Compensation Scheme in Japan

The question of ensuring a minimum price to the producer was also discussed in the light of the present practices in Japan under the Vegetable Price Compensation Scheme which was explained to the delegates by a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Government of Japan. The scheme incorporates the establishment of concentrated vegetable producing areas and of a stabilised marketing system with a view to ensuring a steady supply of vegetables in big cities. Some selected varieties of vegetables are covered by this scheme which is applicable to five areas in different parts of the country. The scheme is based on a demand prospect prepared annually

five years in advance by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, on the basis of studies and certain assumptions concerning acreage, soil conditions, quantities to be produced and on estimates that the cooperatives involved in the production of these vegetables should reach more than two-thirds of the total quantity marketed. The guidance for intensified production is provided through a Coordinator with whose assistance modernisation schemes and production plans are worked out. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry subsidises one-third of the costs of introducing new production techniques.

The aim of the price scheme is to alleviate the hardships faced by the producer when there is a decline in the prices of vegetables and also to prevent decrease in the planted acreage under the vegetables. The amount of compensation to be provided to the farmer is given out of a fund known as the Association of Vegetable Production and Marketing Stabilisation Fund, which was established in 1966. The scheme is applicable to onions, cabbages, Chinese cabbages, carrots, cucumbers and Welsh onions, which are produced in designated producing areas. The fund has been established under the Vegetable Production and Stabilisation Law. Twenty-five per cent of the contributions are made by the cooperative farmer members, twenty five per cent by the prefectural government and the remaining fifty per cent by the national government. The guaranteed price level is fixed on the basis of the sales price in the past years at the Central Wholesale markets in each designated consuming area, and is calculated by multiplying the unit value of the volume delivered to the market. The unit value of the price compensation is normally the equivalent of 80 per cent of the price difference between the guaranteed price and the average actual market price. The scheme does not cover the quantities which are not shipped

to the market. However, consideration is now being given to the introduction of a scheme under which some compensation will be provided for the discarded produce which may be necessary as an effective measure to restore the market price.

The delegates welcomed the introduction of this scheme and felt that such stabilising measures should be taken wherever possible by cooperative organisations to ensure a steady income to the farmer as also to assist in developing planned production of quality vegetables.

VI. Promotional Measures

1. Market Research and Intelligence

The Seminar discussed the need for organising effective market research activities and building up an efficient market intelligence service with a view to increasing efficiency. It was felt that in the absence of a support activity of this nature, marketing organisations will not be able to model their marketing practices on modern business lines. Market research was necessary to identify the potential markets, to identify the commodities to be marketed, to obtain specific information on the quantities and qualities desired by the targeted markets, and to ensure a steady supply of analytical data on the day-to-day market situations. There must be an effective combination of the market intelligence and market research services within the organisation.

However, it was felt that the cooperatives themselves may not be able to undertake market research on an extensive scale owing to the limitation of funds and personnel. The delegates felt that the government or government sponsored agencies should undertake market research which could be used by all agencies interested in

marketing of fruits and vegetables. The experience so far in the field of market research and intelligence by government agencies was far from satisfactory and it was felt that any such research to be undertaken in future should be concerned with the problems which are of direct relevance to the marketing of fruits and vegetables. Even if research is to be undertaken on fundamental problems it should have practical applicability. The priority areas should be identified before any research is undertaken by the government agencies. A commodity by commodity approach was perhaps the best approach in determining the problem areas for research, as it is otherwise difficult to identify such areas. There should be a very effective communication between research agencies and the agencies which are to make use of the research results. The organisations responsible for research should be able to advise the cooperatives and other agencies on the methodology of utilising the findings of the research studies.

The delegates also felt that in addition to the research undertaken by the government or such other agencies, the cooperative federations at the national or provincial levels should have their own research and market intelligence departments on a commodity basis. The cooperatives should consider this activity as an essential part of their normal functions and should try to set aside a certain percentage of their net profits for the purpose. The Seminar felt that at least some quantum of the profits should be allocated for research.

