

Labor Migration, Regional Disparity and Food Production in China

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Abstract: With the urbanization and evolution of food market, hundreds of millions of rural labors outflow occur. Thus labors which are engaged in food production are decreasing, grain acreage is reducing, and some land has even been abandoned. It seems that these threats do not affect the China's overall food security in the short run. However, is the growing trend of food production sustainable? Are there any threats for local food security? Empirical evidence shows that the regional disparity is very important in food production. In the main sales areas, food production is decreasing and only depends on land and multiple cropping techniques because of rural labor outflow. In the main production area, food production is increasing and problems of involution and intensification are eased by rural migration. We argue that natural endowments and comparative advantages determine the different performances of main production and sales areas in face of rural labors outflow. Therefore, the overall planning based on regional disparity is the key to ensure food security.

Keywords: Labor Migration; Regional Disparity; Food Security