

## Nitrous Oxide Emissions from Red Pepper, Chinese Cabbage, and Potato Fields in Gangwon-do, Korea

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The level of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), a long-lived greenhouse gas, in atmosphere has increased mainly due to anthropogenic source, especially application of nitrogen fertilizers. Quantifying N<sub>2</sub>O emission from agricultural field is essential to develop national inventories of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emission. The objective of the study was to develop emission factor to estimate direct N<sub>2</sub>O emission from agricultural field in Gangwon-do, Korea by measuring N<sub>2</sub>O emissions from potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), red pepper (*Capsicum annuum* L.), and Chinese cabbage (*Brassica campestris* L.) cultivation lands from 2009 to 2012. Accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission was 1.48±0.25 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for red pepper, 1.27±0.27 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for potato, 1.49±0.06 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for Chinese cabbage cultivated in spring, and 1.14±0.22 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for fall Chinese cabbage. Emission factor of N<sub>2</sub>O calculated from accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission, nitrogen fertilization rate, and background N<sub>2</sub>O emission was 0.0051±0.0016 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for cropland in Gangwon province. More extensive study is deserved to be conducted to develop N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor for upland crops in Korea through examining the emission factors from various regions and crops because N<sub>2</sub>O emission is influenced by many factors including climate characteristics, soil properties, and agricultural practices.

**Key words:** Chinese cabbage, Greenhouse gas, Nitrous oxide, Potato, Red pepper

**N<sub>2</sub>O emission factors, kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg N<sup>-1</sup>, for Chinese cabbage, red pepper, and potato from 2009 to 2012.**

Crop	2009	2010	2011	2012	Mean±SD
Red pepper	0.00676	0.00548	0.00640	0.00545	0.00602±0.00066
Potato	0.00800	0.00616	0.00702	0.00541	0.00665±0.00112
CC, S	0.00405	0.00422	0.00483	0.00447	0.00439±0.00034
CC, F	0.00308	0.00226	0.00387	0.00355	0.00319±0.00070

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## Introduction

Atmospheric nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) level has increased at a rate of 0.2–0.3% per year (Saggar *et al.*, 2009). The concentration of N<sub>2</sub>O in atmosphere was 314 ppbv in 1998 (IPCC, 2001), while 285 ppbv before 1700 (Stauffer and Neftel, 1988). Park *et al.* (2012) concluded that rise in N<sub>2</sub>O concentration in atmosphere was mainly due to an increased application of nitrogen fertilizers by investigating trends and seasonal cycles in the isotopic composition of nitrous oxide from 1940 to 2005. Nitrous oxide has approximately 300 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) based on a 100 yr time horizon (IPCC, 2007).

Nitrous oxide is produced in agricultural soils after amending nitrogen fertilizers and manure compost through both nitrification and denitrification by the microbial activity (Freney, 1997; Singh and Tyagi, 2009). Nitrification is an oxidation process of ammonia produced from nitrogen fertilizer or compost to nitrate under aerobic condition, and denitrification is a reduction process of nitrate to N<sub>2</sub>O and N<sub>2</sub> under anaerobic condition. Nitrous oxide emission from agricultural soils is significantly determined by N application rate, soil organic carbon content, soil pH, texture, crop type, and the type of fertilization source (Stehfest, 2008).

In Korea, N<sub>2</sub>O estimates have been based on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emission factor methodology due to absence of country-specific emission factor for N<sub>2</sub>O. The default value for N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor has been changed from 0.0125 to 0.01 of N applied to the cropped soils (IPCC, 2006), which means that 1% of unvolatilized N inputs are produced in the soil as direct N<sub>2</sub>O emission. Country-specific emission factor can be more representative of soil, climate, and agricultural practices in Korea, resulting in more accurate and lesser uncertainty than the default factor. Many developed countries have used their own N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor; 0.0062 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for all fertilized upland fields in Japan (Akiyama *et al.*, 2006), 0.01–0.015 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for Sweden (Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, 2006), 0.01 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for chemical fertilizers and 0.02 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for animal manure in the Netherlands (Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, 2006), and 0.003 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for rain fed upland in dry region and 0.021 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for horticultural crops in Australia (Australian Greenhouse Office, 2006).

