

AAI and Me – Shigeya Hasegawa <Part-4>

Memories of JICA Tsukuba training and expectations for the future

In the training course for Tajikistan, which was the first activity on vegetable cultivation for me with AAI at JICA Tsukuba, a tomato cultivation training course was organized in which seedlings were planted at the end of August immediately after the participants' arrival in Japan and ripe fruits were harvested by the end of November before their return home. It is necessary to prepare seedlings for which the first flower cluster begins to bloom, and there were concerns about seasonal obstacles such as weak legginess, poor flower bud differentiation, and lack of flower clusters due to raising seedlings in

midsummer. Even though I had experience in growing vegetables in hot and dry areas during my time with the Kashima Oil Corporation, as well as work experience on salinity tolerance tree selection tests, and indoor greening by gravel cultivation, I felt a great deal of anxiety in this case. In order to prepare quality seedlings that would satisfy the participants, who included lecturers and researchers, I was sweating a lot on Saturdays and Sundays to grow the required seedlings for our course. It ended up being a very good memory because my efforts bore fruit and the cultivation training was carried out as planned.



Tajikistan training (2000)

Practical training for participants to experience vegetable cultivation in Japan is an important part of the curriculum for understanding the technique. I tried to convey the standard work of the farmer as much as possible so that participants could experience the technology for the production of high quality and yield. For watermelon seedling raising by grafting, the success rate was improved by introducing closed control at the initial stage. Drip fertigation was introduced to

improve paprika hydroponic cultivation in cases that showed poor growth after the rainy season. For onion cultivation, cell seedling raising and black mulch were introduced to improve the rate of large and sellable fruits in the practical training. Many participants valued the opportunity to witness the uniform raising of seedlings by potting the soil using a mechanical sieve and a speed potter as a starting point for the production of quality seedlings. In the future, we expect the continued improvement of hands on training that will contribute to the development of practical skills that can be used for growth diagnosis, cultivation management, and technology dissemination from the early stage of cultivation through the introduction of IT and utilization of chemical analysis data.

In the training, we tried to improve skill acquisition through the task experiments that the stimulated and engaged the thinking of participants. In the experiment of 139 participants from 2006 to 2018, 20 vegetables were tested, and the subjects covered were 19 fields. Among the top 10 items, there were overwhelmingly many experiments related to tomatoes, and after the top ten came melon, cauliflower, corn, broccoli, soybeans, lettuce, green beans, pumpkin, bitter melon, and capsicum. In the experimental subjects, there were many tests to grasp the appropriate amount of nitrogen needed, and in recent years, the evaluation of the application of organic fertilizers and composts available in local areas such as chicken manure has increased.

In order for participants and instructors to continue training to achieve skill acquisition through the process of growing vegetables together, information such as marketing and vegetable functionality should be provided in addition to cultivation techniques. Improvement of growth diagnosis ability for participants and learning through coaching to achieve individual training goals are also indispensable and these should be continued.

