

農学における情報利用ゼミナール演習

<食の流通現場見学会>

科目番号：12134

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場所：JA 全農青果センター株式会社

In the morning of 6th Sep, we took a class first about the agriculture, foods and informatics. The teachers mentioned some topics to discuss, such as the reason why we need a system like ICT (Information and communication technologies) in food traceability, the possibility to apply ICT into Food and circulation, the suitable management system in agricultural field, and etc.

Nowadays food security and hunger are global concerns. The global food safety initiative (GFSI) was set up in 2000, which is a collaboration between foods safety experts from retailer, food companies, and providers, with the food supply chain. GFSI can pursue continuous improvement in the food safety systems, ensure consumer protection and strengthen the confidence of consumers. As for Safe Quality Food Institute (SQFI), a certification program for providing the most globally recognized and trusted food safety and quality, which is the only program that be recognized by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI).

After going back to the laboratory enjoying our lunch boxes with light discussion, we headed for JA Zen-Noh Corporation by the train, and after we arrived there, is about at pm13:30. A guy introduced the overview and background about Zen-Noh to us, and he also brought us to visit the huge factory of Zen-Noh. Below is a picture of a huge space with low temperature for protecting the vegetables and fruits there. In this space we also saw the elevators, a lot of boxes contented fruits, on which had a



number and also their name tagged for recognizing. I realized that how automatic the machine can be! Without people's help, the machine and the elevator can recognize the size on the boxes, the name of the fruits and the locations by itself, and bring them to the suitable site for waiting to be transported and sold by sellers. It is very technology indeed!

The Zen-Noh Corporation is established in year 1972, which is about 40 years before. Zen-Noh group builds well-appointed structures that make efficient use of information, technologies, and goods related to marketing, and they are now responsible for supplying food products to consumers all across Japan. Below are the pictures of some fruits transported by Zen-Noh. It is hard to imagine the scale of this company for me because the preservative space is quite big and the workers there are quite a lot! (This is just one corporation in



Saitama-ken, Tokyo, so still has other prefectural and municipal headquarters, such as Kyoto, Osaka, Tochigi and etc.)

According to the web site of ICTs and Food Security, the deployment of ICTs in the field can help to improve food traceability system and enable farmers to better forecast agricultural fields and also production. I think the function of the tags and the name of the packages might be similar. Below is the picture of the tags that people can see on the packages. I found that every tag has its special name and also sometimes a cute picture, which customers can recognize what kind of the product it is, imagine the generally appearance of delicious fruits inside the boxes, and also the sellers can distribute the products conveniently.

And we also visited the factory of the final packing step, where a lot of female-workers working. I was wondering that why all the workers are female, how can they endure such kind of job like this every day, and do they have family to take care of? In my opinion, except for talking with other colleagues during the leisure time, this job is very tired, which seems just repeat the same works all the day. They differentiate the products, take away some fruits with bad quality, and pack others with a tag. (In the next page



are the pictures of them.) Might be the same as some bread factories, though all the procedures can be operated by the technology machine, finally still need workers to make sure all the automatic steps didn't have any mistake, check the quality and do packing. (I was impressed!!)



After visiting the factory, we backed to the conference room for having question and discussion time. He said that because of the uncommon strange climate in Japan this year, a strong influence on agricultural productions happened. It is indeed a big problem people need to overcome in the future. Actually not all the details he said about JA Zen-Noh I understood because of the difficult language really. But it still reminded me something that when I was a junior in college, we visited JieDa lunch Corporation, located in Taichung, Taiwan, which is a wholesale of vegetables and lunch boxes (also provide the kyushoku in some schools in Taichung). The goal of JieDa is nearly the same as Zen-Noh that provide safety production materials and daily necessities, market agricultural products to the consumers.

I am really glad to have this chance to visit Zen-Noh Corporation that I felt impressed and also learned a lot. Hope in the future I can work in such a big food company like Zen-Noh.

Reference:

1. GFSi (global food safety initiative) <http://www.mygfsi.com/>
2. ICTs and Food Security
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/17850554/ICTs-and-Food-Security>
3. SQF (Safe Quality Food) Institute <http://www.sqfi.com/>
4. JieDa Lunch Corporation, Taiwan <http://www.jada.tw/index.asp>