This study was conducted in order to assess N<sub>2</sub>O emissions

from potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), red pepper (*Capsicum annum* L.), and Chinese cabbage (*Brassica campestris* L.) cultivation land in Gangwon-do, Korea and to provide information for developing Korea-specific N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor.

## Materials and Methods

**Crop cultivation** Three crops including potato (*Solanum tuberosum*), red pepper (*Capsicum annum* L.), and Chinese cabbage (*Brassica campestris* L.) were cultivated at the Gangwon-do Agricultural Research & Extension Services field in Chuncheon (N 37° 57' 15.9" E 127° 46' 26.6"), Korea from 2009 to 2012. The crops were transplanted on Apr. 29, 2009, May 5, 2010, May 3, 2011, and May 11, 2012. Chinese cabbage was cultivated twice a year, spring and fall, and the other crops were grown once a year. Chinese cabbage in fall was transplanted on Aug. 26, 2009, Sep. 5, 2010, Aug. 23, 2011, and Sep. 5, 2012. The soil in the field is classified to Yonggye series (fine loamy, mixed, mesic Typic Dystrudepts) and the selected physico-chemical properties of the soil are provided in Table 1. Fertilizers were applied based on standard fertilization rate of the three crops; N-P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>-K<sub>2</sub>O = 320-78-198 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> for Chinese cabbage, 190-112-149 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> for red pepper, and 137-33-114 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> for potato. All the fertilizers were applied before planting potato. For Chinese cabbage, 52% of nitrogen was applied before transplanting and 48% was split twice during cultivation. For red pepper, 54% of the fertilizers were applied before transplanting and the rest 46% was split three times during cultivation. Potato was harvested on July 10, 2009, July 27, 2010, July 18, 2011, and July 24, 2012. For Chinese cabbage, the harvesting dates were June 30, 2009, Nov. 16, 2009, July 1, 2010, Nov. 25, 2010, July 28, 2011, Nov. 23, 2011, July 10, 2012, and Nov. 20, 2012. The treatments were arranged in a randomized block design with three replicates. The plot size of each replicate was 18 m<sup>2</sup>.

**Collection and analysis of nitrous oxide** Gas samples were collected using static chambers, the most commonly used tools worldwide for the greenhouse gas research (Kim *et al.*, 2006; Kim *et al.*, 2008; Saggar *et al.*, 2009; Kim *et al.*, 2010; Seo *et al.*, 2012; Yang *et al.*, 2012a; Yang *et al.*, 2012b; Yang *et al.*, 2012c), twice a week from just

**Table 1. Selected physico-chemical characteristics of the field used in the study.**

pH (1:5)	EC	OM	Avail. P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub>	T-N	NO <sub>3</sub> -N	Exch. Cation			Particle size distribution		
						Ca	K	Mg	Sand	Silt	Clay
	dS m <sup>-1</sup>	g kg <sup>-1</sup>	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	g kg <sup>-1</sup>	mg kg <sup>-1</sup>	-----	cmol <sub>c</sub> kg <sup>-1</sup>	-----	-----	%	-----
6.0	0.33	22	470	1.1	14	3.5	0.63	0.87	54	18	28

after transplanting the crops to next growing season in the following year. Parkin (2008) reported that gas sampling at 1-4 days intervals resulted in cumulative N<sub>2</sub>O emissions with a precision of ±10% compared with ±14% for 3-7 days intervals. The level of nitrous oxide in the gas samples was determined by a gas chromatography (Varian GC 450) equipped with an electron capture detector (ECD). Flux of N<sub>2</sub>O was calculated using the following equation (Shin et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2010; Seo et al., 2012):

$$F = \rho \cdot V \cdot A^{-1} \cdot \Delta c \cdot \Delta t^{-1} \cdot 273 \cdot T^{-1}$$

