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Title

Characteristics of Agricultural Cooperatives Act as an Organization Act and Facing Issues for Reform

Author

Yoshiaki Masuda

Affiliation

The University of Shiga Prefecture

Abstract

Japanese Agricultural Cooperative Act was designed and founded as a cooperative act for farmers in 1947. The act aimed not only to promote mutual cooperation of farmers, but also to accomplish some aims of agricultural policies. From the viewpoint of organization act, the act has unique characteristics. That is, it restricts full members to “farmers” and on the other hand allows participating of non-farmers as associate member. It also restricts the rights of control on the cooperatives only to full members. Nowadays, a number of associate members increased to almost half of all members, and full members have become diverse from fulltime farmers to land owners. The act is required to introduce more flexibility on the purpose of the act, regulation of memberships, and governance system of the cooperatives.

Key words

agricultural cooperatives act, cooperatives, membership, governance