农民合作社 的农业一体化研究

合作社在农业一体化经营、农业经济增长、农民增收中的作用不容忽视,发展各种农业合作社应该成为一种长期战略

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

农民合作社的农业一体化研究 / 冯开文等著 . 一北京:中国农业出版社,2013.10 ISBN 978-7-109-18360-5

> 中国农业出版社出版 (北京市朝阳区农展馆北路 2 号) (邮政编码 100125)

责任编辑 赵 刚 雷云钊

 中国农业出版社印刷厂印刷
 新华书店北京发行所发行

 2013 年 10 月第 1 版
 2013 年 10 月北京第 1 次印刷

开本: 850mm×1168mm 1/32 印张: 9.625 字数: 242千字 定价: 30.00元

(凡本版图书出现印刷、装订错误,请向出版社发行部调换)

序言

付梓之时,对自己的作品评头品足,是任何读书人都不会放过的赏心悦事。届时的心情,大多介乎"放浪于形骸之外"和"悟言于一室之内"两端。如"复值接舆醉,狂歌五柳前"的释然,或如"此中有真意,欲辩已忘言"的憬悟,都在情理之中。不过我每每的选择都是后者,于冷静的思考中感悟来自多方的帮携,从不足处探索前行的路径。这绝不是故作谦虚,而是真诚的自然流露。

论文集成书了,首先要做的事依然是把真诚化成盈盈的谢意。第一位要感谢的,是来自国家自然科学基金的助力。古人云:学如逆水行舟。有精神百倍、日新月异、甚至花见花开的得意时,也难免精疲力竭、无以为继、如抟巨石上山般的艰难日。这次国家自然基金的资助,便恰如雪中送炭,不仅使人顿时精神大振,也平添了长期坚持的希冀,以及排除万难、去争取胜利的信心。

第二位要感谢的,却不一定排在次位。那就是我热爱的大学、挚爱的学院。我时时刻刻自豪着对校园的单恋,对教学科研的独钟,与学院同呼吸共命运的死心塌地。回想年轻时魂萦梦绕的《菁菁校园》,一种近乎圆梦的自得自满时时浮现心中。经济管理学院,就是我赖以拥有些许成绩的"梦田"。

接下来自然要感谢的是这个论文集的作者们。某虽不才, 欣逢盛世, 得培桃李, 幸何如哉! 更荣幸的是, 有机会与我

的博士生、硕士生们一起完成这本书。他们都很优秀,更不 乏出类拔萃者。他们的积极参与、认真钻研、努力创新,是 这部作品得以问世的决定因素。

这个课题的初衷, 文如其名——农民合作社的农业一体 化研究。关键词是农业一体化 (Agricultural Integration), 合 作社 (Cooperative) 的农业一体化。研究的重点也是如此, 要考察合作社的农业一体化究竟如何,包括地位作用如何, 成长如何, 绩效如何, 问题有哪些, 需要什么样的政策支持, 等等。具体来讲,包括三个方面:①各种农业一体化的主体 是如何转变、更替,并最终走向农民合作社的农业一体化的, 其中转变的内在机理是什么。这里各种主体包括改革开放以 来的社区合作社以及后来的股份合作社、乡镇企业、各种涉 农企业、农业产业化经营中的龙头企业等。显然,主体中最 重要的是合作社和龙头企业,实现由龙头企业主导的农业一 体化向合作社主导的农业一体化转变,就是主体转变的关键。 实现和促成这种转变,就是我们的主要主张。②合作社主导 的农业一体化绩效如何? 既然认为龙头企业和合作社主导的 农业一体化,是农业一体化的主要形式(或者模式),并主张 实现由前者向后者的转变,理由是什么?这就必须建立在考 察两种农业一体化绩效的基础上;就不能不考察两种农业一 体化在农业产加销纵向联合和农业生产经营者横向联合两方 面的绩效。出于对实践和学术研究等方面的考虑,纵向联合 (纵向一体化)被看作考察的重点。而农民增收是正当而又恰 当的因变量。③合作社如何更好地改善自身,并更好地推进 自己主导的农业一体化。合作社的不断优化,选取了一个自 我主导农业一体化的新视角,但内容依然不外乎内部制度改 善和外在环境优化两方面。同农民增收目标相一致, 社员权 益制度、领导人选举制度、治理制度、利益分配制度等组成

