

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

FAS/Tokyo team visited the largest manufacturing plant of Kewpie Co. Ltd., a major food manufacturer in Japan. Mayonnaise is the most known signature product of the company. Its mayonnaise enriched with generous amounts of U.S. egg yolks holds commanding market shares in Japan and in China. Of particular interest to U.S. agricultural exports, is the fact that Kewpie's 'deli' line of business, which includes bento box lunches, premade salads and Japanese rice balls, is the fastest growing segment of Kewpies business and holds substantial opportunities for U.S. ingredient suppliers.

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General Information:

The Wasabi

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Kewpie Invites FAS/Tokyo to Largest Japanese Production Facility: On June 8, 2017, FAS/Tokyo staff traveled to the Kewpie Co. Ltd manufacturing plant in nearby Ibaraki prefecture. The FAS/Tokyo team was hosted by Kewpie Chairman, Amane Nakashima, and senior members of the product development team. While touring the largest of Kewpie's 90 facilities in Japan, FAS/Tokyo learned a great deal about the history of the company, its brand, and its future plans. While Kewpie may not yet be a household name in the United States, its mayonnaise (enriched with generous amounts of U.S. egg yolks) holds commanding market shares in Japan and in China. Of particular interest to U.S. agricultural exports, is the fact that Kewpie's 'deli' line of business, which includes bento box lunches, premade salads and Japanese rice balls, is the fastest growing segment of Kewpie's business and holds substantial opportunities for U.S. ingredient suppliers.



Above: Agricultural Minister Counselor, Gary Meyer (center), flanked by Kewpie Chairman Amane Nakashima (right) and Agricultural Attaché, Evan Mangino (left)

Japan dedicates first new soybean crushing facility in 50 years: On June 13, FAS/Japan Minister

Counselor, Gary Meyer, attended the inauguration ceremony of the newest soybean crushing facility of J-Oil Mills, thanking the company and audience for their long-standing support for U.S. soybeans. J-Oil Mills has imported U.S. soybeans for nearly 70 years, and is the second largest U.S. soybean crusher in Japan. The new facility is expected to help meet increased demand for soybean oil and meal in Japan. U.S. Soybean Export Council CEO, Jim Sutter, also gave remarks at the ceremony, emphasizing the industry's continuous provision of high-quality U.S. soybean to the Japanese market. U.S. exports of soybeans to Japan averages \$1 billion annually.



FAS/Japan Minister Counselor, Gary Meyer, and USSEC CEO, Jim Sutter, attend an inauguration ceremony wishing for continuous success of J-Oil Mills and its new soybean crushing facility

61 Japanese Buyers Attend National Restaurant Show in Chicago: ATO/Japan supported the U.S. National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show, held from May 20 to 23 in Chicago, by accompanying 61 Japanese restaurant representatives – 6 independent buyers and 55 buyers organized by the Japan Foodservice Association (JF). In Chicago, ATO/Tokyo Marketing Specialist, Masayuki (Alex) Otsuka, gave a presentation to the buyers about the trade potential of U.S. agricultural products and about current trends in the U.S. foodservice industry. The food service sector in Japan was valued at over \$300 billion in 2016, and JF represents more than 65,000 restaurant companies, including major U.S. chains. ATO/Japan connections with JF and continued support for buyer's missions to the NRA show are instrumental components of ATO/Japan's efforts to expand Japanese food service sector demand for U.S. food and agricultural products.



A Japanese restaurant chain, G-Taste, President Mr. Sugimoto (left), and his staff met Pennsylvania based sweet manufacture Founder, Sandy Solmon, at her booth at the NRA Show and tasted U.S. cakes. ATO/Tokyo recruited this Japanese restaurant chain and escorted them to various U.S. food suppliers during their visit.

Cooperator Meeting: ATO/Japan held the last Cooperator Meeting before the departure of ATO Director, Rachel Nelson, and ATO Deputy Directory, Evan Mangino. The agenda focused on discussing cooperator participation in the remaining CSSF activities for fiscal year 2017, as well as updates about the Seoul Marketing Workshop agenda. Additionally, COSTCO Japan attended the meeting to brainstorm about ideas for their upcoming American Fair.