

Experiences with Census of Agriculture in Korea

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ABSTRACT: A brief description of the Agricultural Census conducted in Korea in 1995 is presented.

1. Introduction

In Korea, the first Agricultural Census was taken in 1960 under the recommendation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (UN/FAO). The Census was taken every ten years until 1990. In order to monitor the rapid change of agricultural situations, the fifth agricultural Census was specially conducted in 1995.

2. Purpose of the Census

The purpose of the Agricultural Census is to provide data for various groups, such as farm policy makers, farm organizations, and education and research institutes, and to serve as a benchmark for sample agricultural surveys by examining the change of agricultural structure and the utilization of agricultural resources. The underlying data contain the changing trends in agriculture as well as the agricultural basic structure such as numbers of farm households, farm household population, cropland, harvested area of crops, livestock, agricultural machinery, and modern conveniences and utilities.

3. Coverage and Time References of the Census

All of the holdings, private or institutional, which fall under one of the sub-categories of "farm households" are under the Census coverage and regarded as statistical units. Basically, farm household is defined as a household engaged in farming for livelihood, making profit and research.

The 1995 Korean Agricultural Census has two types of indicators: indicator of period and indicator of date. The standard date of the Census is December 1, 1995. The standard period is from December 1, 1994 to November 30, 1995. The actual enumeration period is from December 14, 1994 to December 22, 1995.

4. Basic Contents of the Census

Based on UN/FAO recommendations, users' requests and pretest, contents of the Census consist of the number of farm households, land, economic types (sale and household expenditures) and operation types of farm household by administrative districts, and information on farm household members, etc.

5. Enumeration Method for Census

The Agricultural Statistics and Information Bureau (ASIB), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is responsible for the collection, compilation and publication of the official census statistics. Enumeration is conducted by well-trained enumerators who are supervised by supervisors of regional offices of ASIB. Enumerators were selected, one for each Enumeration District (ED), among people 18 years

old or above, who live within or near each ED, are well-informed of the present state of each ED and have time to spare for the Census. The survey is conducted by interviewing all the farm households. Questionnaires completed during the enumeration period are checked by supervisors to minimize errors.

6. Training for Census

Enumerators and supervisors are trained to become familiar with the survey manual, “Enumeration Techniques and Administrative Instructions of Agricultural Census” for the purpose of conducting rapid and standardized enumeration and getting more precise results.

7. Data Processing and Tabulation

After correction of omissions and miswritings, and review of enumerators’ work by the town, township or sub-ward office, all census questionnaires are submitted to the branch offices of ASIB. The data on questionnaires are entered into computers at the branch office. Compilation of raw data is done directly at the ASIB.

8. Dissemination

For prompt use, advance data on the basic items are manually compiled and published as preliminary data before the publication of the final reports. The basic items contain the number of farm households, farm household population, etc. Results of the complete enumeration by every census item were released in December 1996. Classified by a national and 15 provincial level editions, the final report of the census was published by December 1996 and June 1997, respectively.

9. International Cooperation

Korea has been promoting international cooperation on agricultural statistics with developing countries. In 1994, the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) conducted the National Workshop on Agricultural Census and Surveys in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Statistics Center (FASC), and the State Statistical Bureau (SSB) of the People’s Republic of China in Changchun. The workshop was organized at the recommendation made during discussions held between representatives of FASC, SSB and KOICA to the effect that KOICA’s technical cooperation with China in the field of agricultural censuses and surveys, with special reference to the Census of Agriculture, was planned to be carried out in 1997 for the first time in the history of China.