

Market Information Service for Fresh Food in Japan

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ABSTRACT: Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries provides market information on vegetables, fruits and meats in order to provide market equilibrium and stabilize prices. Brief descriptions of information available and uses of the data are provided.

1. Purpose and Significance of the Service

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is promoting the Market Information Service for Fresh Food, which collects market information on vegetables, fruits and meats through the nationwide on-line network in real time and provides it promptly for users in various sectors. The service was established in 1968 aiming at equilibrium of demand and supply and stabilization of prices of fresh food, for which prices fluctuate daily, by providing information on production and shipment from producing areas scattered in various parts of the country and prices and related information of markets for producers, distributors, consumers, administrative offices and so on. The system has been modernized and now a wider range of edited and analyzed information concerning these commodities is provided to the clients.

2. Information Provided

- Market Information: Daily results of trade on major items of vegetables, fruits and meats at wholesale markets of the whole country
- Producing Area Information: Planted areas, yields, estimated harvests, etc. of major vegetables and fruits, and head of traded calves, number of chickens hatched
- Distribution Information: Periodic statistical data on the market of vegetables, fruits and meats
- Forecast Price Information: Processed data as forecast of prices and arrival volume of major vegetables and fruits in each 10-days
- Market Report: Daily information relating market trades concerning such as producing area's brand, commodities in season, discriminated commodities cultivated by organic fertilizers and imported products

3. Utilization of Information

- *Farmers, Agricultural Cooperatives, etc.* use the information to stabilize farm management by means of planned production and shipment by adjusting volume and timing and selecting wholesale markets to forward, based on real-time information concerning other producing areas and wholesale markets across the country.

- *Wholesalers* use the information to make decisions on how to gather commodities from each production area and deal them at a wholesale markets based on the information of markets and production areas.
- *Retailers* use the information to make suitable plans to buy commodities based on abundant and accurate information according to the needs of consumers.
- *Administrative Organizations* use the information to promote production of vegetables, fruits and meats and to improve distribution systems.

Outline of the market information service for fresh food