2. Advertising

The Seminar also discussed the utility of advertising for the various products to be marketed by cooperative societies. Although there was a general agreement that advertisement normally assists in increasing

demand in the market, doubts were expressed whether a general advertising campaign would bring benefits direct to the cooperatives alone. It was felt that the advertising should be based on quality aspects of the products to be marketed by cooperatives and the products to be so advertised should be easily identified. People are inclined to buy advertised products and the cooperatives should take advantage of this trend.

As cooperatives were likely to be short of funds for advertising on a big scale, it was suggested that the national organisation should assist their affiliates in undertaking advertising campaigns. It was also felt that advertising is a highly technical job and should be undertaken by qualified persons. Training facilities should also be developed by national federations for personnel engaged in advertising. The delegates also discussed a few aspects of advertising in relation to export marketing. It was suggested that the cooperatives should take advantage of the advertising campaigns by trade promotion agencies created by the government. Some delegates felt that it may be necessary to undertake advertising campaigns in the domestic market with a view to emphasizing the importance of certain varieties of fruits and vegetables and promoting the consumption in the country of other varieties.

3. Training of Personnel

The requirements of training facilities for personnel engaged in production and marketing of fruits and vegetables was discussed in the context of the experiences from the agricultural cooperatives in Japan. The present training practices in Japan at the primary agricultural cooperatives as well as at the prefectural and national federations were explained to the delegates

and the discussion centred round the training and the nature of activities of the farm advisers employed by the primary societies. It was noted that most of the farm advisers had technical knowledge concerning the various aspects of production of fruits and vegetables and assisted in selection of the key products, identification of key crop producers and in the preparation of production plans. They also assisted in field operations and advised on the marketing practices on a continuing basis. The activities of the farm advisers were coordinated by the extension officer of the Government of Japan. It was explained that whereas the extension officer assisted in respect of general planning and development of agriculture, the farm advisers assisted the members of the cooperatives in evolving specific production and marketing patterns. Training facilities for farm advisers are conducted at the primary level as well as at the prefectural and national levels. This was supplemented by on-the-job training through attachment of trainees, as apprentices, to the societies which had made considerable progress in this field.

The delegates emphasized the need for evolving training programmes geared to the actual needs of the producers and suggested that a very effective coordination ought to be developed between the various agencies at different levels with a view to making use of the personnel trained to the maximum extent. The question of evolving a pool of experts to work at various levels was discussed. However, it was felt that as the farm advisers are employees of respective cooperative societies, it may not be possible for developing a cadre for this category of personnel, but the system followed will normally depend on the conditions prevailing in different countries. A point was made that highly qualified persons working at

secondary or higher levels of organisation should also be sent for field work from time to time.

4. Collaboration between Agricultural Cooperatives and Consumer Cooperatives

One of the subjects which came up repeatedly during the discussion was the question of collaboration between the agricultural producer cooperatives and the consumer cooperatives with special reference to the marketing of fruits and vegetables. Emphasis was often laid on the need for developing marketing after taking into consideration the requirements of the consumers. In other words, the marketing of produce by agricultural cooperatives ought to be based on the requirements of the market. There was general agreement that the agricultural cooperatives should produce fruits and vegetables which can be marketed to the best advantage of the producers. Simultaneously, the Seminar emphasized the need for developing a direct relationship between the producers and the consumers cooperatives for the delivery of fruits and vegetables under an agreed formula between the two organisations. The discussion on the subject towards the end of the Seminar was based on examples given from the Japanese Cooperative Movement.

