

A case study on successful tomato production in Biratori town, Hokkaido, Japan



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Biratori town

Location: 100km southeast of Sapporo city

Number of farms: 512

Agricultural field:

Paddy: 2,170ha

Other crops: 595



Tomato production:

Started by a small group with 6 farms in 1971

Bird's-eye view of Biratori town





**Tomato production using
the plastic film house**

(House size: 10m × 50m)

**(Average area of
a farm: 0.7ha)**

= 14 houses/farm

Sales: 0.2 million US\$/farm

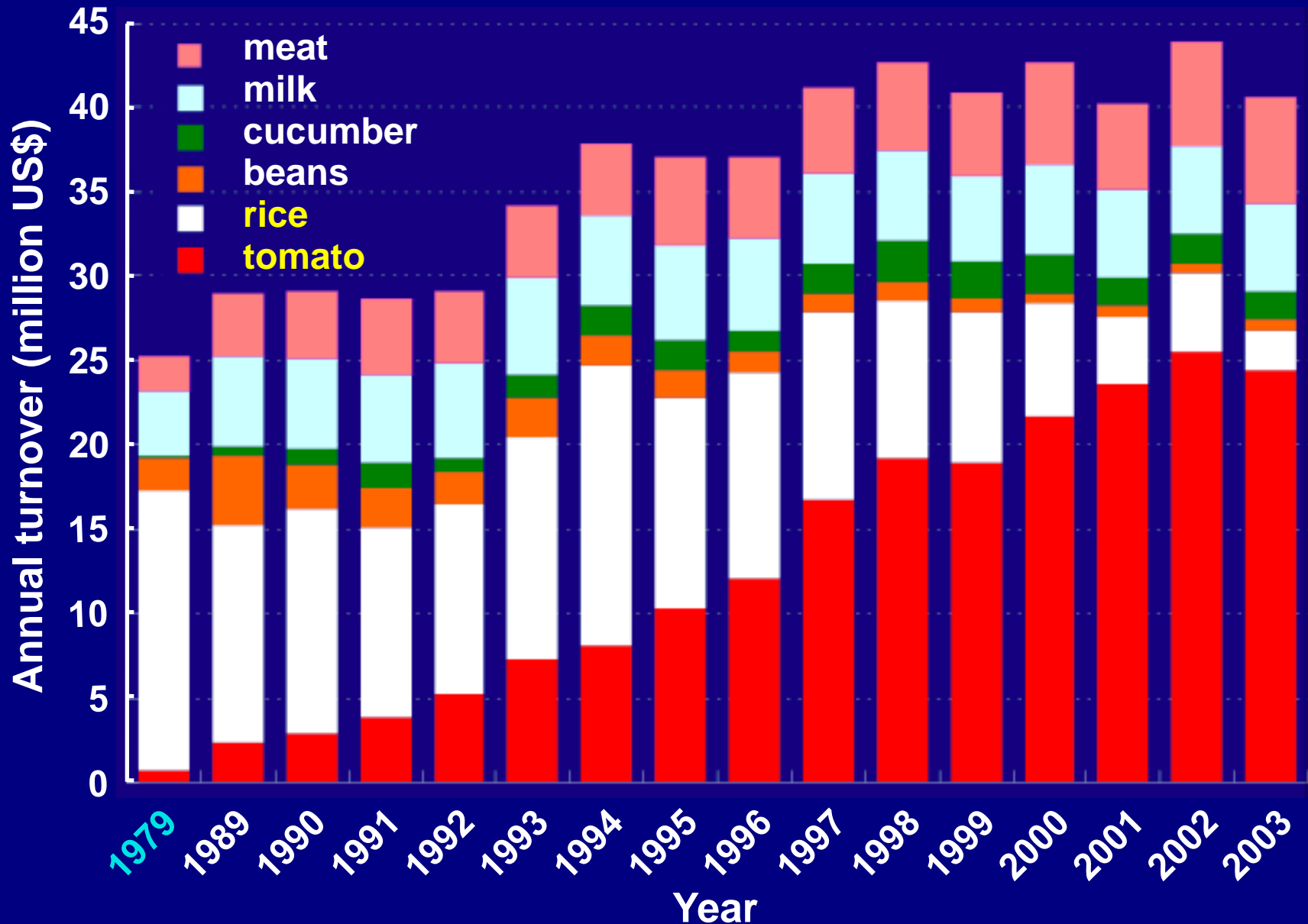


Figure. Yearly changes in agricultural production of Biratori.

