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## Japan

### Market Development Reports

#### Food Business Line

*Periodic Press Translations from ATO Tokyo*

**2001**

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**Report Highlights:** A summary of current news reports in America's largest food and agricultural export market as translated from Japan's mass media and food press. This issue includes: Japan Department Store Association member sales increase in June; leading retailer JUSCO to begin 24-hour operations at Max Value supermarkets in Gifu and Chiba prefectures; Wako pork cutlet chain receives USDA award; U.S. cereal maker Organic Milling manufactures Morinaga Seika's new organic breakfast cereal line; and Kagome Foods and Heinz to cooperate in U.S. and Japan markets.

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
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# Food Business Line

Periodic Press Translations from ATO Tokyo

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## Wholesale/Retail

- According to the *Japan Department Store Association*, total sales of member department stores in June increased 2.4% on a same-store basis compared to the same month last year. This was the first time in two months for sales to exceed the previous year's record, mainly due to the hot weather and early summer discount sales. During the same period, food sales also increased by 4.4% on a same-store basis. (a 7/25)
- On August 1, *JUSCO* will begin 24-hour operations at its Max Value supermarket in Gifu prefecture, targeting office employees who return home late. This is the first attempt for a large retailer to stay open 24 hours. *JUSCO* also plans to implement the new hours at its Max Value store in Chiba by the end of August. (a 8/1)

## Food Service

- *Wako Co., Ltd.*, a leading *tonkatsu* (pork cutlet) chain restaurant company, was presented an award by USDA in June for contributing to the development of U.S. pork demand in Japan and improving the quality image of U.S. pork. Since 1994, *Wako* has imported all its pork from the United States. (b 7/31)

## Food Processing/New Products/Market Trends

- *Morinaga Seika* (Morinaga Snack Foods) will start selling organic breakfast cereals on August 2. The products will be manufactured by U.S. cereal maker *Organic Milling*, and imported by a trading company to be sold under the *Morinaga* brand. This is the first line of breakfast cereals approved to be labeled "organic" under the revised JAS law. (a 7/27)
- *Kagome Foods* announced on July 26 it will begin cooperation with *HJ Heinz* in the areas of sales, production, quality guarantee, distribution, and procurement. *Kagome* will help revitalize *Heinz's* Japan office, while *Heinz* supports *Kagome's* business activities in the United States. (a 7/27)
- The *Japan Self-Service Association* announced it will cooperate with *Infomart*, Japan's largest food B2B website company, in launching a new supermarket food site called "JSSA FOODS Info Mart." (f 7/26)
- *Tomen Corporation* has acquired the right to sell *Sara Lee* frozen cakes and bakery products in Japan via *Sara Lee Bakery Australia*, the regional branch office of U.S.-based *Sara Lee Corporation*. (f 7/30)
- *Calbee* began a recall of 8 million packages of its "Kappa Ebisen" (Shrimp Flake) snack product and other related snack foods on July 31 due to the detection of a small piece of metal. (a 8/1)
- The trend of decreased rice consumption brought about by modern lifestyles and new eating habits has recently begun to change. *Bento* lunch boxes and *gyudon* grilled beef topped rice

bowls, as well as frozen rice and microwavable packaged rice products are now selling very well. This new trend pushed up the wholesale price of rice by 4% in June compared to May. ( c 8/1)

**ATO/Cooperator/Competitor Activities/Trade Shows**

- *Meat & Livestock Australia* (MLA) held a welcome luncheon for the Australian national swimming team on July 18 in Kyushu. *MLA* is the official sponsor for the World Swimming Championships held July 16-30, and hopes to further promote Aussie beef as healthy and nutritious through this sporting event. (f 7/30)
- The President of the *USA Poultry and Egg Export Council*, Mr. James Sumner, held a press conference at the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office in Tokyo on July 30. ( c 7/30)
- The 12<sup>th</sup> California Walnuts Contest was concluded on July 19 at the Akasaka Prince Hotel in Tokyo. Four winners were announced from among 253 contestants. Contest entries included rice walnut bread, a hot walnut sandwich, and a crispy walnut *onigiri* rice ball. ( c 7/30)

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**Sources**

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|----------------------------------|---|
| (a) The Japan Economic Newspaper | (b) The Nikkei Marketing Journal        |
| (c) The Japan Food Journal       | (d) The Beverage & Food News Commentary |
| (e) The Japan Food News          | (f) The Food Industry News              |

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