where F is N<sub>2</sub>O flux (mg m<sup>-2</sup> h<sup>-1</sup>), ρ is the gas density of N<sub>2</sub>O (1.96 mg m<sup>-3</sup>), V is the volume of the chamber (m<sup>3</sup>), A is the area of the chamber (m<sup>2</sup>), Δc·Δt<sup>-1</sup> is the average increase of gas concentration in the chamber, and T is mean temperature in the chamber (°C) plus 273. For the greenhouse gas flux measurements using chamber, linear regression is less sensitive to chamber deployment time and analytical precision than other methods and has small detection limit thresholds (Parkin et al., 2012). Emission factor is calculated by dividing accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission from cultivated plots by unvolatilized portion of the applied nitrogen.

**Climatic condition** Mean air temperature and precipitation during the study period are shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, respectively. The mean air temperature in 2009, 2010, and 2011 was 10.3°C, 10.3°C, and 10.8°C, respectively, which is 0.4~0.9°C below the normal data (1981~2010), 11.2°C. The annual precipitation in 2009, 2010, and 2011 was 1,789 mm, 1,634 mm, and 1,851 mm, respectively, which is about 300-500 mm higher than the normal data, 1,325 mm.

## Results and Discussion

Emission rates of N<sub>2</sub>O for red pepper were less than 35.5 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 19.8 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 26.9 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 26.3 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup>

d<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 (Fig. 3). For potato, the highest N<sub>2</sub>O emissions rate was 29.5 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 16.3 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 28.5 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 30.7 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2012. Most of N<sub>2</sub>O emission occurred during first three months for the two crops. Chinese cabbage cultivated in fall showed different N<sub>2</sub>O emission pattern from the emission pattern for spring cultivation. Nitrous oxide emission rates markedly increased immediately after transplanting the crop in fall, up to 98.3 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 79.2 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 60.3 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 64.8 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 compared with 53.3 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>, 37.4 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>, 37.5 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>, and 40.8 g N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>, respectively for each spring cultivation probably because of greater activity of microorganisms by relatively high temperature and precipitation at transplanting (Fig. 1 and 2). The N<sub>2</sub>O emission rates, however, sharply decreased after the peak emission and even reach almost zero in late fall and winter possibly because of decreasing temperature and soil inorganic-nitrogen level. Kim et al. (2008) reported that relative contribution of inorganic-nitrogen and soil temperature to N<sub>2</sub>O emission was 24~51% and 26~36%, respectively for red pepper cultivation.

Accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission for red pepper was 1.83 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 1.31 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 1.46 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 1.31 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 (Fig. 4), 1.66 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 1.13 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 1.23 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 1.04 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 for potato, 1.51 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 1.41 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 1.53 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 1.52 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 for spring cultivated Chinese cabbage, and 1.22 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2009, 0.82 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2010, 1.34 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2011, and 1.17 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in 2012 for fall Chinese cabbage. In 2012, the gas samples were collected until Nov. 22, resulting in shorter analysis duration, 196 days than the other three years, 317~370 days. It needs to be noted very low N<sub>2</sub>O emission in winter due to low temperature and residual nitrogen from 2009 to 2011 (Fig. 3). Cantarel et al. (2011) reported significant increase in N<sub>2</sub>O emissions with increase

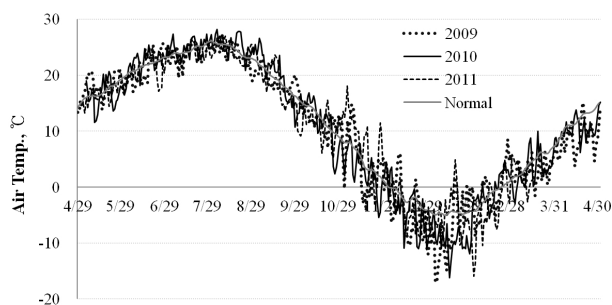


Fig. 1. Mean air temperature during the study period compared with normal data (1981~2010).

