



FIGURE 1. Geographic distribution of 42 studied villages in the endemic area of blackfoot disease in Taiwan, by median arsenic level of well water determined in 1964-1966.

demic area had an insufficient intake of fresh vegetables and animal protein. Most residents of the study area have been engaged in fishing or salt production or, in areas of less salinity, in farming. The population in the study area decreased from 203,344 in 1973 to 174,945 in 1986, and the average immigration rate and emigration rate were 3.81 percent and 6.76 percent,

respectively. Both of these rates were lower than the average rates for rural areas in Taiwan (35). It was recently reported (30) that more than 90 percent of local residents lived in the study area all their lives. Because the study population lived in a small area, they shared similar dietary patterns, life-style, socioeconomic status, and even medical facilities.