
Production and Consumption Trends of Matsutake Mushrooms and Shiitake Mushrooms during the High Economic Growth Period and Their Background

OGURA Jun'ichi

Matsutake mushroom was popular among common people until the early stage of the high economic growth period, but it became a luxury food which was difficult for most consumers to afford as its production sharply decreased during the period. On the other hand, in contrast, the production volume of shiitake mushroom greatly increased during the period, and it became a popular food as the price dropped significantly.

In such change, the price of the food seems to have been especially important for consumers. Since the price fluctuation was large due to high inflation rate during the high economic growth period I focus on in this paper, I considered the prices that consumers felt in each year (consumer-perceived prices) by comparing the actual prices in each year with day laborer's wages. I also considered the trend from the early 20th century in order to consider the period of high economic growth. Also, I considered the background of production and consumption trends of matsutake mushrooms and shiitake mushrooms since the early 20th century.

As a result, it is considered that the consumer-perceived prices of matsutake mushroom almost doubled from the beginning to the end of the period of high economic growth. However, if you look at the change from the early 20th century, the consumer-perceived prices of matsutake mushrooms in the early period of high economic growth were about three times as high as that in the early 20th century.

In contrast, the production volume of shiitake mushrooms increased significantly throughout the period of high economic growth, and the consumer-perceived prices were almost halved, making it more affordable for consumers. After many years of research, the artificial cultivation of shiitake mushroom became easy and the production volume increased drastically, while matsutake mushroom continued to be difficult to cultivate. Furthermore, due to the spread of propane gas during the period, the use of *satoyama* (woodlands near villages) as in the past disappeared and the woodlands environment greatly changed, resulting in the disappearance of matsutake mushrooms.

Key words: high economic growth period, matsutake mushroom, shiitake mushroom, production volume, consumer-perceived price, background