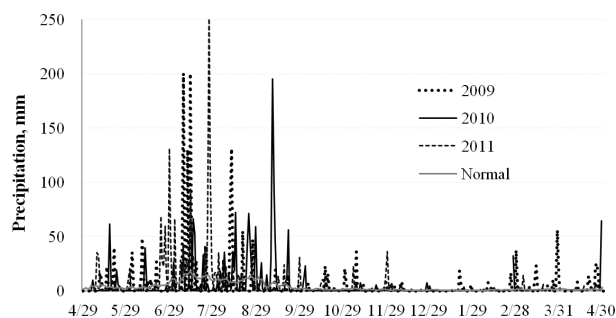


Fig. 2. Mean air temperature during the study period compared with normal data (1981~2010).

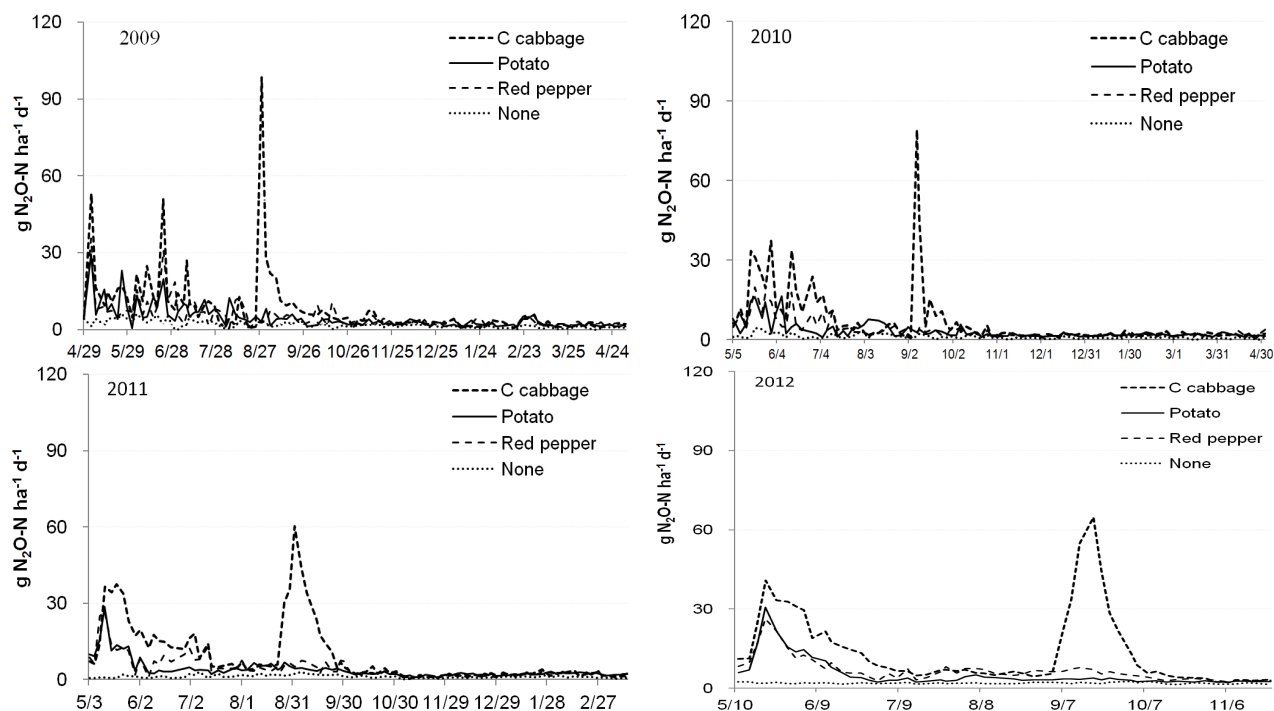


Fig. 3.  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission patterns of Chinese cabbage, red pepper, and potato from 2009 to 2012. Chinese cabbage was cultivated twice a year, spring and fall, while once a year for red pepper and potato.

