

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Joint Marketing Program with Aoyama Gakuin University

Country: Japan

Post: Osaka ATO

Report Category: Agricultural Trade Office Activities

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Report Highlights:

From April to August 2025, ATO Osaka conducted its second collaboration with Aoyama Gakuin University. The program, initially started in 2024, provides students with knowledge of U.S. agricultural products and encourages strategic marketing discussions. This year, in collaboration with Almond Breeze, students developed marketing strategies for plant-based beverages. The program's three goals are to: create innovative marketing ideas, gain insights into young consumer preferences, and equip students with accurate knowledge of U.S. products. Since the program's inception, over 100 students have attended collaboration lectures, building a strong “win-win-win” relationship among the ATO, U.S. cooperators, and the university. The program is expected to continue in future years.

Background:

In April 2024, ATO Osaka began its collaboration with the Department of Marketing at Aoyama Gakuin University. Aoyama Gakuin University is one of Japan's most renowned universities and is well known for producing graduates who go on to work at leading food-related companies. As part of this collaboration, ATO Osaka conducts a marketing activity within a semester-long course. Using U.S. food and agricultural products as the central theme, approximately ten student groups are tasked with developing original marketing and promotional ideas. These ideas are then presented to professors, ATO Osaka, importers, and Japanese food manufacturers, and are followed by feedback and evaluation.

The objectives of this joint initiative with the Department of Marketing at Aoyama Gakuin University are threefold:

1. To provide students—many of whom are expected to join major corporations in the future—with an understanding of Japan's food self-sufficiency rate, the differences between Japanese and U.S. agriculture, and the safety and characteristics of U.S. agricultural products.
2. To identify and potentially adopt outstanding marketing ideas proposed by the students, refining and incorporating them into the promotional activities of ATO Osaka and U.S. cooperators.
3. To gain insights into the perspectives of younger generations, particularly those in their teens and twenties, by observing firsthand how they gather information, what influences their thinking, and what areas of interest they prioritize.

In 2024, the course was conducted in partnership with a variety of cooperators, while in 2025 it was carried out together with Almond Breeze and its Japan partner, Kagome Co., Ltd. Through these efforts, the program established a public-private-academic framework and built a “win-win-win” relationship among all stakeholders.

2025 Semester with Almond Breeze

Plant-based beverages are currently one of the fastest-growing markets in Japan. While companies such as Glico have expanded their share with the product “*Almond Kou-ka*” and Australian oat milk brands are also gaining traction, Almond Breeze changed its production partner to Kagome in 2023 and reformulated its products for the Japanese market. The 2025 course coincided with the timing of Almond Breeze's relaunch in Japan.

As part of the program, students were given presentations not only on the market situation but also on the nutritional composition of almond milk and points of differentiation from its competitors. They were then asked to develop marketing strategies under the theme: “*How can Almond Breeze become a regular beverage choice among consumers in their 20s?*”

While Almond Breeze's current advertising campaigns primarily target consumers in their 40s, the students provided fresh perspectives unique to the younger generation, supported by data and logical reasoning. Their proposals attracted significant interest, and several ideas are now being reviewed at the corporate level for potential application in actual marketing activities.



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私たちが提案したい世界観

この1本は、誰かに褒められる代わり

自分を満たせる言葉を、毎日もらおう

自分が満たされるから飲む

▶ “自己肯定感を注ごう”

Attachments:

No Attachments.