

Time Allocation of Agricultural Households under Economic Recession: Lessons from Japanese Agriculture in 1930s

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Abstract

When developing economies face economic recession, rural sectors are expected to absorb unemployed returning persons who lost their jobs in urban sectors and to retain potential excess laborers who would have flowed in urban sectors if the economy had been in a period of expansion. This paper examines this work sharing hypothesis by using historical data of Japanese farm households in 1930s when the Japanese economy suffered from the Great Depression. The results suggest the existence of work sharing mechanism. More importantly, however, the strategies taken by farm households to achieve work sharing differed by the farm management structures.

Key words

Work sharing, farm household economy, economic recession, prewar Japan

JEL classification

N55, O12, Q12