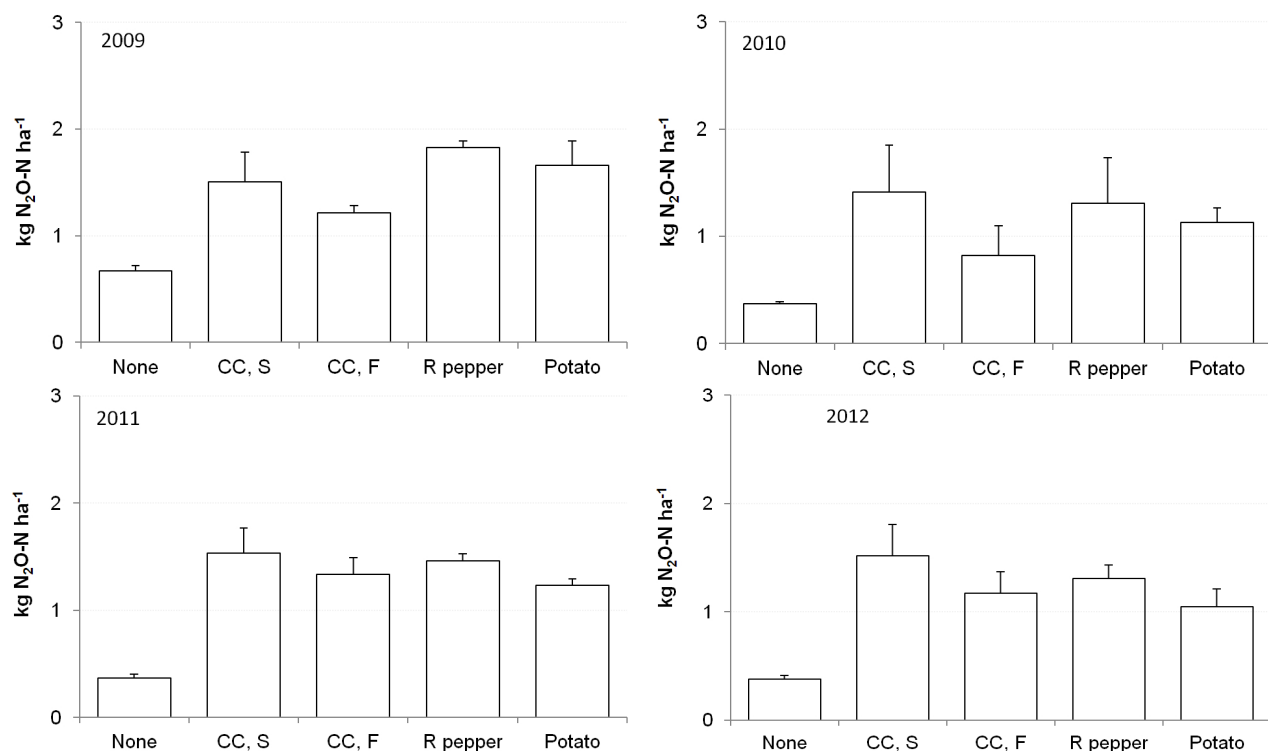


Fig. 4. Accumulated  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission from cultivation of Chinese cabbage, red pepper, and potato from 2009 to 2012. CC, S and CC, F denote Chinese cabbage cultivated in spring and fall, respectively. Error bars indicate standard deviation.

in temperature and Kim et al. (2008) showed that mineral nitrogen level in soil greatly affected  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission. Kim et al. (2010) reported that  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission from soybean field was influenced by soil inorganic nitrogen (66%), soil moisture

(19%), and temperature (15%). In addition, Akiyama et al. (2006) developed  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  emission factor for Japan based on data measuring over 90 days by assuming that most  $\text{N}_2\text{O}$  resulted from fertilizer application is emitted in less

