

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**Date:** 4/15/2016

**GAIN Report Number:** JA6006

## Japan

**Post:** Tokyo

### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 12 Issue 2**

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

New York Chocolatier Opens First Tokyo Location; Japanese Government Moving Towards Fewer BSE-Related Restrictions; Agricultural Exchanges Continue to Strengthen Ties

## General Information:

# The Wasabi

*HOT News from Japan - Vol 12, Issue 2*  
April 15, 2016



**New York Chocolatier Opens First Tokyo Location:** On April 20, ATO Director Rachel Nelson attended the opening of "Cacao Market by MarieBelle," a business started by Maribel Lieberman. Ms. Lieberman has well-known chocolate shops across New York City and a factory in Brooklyn, NY. This is the third Cacao Market in Japan, and the first in Tokyo. The first two Cacao Markets in Japan opened in Kyoto in 2012. The company will donate chocolate for this year's Independence Day reception at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Tokyo.

## **Japanese Government Moving Towards Fewer BSE-Related Restrictions:**

On March 28, Agricultural Specialist Kakuyu Obara attended the Food Safety Commission's Prion Committee's third meeting on a proposed revision that would eliminate age-based BSE-testing requirements for Japanese domestic cattle. The Office of Agricultural Affairs has been tracking this issue closely since the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare (MHLW) submitted the proposal in December 2015. Post expects that the Prion Committee will meet several more times on the issue before concluding its assessment of the proposed measure's risk to human health later this year. While MHLW maintains BSE-related import restrictions on beef from the United States and other countries classified as 'negligible risk' by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the proposed measure appears to be a positive step toward future easing of BSE-related import restrictions.



平成27年度米国派遣農業研修生 杜行会 2016年3月24日 於：国立オリンピック記念青少年総合センター

## **Agricultural Exchanges Continue to Strengthen Ties between Japan and the United States:**

On March 24, 2016, the Japan Agricultural Exchange Council (JAEC) held an orientation seminar and sending-off ceremony for 46 young Japanese agricultural trainees who will participate in a nineteen-month farm training program in the United States. As part of their training, the Japanese trainees will live and work on U.S. farms, while learning about many aspects

of U.S. agriculture, including marketing, agricultural technologies and cultural practices. At the seminar, Agricultural Attaché Evan Mangino gave the trainees an overview of what U.S. agriculture looks like today, highlighting the diversity of U.S. farms and products.

The trainees were particularly intrigued by facts that contradicted their perceptions of U.S. agriculture, such as how the number of small, family farms dwarfs the number of large scale operations. Mr. Mangino had a lively discussion with the trainees on U.S.-Japan farm trade relations and the future of Japanese agriculture. At the following ceremony, Mr. Mangino encouraged the trainees to use their new-found knowledge and experience to strengthen Japan's agricultural future. USDA and JAEC share a long history of cooperation and this seminar continued to bolster that relationship and the Office of Agricultural Affairs' outreach efforts.

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