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的内部制度,应是考察的重点。而来自法律和政策的外部影响也不能被忽视。

从展开课题研究到结题,我们遭遇到了一个难题,合作 社主导的农业一体化发展得不尽如人意。换句话说, 从课题 设计到完成,始终存在一定程度上的对实践的超前性。虽然 如此,实践还是提供了丰富的素材,我们还是较为完整地完 成了预定研究任务。形成的主要结论有:①以文献综述、定 性分析和实地调查等形式分析指出,从龙头企业主导的农业 一体化向合作社主导的农业一体化转变成了势所必然的时代 之选。其内在机理就在于,时代决定了农业一体化必须从农 民增收出发,以农民增收为依归;合作社作为农民的经济组 织,势必较之龙头企业主导的农业一体化存在更少利益纠纷 等,也势必会更有利于农民增收。②通过计量分析、规范分 析等手段,比较了龙头企业主导的农业一体化和合作社主导 的农业一体化的不同绩效。验证了在以农民增收为目标的前 提下, 较之龙头企业主导的农业一体化, 合作社主导的农业 一体化有着明显的增收优势, 也取得了应有的增收效果。 ③合作社是农业一体化中不可或缺的重要影响因素。对合作 社在农民增收中的作用的实证分析,对合作社内部制度的博 弈分析和案例分析, 以及多角度的合作社分析, 都证实了合 作社在农业一体化经营、农业经济增长、农民增收中的作用 不容忽视,发展各种农民合作社应该成为一种长期战略和持 续性政策。④不论是龙头企业主导的农业一体化还是合作社 主导的农业一体化,都需要来自各方面的合力和助力。正如 不能只有龙头企业主导的农业一体化一种形式, 在重视合作 社作用的同时,农村土地制度、村民自治制度等都应纳入研 究视野。土地制度因为与农业一体化的密切关系,更应受到 高度重视。

在论文集中,体现结论①、②的论文,收入"农业一体化"部分;对应于结论③、④的论文,依次收入"合作社"部分和"土地及其他制度"部分。三部分共计23篇。

每篇论文均进行了必要的修改,注明了原文的发表刊物等出处信息,绝大部分发表时注明"得到了国家自然科学基金的资助(批准号70773132)"。在此,对于乐于奖掖后进、发表各文的各种学术期刊,恭致谢忱。

得到了多方提携,不足之处更应严肃对待。除了前面提到的合作社的农业一体化发展不尽如人意造成了研究缺憾外,对龙头企业的研究也稍嫌不足。对此,作为课题主持人和学生们的导师,我自然应该负首责。总结和反思之余,希望这些会成为未来进一步研究的重要方向、不断提升研究水平的垫脚石、再出好成果的登高梯。

最后,要特别感谢赵刚先生。虽诸事繁忙,却亲自责编本书,斧正有加,助益良多。不愧是多年故交。在此,向他和权威的中国农业出版社诚致谢意。

序以志。

冯开文 2013年8月7日于中国农业大学

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农业一体化篇

Review of China's agricultural integration development: 1978—2008*

Feng Kaiwen Zhang Jinhua Huang Yingwei

Abstract

Purpose The purpose of this paper is to draw conclusions about China's agricultural integration (CAI) by looking back its processes stage by stage, discussing the problems related to CAI, in order to learn salutary lessons for the future of agricultural development, for the increase in rural income, and especially for the promotion of CAI.

Design/methodology/approach The paper comprises three stages; analyzing the process of CAI from the household responsibility system, to agricultural industrialization, until the stage of CAI led by farmers' co – operatives; discussing the related practice together with literature; and historically proving that there is no better way to promote CAI than letting it be led by farmers' co – operatives.

