

Opening Address

Regional Symposium on Marketing and Finance of the Organic Supply Chain

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Vice-Chairman & President, NACF

It is a pleasure to meet such distinguished delegates from various organizations in 『Regional Symposium on Marketing and Finance of the Organic Supply Chain』 held at National Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Korea.

『Mr. Pal Buy Bonnang』 , Chairman of Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association,
『Mr. Andre Leu』 , President of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements,
The representative of Agricultural and Food Marketing Association for Asia and the Pacific,
The representative of Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,

Distinguished speakers, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of 3 million Korean farmers, I would like to welcome you to the NACF of Korea.

This venue we all gather today is the headquarters of the agricultural cooperatives as well as the largest farmers' organization in Korea. The NACF successfully celebrated its 50th founding anniversary last year, and held its 51st founding anniversary ceremony last July.

Over the last half a century, the NACF has made a great deal of achievements by sharing the joys and sorrows of member farmers, and has grown to be one of the 10 greatest cooperatives by the International Cooperative Alliance.

Last March, the NACF reformed its business structure forming NongHyup Financial Group and NongHyup Agribusiness Group, which were spun off from the federation. The main objective of this reform is to make Korean agricultural cooperatives efficient enough to meet the severe market competition through specialization and professionalization while maintaining its cooperative identity.

Please keep watching us and give us your kind support.

I believe it is timely to hold this symposium on marketing of organic agricultural products and the finance to boost the industry, considering ever-increasing awareness of food safety all across the continents.

As you are well aware, organic farming is the form of agriculture that sustains the health of soil,

ecosystems and biodiversity. Organic farming satisfies the recent demands where concern over well-being, food safety, multi-functionality of agriculture, and sustainable farming are becoming significant interests to the general public.

Domestically speaking, the consumption trends of agricultural products have evidently shifted from price and quantity to safety and quality. Organic agriculture production has increased to be 1,850 thousand tons last year, which is 20 times more than 10 years ago.

The NACF has been making a concerted effort to keep the pace in the current food consumption traits, and reforming its marketing practices to provide better income and sustenance for member farmers.

The practices of the NACF vary: launching and boosting competitive organic brand 'A-Chim-Ma-Ru', expanding the consumption of organic food for use in healthy school meals, and fostering 『Eco-friendly Agriculture Committee』 to advance the organic agriculture.

In spite of the limited arable land, Asia Pacific region is struggling to support a great number of populations with a relatively high portion of people working in agricultural industry. This often leads to the agricultural policies focusing on production increase through the traditional supply-driven way of farming.

I believe, however, that added value creation through expanded organic farming is essential as it is an opportunity to raise competitiveness in agriculture, and also to increase farmers' income. Small-sized family farmers can make the most of its strength in organic farming, because even small-quantity production creates high values with quality agricultural products.

I would like to convey sincere appreciation to Mr. Noh Won-Sik, the secretary general of APRACA and his staff for orchestrating and coordinating this event from the very beginning.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I hope that this symposium can bear fruitful outcomes through proactive participations of all the distinguished figures attending this event.

Korea is now on the path toward autumn harvest season. And, Korean Thanksgiving Day, when we express our gratitude toward the good harvest to our ancestors, is just around the corner. I cordially wish you have pleasant time during your stay in Korea. And, I kindly recommend you to share some time to understand Korean agriculture, Korean cooperative movements, and, most of all, have better insight into organic farming in diverse countries.

Thank you very much!