



Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 5/8/2000

GAIN Report #JA0053

Japan

Agricultural Situation

This Week in Japan

2000

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Report Highlights:

A summary of events and developments in the United States' largest export market for agricultural, forestry, and fishery products. This week's highlights include:

- **MHW to Allow Ractopamine Hydrochloride Residues (Paylean) in Pork**
 - **Japan's FMD Situation Continues to Improve**
 - **Japanese Farm Labor Force Continues to Shrink**
 - **Housing Market Slightly Recovered in 1999 but Outlook for 2000 Remains Cautious**
 - **U.S. Fresh Grapefruits and Oranges Forecast at Near-Record Import Levels**
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Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1], JA



This Week in Japan

**An Update of Major News and Events from the Largest U.S. Agricultural Export Market
Volume IV, Issue No. 19
May 8, 2000**

- i MHW to Allow Ractopamine Hydrochloride Residues (Paylean) in Pork:** In a meeting with the agricultural attache, the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) Veterinary Sanitation Division confirmed that MHW has decided not to require a safety assessment by the Government of Japan for ractopamine hydrochloride, a swine feed ingredient to be marketed under the brand name Paylean in the United States later this year. MHW said Paylean residues will be permitted up to the safe tissue concentrations set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i Japan's FMD Situation Continues to Improve:** Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) continues to ease restrictions on movement of meat products within the areas of Miyazaki Prefecture where foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) was confirmed. To date no evidence exists that the disease has spread from the original 3 farms. The next step is for Japanese authorities to declare Japan FMD-free to the OIE (Office of International Epizootics). These officials then determine whether to grant Japan FMD-free status. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i Japanese Farm Labor Force Continues to Shrink:** According to the just-released 1999 MAFF Annual Report on Food and Agriculture, the number of Japanese citizens engaged primarily in agriculture totaled an estimated 3,845,000 persons in fiscal 1999, down 1.2 percent from the year before. Meanwhile, the number of citizens aged 65 or older engaged in agriculture jumped 2.1 percent last year to 1,972,000, accounting for 51.3 percent of Japan's farm population. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i Housing Market Slightly Recovered in 1999 But Outlook for 2000 Remains Cautious :** According to statistics from Japan's Ministry of Construction (MOC) during 1999 housing starts reached 1,214,601 units, up 1.4% from the previous year. The increase was slight but represented the first increase in 3 years after the 14-year low of 1998. Starts of wood-frame housing, a key sector for U.S. wood products suppliers, grew 4% while 2x4 wood frame starts grew 12%. Looking ahead, though January 2000 overall housing starts are up 17% from 1999, the market outlook is cautious. Despite Japanese Government housing stimulus measures, consumer spending on homes remains lethargic due to concerns about the economy and increasing mortgage rates. For details see JA0042-JA0047. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i U.S. Fresh Grapefruits and Oranges Forecast at Near-Record Import Levels:** Abundant supplies of high-quality, low priced-fruit this year will result in near-record Japanese imports of U.S. fresh grapefruit and oranges, with imports from all sources projected to reach 290,000 tons and 160,000 tons, respectively. Imports of fresh lemons are projected to be up slightly from last year at 90,000 tons. See JA0052 for details. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

Upcoming Events: 5/14-20: Visit by Kathleen Merrigan, Administrator, USDA/AMS