

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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**Date:** 11/16/2012

**GAIN Report Number:**

## Japan

**Post:** Tokyo

### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 8 Issue 10**

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

Cinnabon Returns to Japan for the First Time in Four Years; Japanese Consumer Group Explains the Safety of Biotech Foods and Food Irradiation.

# The Wasabi

*HOT News from Japan - Vol 8, Issue 10*  
November 16, 2012

## **Cinnabon Returns to Japan for the First Time in Four Years:**

Ambassador John V. Roos was the guest of honor at the Grand Tokyo Opening of Cinnabon on November 15, 2012. Cinnabon returns to Tokyo after an absence of about four years, marking the return of an iconic U.S. franchise. In 1999, Cinnabon opened a store in Japan, but it closed in early 2009. This year, Brand Partners, Inc. (BPI), has obtained the franchise rights for Japan. The Roppongi Cinnabon store will be collocated with a new BPI-managed Seattle's Best coffee shop. The Ambassador was nostalgic in his comments as the aroma cinnamon wafted throughout the shop. He recalled that it has been a long time since he had the chance to taste a Cinnabon cake. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Director, Steve Shnitzler, also kicked off a Cinnabon media event on November 8, 2012, helping introduce the brand back to Japanese consumers. Cinnabon imports all its ingredients from the United States and uses the same tried and true methods of preparation. Cinnabon hopes to have up to 50 stores in Japan within the next five years.



## **Japanese Consumer Group Explains the Safety of Biotech Foods and Food Irradiation:**

On November 10 - 11, the Japanese Science and Technology Agency held a large-scaled event in Tokyo known as “Science Agora.” A Japanese consumer group interested in learning about food science and promoting science-based risk communication participated in the event. At the event, the group set up a booth to explain the safety of biotech foods and food irradiation. The booth also displayed a biotech variety of Hawaiian papayas and attracted about 400 people in total. Members of the consumer group explained the history of the Hawaiian papaya, its struggles to fight the papaya ring spot virus, and the origin of the biotech “Rainbow” papaya. About a year ago, Japan completed the safety review of Rainbow papaya; the first ever biotech consumer-ready product allowed for the distribution in Japan. While the majority of Japanese consumers are reportedly still apprehensive about agricultural biotechnology, there are consumers who recognize the safety and advantages of new food technologies and support the public acceptance of the technologies.

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