

“A Study on the Volume and Transportation Distance as to Food Imports (“Food Mileage” and its Influence on the Environment”, by Tetsuya NAKATA, *Journal of Agricultural Policy Research*, No.5, pp.45-59.

"Food Mileage" is an index that expresses the distance from the farm to the table, particularly of imported foods, and is the aggregate product of the weight and distance transported from overseas of all food items imported by a country. The unit of food mileage is t·km (ton-kilometer).

In 2001, Japan's total volume of food imports was 58 million tons and its food mileage was 900 billion t·km, the latter being almost 1.6 times the total domestic freightage. International comparisons show that this figure is high. The food mileage of South Korea and the United States are around 30 to 40% of Japan's, the United Kingdom and Germany about 20% and France around 10%. The per capita figure of Japan is also high.

Japan's remarkably high food mileage is largely due to particular commodities such as grains and distant export countries such as the United States, and incurs environmental concerns. Japan's huge volume of food imports accompanied by long-distance transportation may be damaging the global environment through the increase of carbon dioxide emissions.