**Table 2. N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor<sup>†</sup>, kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg N<sup>-1</sup>, for Chinese cabbage, red pepper, and potato from 2009 to 2012. CC, S and CC, F denote Chinese cabbage cultivated in spring and fall, respectively.**

Crop	2009	2010	2011	2012	Mean±SD
Red pepper	0.00676	0.00548	0.00640	0.00545	0.00602±0.00066
Potato	0.00800	0.00616	0.00702	0.00541	0.00665±0.00112
CC, S	0.00405	0.00422	0.00483	0.00447	0.00439±0.00034
CC, F	0.00308	0.00226	0.00387	0.00355	0.00319±0.00070

<sup>†</sup>Emission factor = ((accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission from cultivated plots)-(the background emission from un-fertilized plots)) / (unvolatilized portion of the applied nitrogen).

than 90 days, although Bouwman et al. (2002) reported significantly less N<sub>2</sub>O emission for shorter than 120 days measurement compared with the data for 180–300 days. Background N<sub>2</sub>O emission from non-fertilized field ranged from 0.37 to 0.67 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup>, which is relatively low level compared with 0.65 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in Japan (Akiyama et al., 2006), 1.06 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> in China (Gu et al., 2009), and 1.0 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> proposed by Bouwman (1996). Background N<sub>2</sub>O emission is also influenced by many factors including soil properties, climate characteristics, and previous fertilization history.

Emission factor of N<sub>2</sub>O calculated from accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission and nitrogen fertilization rate for each crop and background N<sub>2</sub>O emission ranged from 0.00545 to 0.00676 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for red pepper, from 0.00541 to 0.00800 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for potato, from 0.00405 to 0.00483 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for Chinese cabbage cultivated in spring, and from 0.00226 to 0.00387 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for Chinese cabbage in fall (Table 2). Nitrous oxide emission factors from black volcanic ash soil in Jeju island were 0.0202 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for soybean (Yang et al., 2012a), 0.0025 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for carrot (Yang et al., 2012b), and 0.0040 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for potato (Yang et al., 2012c). In Japan, N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor is 0.0062±0.0045 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N because of 0.0032 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for well-drained upland and 0.0140 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for poor-drained upland (Akiyama et al., 2006). For tea tree, the N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor is set to be 0.0282±0.0180 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N (Akiyama et al., 2006). It is generally reported large coefficients of variation for N<sub>2</sub>O emissions measurements ranging from 100 to 300% (Thornton and Valente, 1996). An uncertainty for the Tier 1 method emission factor ranged from 0.003 to 0.03 (IPCC, 2006). Developing common N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor for various upland crops except crops showing peculiar N<sub>2</sub>O emission pattern is considered to be better than developing specific N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor for each crop. The results obtained the study indicated that N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor of 0.0051±0.0016 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for red pepper, potato, and Chinese cabbage cultivated in Gangwon province, Korea. However, it should be noted that more extensive study is deserve to be conducted to develop N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor

for upland crops in Korea through examining the emission factors from various regions and crops because N<sub>2</sub>O emission is influenced by many factors including climate, soil characteristics, nitrogen fertilization rate, nitrogen source, crop type, and agricultural practices.

## Conclusion

Developing N<sub>2</sub>O emission factor for agricultural field is essential to reduce greenhouse gas emission. Gas samples were collected from upland field cultivating red pepper, Chinese cabbage, and potato and N<sub>2</sub>O emission was measured for four years. Accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission was 1.48±0.25 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for red pepper, 1.27±0.27 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for potato, 1.49±0.06 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for Chinese cabbage cultivated in spring, and 1.14±0.22 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup> for Chinese cabbage in fall. Background N<sub>2</sub>O emission from non-fertilized field was 0.45±0.15 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N ha<sup>-1</sup>. Emission factor of N<sub>2</sub>O calculated from accumulated N<sub>2</sub>O emission and nitrogen fertilization rate for each crop and background N<sub>2</sub>O emission was 0.0051±0.0016 kg N<sub>2</sub>O-N kg<sup>-1</sup> N for cropland in Gangwon province.

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