Findings The paper finds that, the development of China's

^{*} This paper is a part of the project "Agricultural Integration of Farmer's Co-operative" supported financially by NSFC (No. 70773112). The former paper published at "China Agricultural Economic Review" (Indexed in SCIE&-SSCI) Vol. 1, No. 4, 2009, pp459 – 477. It is modified by Feng kaiwen this time.

agricultural economic organizations is owing to CAI, and can be studied stage by stage; the process of CAI proves that it needs to be promoted as a new style led by farmers' co – operative in order to increase rural income; literature review also gives eloquent proof of the above viewpoint; agricultural integration led by farmers' co – operative should be taken as a better way to upgrade CAI and to increase rural income, for it can decrease the benefit disputes that usually happened in the former type of agricultural industrialization.

Originality/value The obvious value of the paper is to show, by a historical review, a way to promote CAI and to increase farmers' income. A literature review finds these countermeasures comprehensively, historically, and theoretically. The information about CAI will be beneficial for people who are interested in the topic.

Keywords

China; Agriculture; Integration; Co - operative organizations; Community development; Rural economies

Introduction

Since the agricultural tax reform launched in 2003, rural China has entered into a new stage of development. A series of agricultural strategies and policies was adopted, mainly in order to increase rural income, to modernize agriculture and to renew the building of rural villages. Existing researches show that there are two main reasons why farmers have low income, one of which is the small scale of management and low level of organization, and the other is the farmer's difficulty in earning profits through the processing and marketing of agricultural products. By the end of 2008, rural households kept a scale of land

less than 0.0534 hectares on average and most of the farming was done by former individuals rather than by organizations. Statistics also demonstrate that there were less than 150, 000 farmer's co-operatives established by the end of 2007 joined by less than 50 million farmers. The union of co - operatives was rare too (www. cfc. agri. gov. cn). On the other hand, most of the processing and marketing of agricultural products are dominated by enterprises which not only reap most of the profit but also dominate the buying and selling of agricultural products. Though the agriculture industrialization has been founded since the 1980s, most of the enterprises which always dominate the industry chains are reluctant to share the profits fairly with farmers. Farmers in turn tend to break the contract if they can sell their products to those who are willing to pay more. To sum up, it is necessary to urge the development of China's agricultural integration (CAI)², including both the horizontal union of

① As a Chinese word, it is close to Agribusiness or Agriindustry, means farmers selling their products to "leading companies" for processing and marketing according to formal or informal contracts, to decrease the market transaction costs and to share the profits with companies. Even though it derived more models later, in fact, companies usually deprived farmer's profit with their advantages of economic and social resources.

② In this paper, there are two kinds of agricultural integration mentioned, horizontal integration – means to organize the individual farmers and unite the farmer's organizations horizontally, and vertical integration – definited as extend agricultural industry vertically from agriculture field to agricultural products' processing and marketing in order to form an industry chain. CAI is taken as a helpful approach to increase farmers' income. Since, the HRS set up in 1978, farmers became smaller, weaker, individual agricultural producers, they were very hard to organize themselves and to extend agricultural industry chain even though they got a lot of favors from the system at beginning.

farmers and the vertical extension of agricultural industries, since it is the essential and efficient way, proved by practice, to increase rural income. What kind of agricultural integration could be more efficient to protect farmers' interests and promote their income? How to realize it and what should be paid more attention to in the process of CAI? These issues still prevail in China.

Existing classical literatures were mainly concerned with the following issues. First of all, the household responsibility system (HRS), which caused a small scale of management and the low level of farmers' income, would be taken as the origin and rural China needs to promote agricultural integration. Second, the community co - operatives, as the first stage of horizontal organization, united the agricultural resources of farmers - especially, land and other productive factors. Third, the township and village enterprises (TVEs), the result of a successful experiment of mechanization of agricultural production, created dramatically increased quantities of rural industrial products and benefited farmers. Fourth, the agricultural industrialization as a kind of vertical agricultural integration strengthened the industrial links between farming and agricultural processing and marketing, and offered farmers opportunities to reduce their market transaction costs and share profits. In contrast, when the integration was dominated by powerful companies who only sought maximizing their own profits, farmers interests were easily ignored. Besides, experiences of agricultural integration in foreign countries brought some good examples for China. In China, farmers' own organizations, such as agricultural co - operatives, including specialized co - operatives and others, were also growing rapidly, especially in recent years,

some of which even involved agricultural processing and marketing. Which kind of CAI mentioned above could be the most efficient way of raising rural income? Since, there are very few researches on the topic, except for some strategy studies in some single fields (Lin, 2007), this article aims to fill this gap and reviews the development of CAI based on the literature.

