OPENING REMARKS

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Dr. Huang, Director of the FFTC, Dr. Choi, President of the KREI, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my great pleasure to join you in opening the International Workshop on Collection of Relevant Agricultural Policy Information and Its Practical Use held here by the Food and Fertilizer Technology Center. On behalf of the Council of Agriculture of my Government, I would like to offer my congratulation on holding a workshop of such practical importance to the Asian and Pacific countries.

Since its inception in 1969, the FFTC has sponsored various international symposiums, workshops, field demonstrations, and study tours for the benefit of more than 16,000 agricultural workers from the Asian-Pacific region. A series of technical reports and other literature has also been published for wide distribution. As a consequence the FFTC has contributed significantly towards solving problems encountered in such fields as crop production, fishery, livestock farming, disease and pest control, and environmental protection. Indeed, the FFTC has played an important role in promoting international agricultural cooperation and contributed significantly to agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Facing the challenges of global climate change, food security and trade liberalization, countries in this region have to improve regional cooperation in sharing expertise and experiences in relevant agricultural policies.

Since 2013, the FFTC, under the leadership of Dr. Huang and in conjunction with its partners, has expanded the scope of its information network activities to embrace agricultural policy issues in the Asian-Pacific region by establishing an information platform of agricultural policy. The platform serves as a vehicle for stepping up information exchange on agricultural technologies in the region.
The FFTC project focuses on eight countries- Japan, Korea, the Philippines, the PRC, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the R.O.C. The information covers an overview of agricultural policy, trade liberalization countermeasures, agricultural land policies, farmers’ retirement systems, agricultural disaster insurance, food security, production and marketing policies and others. Selected information was translated into Chinese for dissemination in Taiwan. Through its website this platform presents very valuable information on agricultural policies for sharing among the countries to advance agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific region.

I am very pleasure to know that the FFTC has invited President Choi of the Korea Rural Economic Institute to deliver the workshop’s keynote speech today. Dr. Choi will share with us the evolution of Korean agricultural policies.

Agriculture is an essential industry which plays a vital role in production, ecology, conservation, livelihood, and culture. Sustainable agriculture is therefore a goal that all of us must pursue. Taiwan has had some achievements in agricultural development over the decades. However, Taiwan is now confronted with challenges such as small farming scale, aging farmers, fragmented farmland, increasing trade liberalization, and worsening climate change. The COA has recently launched a series of measures to tackle these challenges such as adding agricultural value in a pilot free economic zone, revitalization of fallow farmland, a water-saving cropping system, and the “small landlord, big tenant” program. We would be pleased to share these experiences with all the Asia-Pacific countries.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your gracious presence and wish the workshop great success. Thank you very much for your attention.