

Alternative seed suppliers of local vegetable varieties in modern agriculture of Nagano, Japan. (Oral Presentation)

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Introduction

It has been widely recognized that farmers are the key actors for seed production of local varieties. However, in advanced nations where farmers can easily obtain seeds of modern varieties from the seed merchants, they have lost incentive to harvest their own seeds of local varieties by themselves.

Objectives

To make clear the roll of various actors in the seed supply system of traditional local varieties of vegetables in Nagano Prefecture where many local varieties are still grown within modern agriculture by local farmers.

Methods

Major local vegetable varieties (of about 20) in Nagano were studied to identify who produce and distribute the seeds by field study including interview to farmers and seed producers.

Results

Seeds of local varieties were produced by various actors, such as farmers, local small seed company, seed producers association and so on. Under circumstances where seed production become difficult due to aging of farmers and loss of incentives by farmers, involvement of other stakeholders need to be found in order to continue the production of such vegetables. Local small seed companies have been actively involved in the production and distribution of seeds of local varieties.

Conclusion

Contribution of local small seed companies to the seed supply system for local varieties need to be considered positively in advanced nations such as Japan. They play an important roll in maintenance breeding of local varieties instead of farmers. However, risk of losing the variety due to loss of market should also be recognized in this system.

Keywords: local small seed company, local variety, maintenance breeding, seed supply system, seed production

Selected References

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