To look for the most efficient way of agricultural integration to increase farmer's income, this article analyzed the development of CAI by its stages and assessed their performance and associated problems. The remainder of the article is organized as follows. The next section reviews the practice of the HRS as the first step of CAI development. The third section describes the application of the community co-operatives. The following three sections present the development of TVEs, the agricultural industrialization and the farmer's co-operatives. Finally, informed by historical evidence, the article introduces the approach to improving CAI to increase rural income.

1. HRS: the institutional origin of CAI development

In China, farmers are defined as the people who live in the countryside, including those who have not graduated from universities or colleges, and those who work in the city but still have the rural registered permanent residence (Lu, 2006).

Before 1978, under the people's commune, farmers had to do what the commune asked them to do. But after 1978, under the HRS, they were permitted to do what they wanted, but were still not able to do so as smaller, weaker, individual agricultural producers. Other word, the HRS made farmers need to be organized (horizontal integration) and agriculture should be changed into vertical integration. First, it is necessary to exam-

ine the origins of HRS, and its connection to CAI development.

After being tested several times, HRS was carried out successfully by farmers in Xiaogang Village, Fengyang County, Anhui Province in 1978 (Feng, 2004). At that time, as the less efficient way of productive organization – people's commune – failed to provide sufficient grain year by year, and the villagers in Xiaogang Village had to overcome the famine problem by themselves. In the spring of 1978, they took a political risk of distributing the collective land amongst each individual household for cultivating. They also made a firm promise to hand in an adequate harvest to the collective and government by the end of year. Theoretically, the rebuilt HRS gave individual households the right to use the collective land and keep the surplus after paying agricultural taxes and fees. Consequently, Xiaogang villagers doubled their harvest amount at the end of 1978, and then the efficient HRS spread all over the countryside and became a basic institution in 1982.

Since, it was definitely different from the institutions in the people's commune, such as collective productive institution, collective property rights, and average distribution system, HRS was praised by almost all economists as the first experiment for the whole economic reform since 1978 in rural China. As is well known, developing his own approach by game theory and new institutional economics, Lin (1994) discussed the supervision problems of the people's commune system from the special characteristics of agricultural production, and concluded that the high cost of supervision and difficulties in calculating each laborer's contribution caused the failure of the people's commune. Zhou (1995), whose perspective was slightly different from Lin, discussed the games and its changes between farmers and government on insti-

tution supply during the period 1949—1978 and educed the reason that, that after 1978, the people's commune system imposed by the government had a low efficiency, high cost of supervision and difficulties in supervising the supervisors. Both problems could not be solved under the institution structure of people's commune. After proving the relationship between central and local government on institution supply modified after 1978, Zhou reckoned HRS innovation was the new model of institution supply, that is, first, the farmers created the institution and then the government admitted and implemented it, so the rural institutional changes advanced from an imposed style to an induced one. Chen (1994) pointed out that the people's commune did not have a complete property rights structure; it especially lacked the residual claim right and residual right of controlling, which seriously undermined the encouragement mechanism. Oppositely, it is easy to find the property rights improvement on HRS, such as, farmers could manage their own production independently and retain residual distribution rights.

The HRS was recognized as the foundation and origin of the following economic institution innovations. Briefly, it is the basic institutional platform. However, studies on HRS have stagnated recently, and only a few researchers (Luo, Zhang, 1995; Feng, 2004) paid attention to the weakness of HRS, especially its defects on agricultural production and development such as led to a too small scale of production. Because of the rigid path dependence (North, 1991) formed by this basic institution, it was too difficult to make a complete institutional change and probably restricted the follow – up organizational and institutional innovations. These studies indicated that if agricultural organizations and institutional innovations were completely confined within the boundary of HRS, the produc-