It was pointed out that there are a few noticeable cases of collaboration between the agricultural producers cooperative and the consumer cooperatives. However, such collaboration was of recent origin and the total volume of trade involved through such collaboration was of a marginal nature. While the Seminar emphasized the need for developing such collaboration, it was felt that there were several difficulties in evolving an agreed formula acceptable both to the producers as well as the consumers cooperatives. The most important factor in the process

was the question of price in respect of which there is likely to be a conflict of interest between the two groups. However, it was felt that the question of prices could be resolved by negotiating the price structure on the basis of current market prices and taking into consideration the averages over a period of time. If in some cases the agricultural cooperatives have to accept a slightly lower price or the consumers cooperatives a slightly higher price, it was felt that the elimination of expenses normally incurred for the services of the brokers or wholesale agents may bring, in the ultimate analysis, greater benefits both to the producer and the consumer.

The Seminar, therefore, commended the example of collaboration between the agricultural cooperatives in Japan and a few consumers cooperatives for consideration by other movements in the Region. It was also emphasized that the organisation of wholesale distribution centres such as the one organised by Zenhanren in Tokyo would be an effective way of developing such collaboration. Through such centres the producing cooperatives would be able to deliver agreed quantities of fruits and vegetables to representatives of consumer cooperatives on a continuing basis ensuring both steady supply and quality goods at an agreed price.

The delegates were of the opinion that for an effective collaboration between the two types of organisations it was necessary to have a proper planning at both points of the marketing and purchasing operation. The consumers cooperatives should be able to purchase adequate quantities of fruits and vegetables from a producing organisation with a view to ensuring a proper planning of the required varieties and quantities at the production end, and unless the consumer organisations

themselves are properly organised and are able to determine their requirements sufficiently in advance, it will not be possible for the two organisations to develop effective collaboration.

The delegates also suggested that more information on cooperative marketing in different countries should be made available through the Information Bulletin and other publications of the ICA Regional Office and Education Centre.

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REGIONAL SEMINAR ON " MARKETING OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THROUGH
COOPERATIVES", TOKYO, JAPAN

17th to 27th May 1970

PROGRAMME

		<u>Session No.</u>	
<u>17th May, Sunday</u>			
10.00 a.m.	1		Inauguration
1100 - 1130			Tea Break
1130 - 1300	2		Orientation on Marketing Structure of Fruits and Vegetables in Japan
Afternoon			Free
<u>18th May, Monday</u>	1		Visit to the Yaizu Agricultural Cooperative
<u>19th May, Tuesday</u>	1		Society, Yaizu.
<u>20th May, Wednesday</u>			Visit to the Cooperative Perishable Product Wholesale Centre, Tokyo
<u>21st May, Thursday</u>			
0930 - 1030	3		Presentation of Background papers by participants
1030 - 1045			Tea Break
1045 - 1200			Presentation of background papers (contd)
1200 - 1400			Lunch Break
1400 - 1530			Presentation of background papers (contd)
1530 - 1545			Tea Break
1545 - 1730			Presentation of a Case Study on "The Kigezi District Vegetable Growers Coop Union, Uganda"
		Chairman	Mr M.V.Madane
		Introduced by	Mr G.R.Spinks, Marketing Specialist FAO, Bangkok.
			Cooperative Marketing of Vegetables and Fruits with special reference to the Palugama Link-up Scheme, Ceylon
		Introduced by	Mr C.J.R.Bogollagama Senior Asst.Commissioner Colombo.
		Discussion	

22nd May, 1970. Friday

- 0930 - 1030 4 Need for Planned Production for Effective Marketing of Fruits and Vegetables - Presentation of a Case
- Chairman Mr Shiro Futagami
- Introduced by Mr Yukio Uchida, Chief,
Farm Guidance Section
Yaizu Agri. Coop Society
Yaizu, Japan
- 1030 - 1045 Tea Break
- 1045 - 1200 Discussion
- 1200 - 1400 Lunch Break
- 1400 - 1500 5 Marketing Facilities for Fruits and Vegetables and the role of Cooperatives at different levels in providing facilities
- Chairman Mr G.R.Spinks, FAO, Bangkok
- Introduced by Mr Masao Nakata
Chief, Vegetable Section
Fruits and Vegetable Department
Zenhanren, Tokyo.
- 1500 - 1545 Discussion
- 1545 - 1600 Tea Break
- 1600 - 1730 6 Group discussion on Session No. 4

