

Solidarity Message from Hokkaido Farmer's Union

We, Hokkaido Farmer's Union are organized by twenty seven thousand farmers among forty two thousand in Hokkaido, the northernmost part of Japan. Our mission is to improve social and economic status of farmers, and many dairy farmers are core members of ours.

Being recognized as the food producing base of Japan, agriculture, forestry and fisheries including dairy industry has been developed as a main industry in Hokkaido. Therefore, industries associated with agriculture and food industries such as food processing and dairy products are prospered and indispensable for local economy, community and employment.

Dairy farming in Hokkaido, in particular, stands for 57 % of total heads raised in Japan and 52 % of raw milk production, and forms an extensive dairy area together with dairy product plants in operation.

In main dairy areas farmers and their communities concentrate and depend on dairy farming and business under severe climate and geographical conditions. And it is very difficult for them to convert to other agricultural sectors.

If Japan participates in the TPP and abolish import tariffs causing the flood of less expensive products into domestic market, dairy farming and business will be seriously damaged. Dairy farmers are forced to give up farming, dairy workers will lose their jobs and their communities will be ruined.

The prefectural authorities of Hokkaido released the estimate that those products with little quality difference such as butter, powdered skim milk and cheese would be replaced by imported products. The damage to the dairy farming and industry will be decrease of production by JPY 712.3 billion or approximately USD 7,268 million and fifty six thousand jobs will be lost. These damages in the dairy farming and industry stand for 45 % and 50 % respectively of the whole economy of Hokkaido.

Unexceptional tariff abolition including sensitive products such as dairy and other agricultural products is being discussed in the TPP negotiation will endanger food sovereignty, coexistence of diversified agriculture, food safety and stable supply of food. We can never accept it.

The TPP will ruin agriculture and farm communities of every country. TPP will damage employment and livelihood of ordinary people. We are strongly opposing to the TPP.

Let us stand up and oppose to the TPP hand in hand!!

Fujio YAMADA, Chairperson of Hokkaido Farmer's Union