

Plenary-02

Mid- to Long-term Food Policy Direction

Bo-ram Kim^{1*}

¹Food Grain Industry Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

[Abstract]

Prolonged Russia-Ukraine war, and unstable situation of supply and demand of global crops including the COVID-19 pandemic have raised awareness regarding food crisis, and in addition to this situation, export restriction measures imposed by some countries have accelerated the rise in the prices. Since the Republic of Korea depends annual crop consumption (21.32 million tons) mostly on the imports (food self-sufficiency rate in 2020 was 45.8%, crop self-sufficiency rate was 20.2%), our main task is to stably secure food. Now we need to put focus on building capacity to secure stable food supply, and actively manage and respond to risks.

To overcome this condition, the Korean government set robust food sovereignty as its policy task, and has been focusing on the policy capacity by providing financial and policy support in parallel. We need to implement mid- to long-term measures to strengthen food security as well as to ensure domestic price stability.

While increasing the domestic capacity to supply food in the mid- to long-term perspective, we are implementing projects to bring in crops which are inevitable to be imported by private companies. Specifically, we are making efforts to expand infrastructure for the public reserve and domestic production of wheat and beans which have low self-sufficiency rate, and to secure food sovereignty by providing support to secure global crop supply chain to private companies. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs plans to set a target for food self-sufficiency rate and prepare a policy to strengthen mid- to long-term food security by establishing a task force to strengthen mid- to long-term food security in the Ministry.

Especially, although wheat is the second staple food, domestic wheat production and the foundation for the industry is poor. Compared to the wheat imports, domestic production of wheat is 30 thousand tons (self-sufficiency rate of 1%), leading to a vulnerable status against internal and external shocks. Through the establishment of the Wheat Industry Promotion Act (Feb. 2020) and the First Master Plan for Wheat Industry Promotion (Nov. 2020), the Korean government has developed a policy basis, and has been providing financial support in overall across the production, distribution and consumption process.

In addition, the government established a production complex for Korean wheat and beans in order to supply affordable government-supplied commodities, provide education and consulting services, and create a high-quality stable production system, including facilities and equipment. We are also continuing to increase the public reserve for wheat and beans with the purpose of stable supply and demand as well as food security.

The Korean government will establish and implement mid- to long-term measures to strengthen the foundation for domestic production across production, distribution and consumption process, and to stably secure global supply chain including through diversified import channels.

*Corresponding author: E-mail, boram7492@korea.kr Tel. +82-44-201-1831