23rd May, Saturday

- 0930 - 1030 7 Processing Facilities required for improving marketing conditions and for disposing of surpluses and the role of cooperatives at different levels in establishing the processing facilities - Presentation of a Case
- Chairman Mr Eogollagama
- Introduced by Mr B.G.Lowe
General Manager
Leeton Coop Cannery, Leeton
Australia.
- 1030 - 1045 Tea Break
- 1045 - 1200 Discussion

23rd May (contd)

1200 - 1300		Lunch break	
1300 - 1400	8	Plenary on Session No.6	
1400 - 1500	9	Operational Techniques in Fruits and Vegetable Marketing by Cooperatives - "Unconditional Consignment and Pooling Account System"	
		Chairman	Mr S.T.Sundaram
		Introduced by	Mr Kazuo Kizawa Chief, Planning Section Zenhanren, Tokyo
			&
			Mr T Ishibashi Chief, Horticulture Dept. Chiba Prefecture Economic Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, Japan.
1500 - 1515		Tea Break	
1515 - 1615		Discussion	

24th May, Sunday

Free

25th May, Monday

0930 - 1030	10	Operational Techniques in Fruits and Vegetable Marketing by Cooperatives - "Financial Aspects for Marketing Operations and Management"	
		Chairman	Mr V.G.Puranik
		Introduced by	Dr V.U.Quintana Director, Agri Coop & Credit Institute, Laguna.
1030 - 1045		Tea Break	
1045 - 1200	11	Group Discussion on Session No.10	
1200 - 1300		Lunch Break	
1300 - 1400	12	Market Intelligence and Research Services and Advertising facilities required for fruits and vegetables marketing including export, and the role of Coops at different levels	
		Chairman	Mr E.G.Lowe
		Introduced by	Mr Edward Chobanian Asian Development Bank, Bangkok.

25th May (contd)

1400 - 1430		Discussion
1430 - 1445		Tea break
1445 - 1630	13	Plenary on Session No.11

26th May, Tuesday

0930 - 1030	14	Compensatory measures against price fluctuations by cooperatives with special reference to Japanese Experience
		Chairman Mr E Chobanian
		Introduced by Mr Satoshi Obara, Chief, Vegetables & Flowers Section Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Tokyo.
1030 - 1100		Discussion
1100 - 1115		Tea break
1115 - 1215	15	Group discussion on Session No.12
1215 - 1315		Lunch break
1315 - 1400	16	Collaboration between consumers cooperatives and Agricultural Cooperatives
		Chairman Mr H Wickramasinghe
		Introduced by Mr Shiro Futagami Deputy Director, ICA RO & EC New Delhi.
1400 - 1430		Discussion
1430 - 1445		Tea Break
1445 - 1545	17	Plenary on Session 15
1545 - 1645	18	Types of Personnel needed for Fruits and Vegetables Marketing and Contents of Training Programme for the Marketing Personnel.
		Chairman Dr V.U. Quintana
		Introduced by Mr K Tsutsumi Farm Management and Agrl. Policy Department, Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, Tokyo.
1645 - 1715		Discussion

27th May, Wednesday

1000 - 1200		Visit to National Marketing Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, Tokyo.
1200 - 1400		Lunch break
1400 - 1500	19	Final Plenary Session
1500 - 1515		Tea Break
1515 - 1700		Final Plenary Session (contd)
		Closing of the Seminar

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REGIONAL SEMINAR ON " MARKETING OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES THROUGH
COOPERATIVES, TOKYO, JAPAN

17th to 27th May 1970

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- | | | |
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