



Japanese and U.S. food and farm organizations urge halt to trade talks that undermine rural livelihoods and food sovereignty

As Japan and the United States embark on negotiations over agricultural markets, potentially paving the way for a free-trade agreement, we urge the complete halt of these negotiations that undermine the livelihoods of family farmers and the sovereignty of rural communities in our two countries. We reject any agreement that serves only to open our respective markets and strengthen corporate control over our rural economies. Market openings under previous trade agreements have contributed to the failure of independent family farms and increases in corporate concentration in agriculture, as well as environmental degradation and weakened standards for food safety. We oppose efforts to lock in the mistakes of previous trade agreements through new arrangements between the U.S. and Japan, specifically:

- 1) **We reject plans that expose Japanese producers to unfair competition from increasingly concentrated global agricultural markets.** The U.S. export-oriented livestock sector (particularly pork and beef) has become extremely concentrated, with the world's largest meatpackers and processors having near monopolistic control over all stages of livestock production involving animals grown in Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). In this system, farmers and ranchers are forced into one-sided contracts that eliminate market transparency, facilitate price manipulation, undermine the livelihoods of independent farmers and ranchers, and threaten farmers' ability to adopt pasture-based sustainable production practices. Much U.S. pork is raised in CAFOs using antibiotics as a growth promoter, a practice that contributes to antibiotic resistance in humans. Animals are raised under inhumane conditions, and the meat produced can be contaminated with salmonella, e-coli and other dangerous bacteria. The animal wastes generated in CAFOs pollute the air and water in neighboring communities, particularly low-income communities of color, and increase greenhouse gas emissions. Many U.S. farmers and rural residents, consumers and environmentalists are calling for restrictions on CAFOs and changes to ensure smaller-scale, environmentally-friendly, and more humane production with fair prices to farmers and ranchers, geared to the U.S. market.

Unfortunately, the U.S. government continues to deregulate CAFO livestock production while ignoring the environmental justice impacts, discriminatory and retaliatory actions by meatpackers and processors, and socio-economic externalities of market concentration. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) intends to finalize new rules on pork inspections that would eliminate some government inspectors, leaving inspections to company employees. They are also planning to increase line speeds for processing hogs. This will be harmful for food workers and will almost certainly result in increased contamination with e-coli and/or salmonella.

IATP.ORG

2105 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

55404

(612) 870-0453

FAX (612) 870-4846

110 MARYLAND AVE NE, SUITE 307

WASHINGTON, D.C.

20002

(202) 543-8602

FAX: (202) 543-0978

Japan is already the biggest market for US pork exports. Lowering Japanese tariffs to facilitate greater trade in pork will undermine Japanese producers, lead to greater corporate concentration in the U.S. and expand the CAFO system production.

- 2) **We reject the imposition of unsafe standards on food safety and agricultural biotechnology.** Should the talks extend beyond lowering tariffs on beef, pork and other agricultural goods, they could proceed to negotiations between Japan and the United States for a more comprehensive free-trade agreement, potentially drawing from harmful provisions in the recently negotiated US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). That agreement would compel governments to recognize each other's food inspections as equivalent and to decrease border inspections.

The U.S. has embraced a reckless approach to regulating genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and emerging new gene editing technologies that is codified in USMCA, which will likely extend to future trade agreements. For decades, agricultural biotechnology companies have extracted their profits from rural communities by monopolizing seed markets while offering fewer seed choices at higher costs. GMOs have contaminated the fields of farmers using non-GMO seeds and organic practices, undercutting these farmers' autonomy and livelihoods. Furthermore, GMO corn and soy production has led to overuse of glyphosate and the emergence of herbicide resistant superweeds. At the recommendation of agribusiness firms, farmers who have adopted these chemical-intensive practices are left with few options but to attempt to combat those new weeds with the addition of extremely toxic herbicides 2,4-D and dicamba, volatile chemicals that are causing enormous damage to neighboring farms and lands.

Under a U.S.-Japan Free Trade Agreement, the U.S. would insist on language from the USMCA that limits the scientific data used to set food safety and agricultural biotechnology standards that would otherwise protect human health and the environment. Currently the U.S. government allows agribusinesses to maintain testing data and studies on agricultural chemicals as Confidential Business Information. It would likely require Japan to accept provisions on "Low Level Presence Occurrence" of genetically engineered or edited crops unauthorized in Japan, potentially opening its market to unauthorized new agricultural products such as gene-edited wheat or rice with no risk assessment. Locking such rules in place in a trade agreement would serve to dismantle Japan's protections on seeds and foods and undermine the work of food and farm advocates in the U.S. to appropriately regulate those technologies.

- 3) **We reject rules that undermine democracy and create new barriers to public interest protections.** While our organizations' primary focus is on food and agriculture, we join other sectors in opposing rules that threaten our economic, social and cultural rights. We call for the elimination of investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) from any trade or investment agreement. We oppose trade rules requiring "Regulatory Impact Analysis" as a tool to undermine new public interest protections. We oppose rules that would extend

monopoly rights for prescription medicines or impede efforts to ensure access to affordable medicines.

In 2010 the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan published a nightmare scenario, projecting the complete liberalization of Japan's market to imports, which would dramatically reduce Japan's food self-sufficiency rate from 39% (at that time) to 14%, with a 90% decline in rice production and a 70% drop in pork and beef production. Japanese farmers and consumers are worried that TPP11, the Japan-EU FTA, and a possible Japan-U.S. FTA will realize this scenario. This is not only a serious violation of Japan's food sovereignty but would also exacerbate widespread hunger and food problems as a country with a population of more than 120 million requires increased food imports.

Instead, we call for a new approach to trade relations between our two countries, one that **respects and advances family farming and food sovereignty** –the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

Japanese Organizations

Nouminren (Japan Family Farmers Movement)

Zennokyororen (National Federation of Trade Unions of Agricultural Cooperative Association in Japan)

U.S. Organizations

Center for Food Safety

Food & Water Watch

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

National Family Farm Coalition