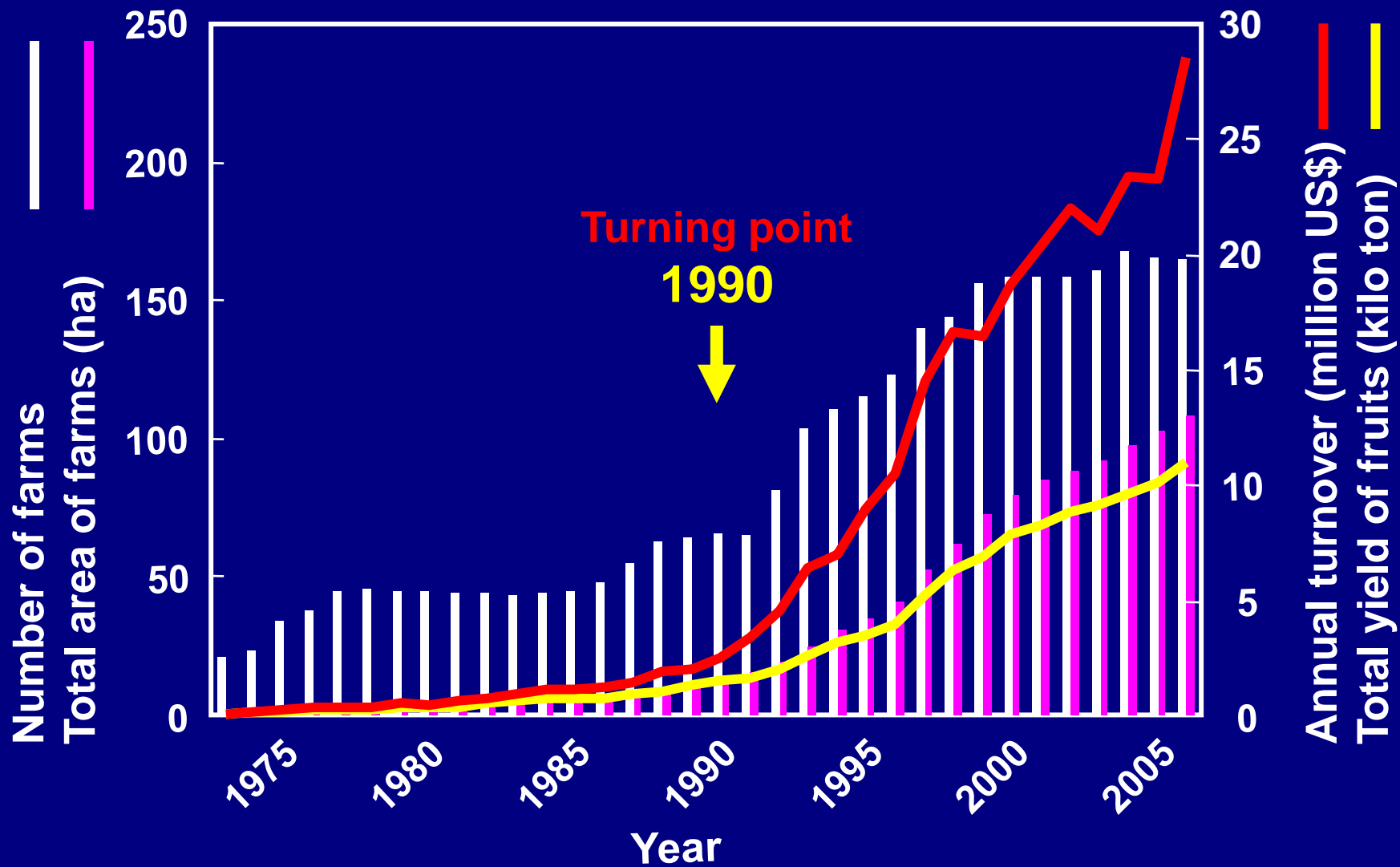


Figure. Changes in tomato production in Biratori.

What's happened around 1990?

They realized **stable supply** of the high-quality fruits
(50-60t / day)

by equipping the **fruit selection facilities** depending
on a grant from the government ... 2.8 million US\$



Buyers always buy the fruits for a high price,
(...directly, not via market)
since they need tons of fruit every day.

Buyer = huge retailer (group companies)

Standardization utilizing the fruit-selection machine:

Sizes: **3L, 2L, L, M, M1, S, 2S** (7 grades)

Qualities: **good, very good, excellent** (3 grades)



➔ Established the **'Biratori'** brand

Other points to produce and ship high-quality fruits:

- 1) Chose a **new cultivar** with high fruit-qualities
- 2) Built storage rooms equipped with **pre-cooling apparatus** (cold-chain system) ... 5.0 million US\$
- 3) **Cooperation** of all farms **in seedling production**
Built nursery greenhouse ... 1.9 million US\$



Other points to produce and ship high-quality fruits:

4) Establishment of **education system**:

New faces were taught **by expert farmers** to make their skills up.



Keys for successful production of fresh fruits

1. To realize stable supply of huge amount of fruits with high qualities

... they will have economic power

2. Public investment to agricultural infrastructures:

a) **Nursery** for growing seedlings uniformly

b) **Fruit selection system**

c) **Storage rooms with pre-cooling system**

... to establish **cold-chain system**

Common sense on post-harvest dealing:

Fresh fruits must be kept at low temperature through all steps from growers to consumers.