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Agricultural Situation

This Week in Japan

2001

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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 includes: USMEF Launches U.S. Beef Safety Media Campaign in Response to Japan BSE Crisis; ATO/Osaka Sponsors Great American "Healthy Gourmet" Cuisine Promotions; ATO/Tokyo Holds "Healthy Gourmet" Menu Seminar for Institutional Food Service Industry.

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This Week in Japan

An Update of Major News and Events from the Largest U.S. Agricultural Export Market

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i USMEF Launches U.S. Beef Safety Media Campaign in Response to Japan BSE Crisis: The U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) has launched an aggressive media campaign to combat fears among Japanese consumers about the safety of eating beef following the recent discovery of BSE in a domestic Japanese cow. Following their own full-page ad a few weeks ago, USMEF has now joined forces with leading Japanese food service chains to place advertisements in all of the country's major newspapers. Yoshinoya D&C, the popular quick-service "beef bowl" chain restaurant which uses primarily U.S. beef, has been the most prominent so far. Yoshinoya published an ad on October 28 featuring a full-page picture of USMEF President/CEO Philip Seng holding an official letter stating that the U.S. Government and the U.S. meat industry certify the quality and safety of U.S. beef, and that no evidence of BSE has been found in U.S. cattle. (ATO/Tokyo)

i ATO/Osaka Sponsors Great American "Healthy Gourmet" Cuisine Promotions: In a series of "Great American" Cuisine Promotions conducted by ATO/Osaka in late October, over 250 influential food industry players in the Kansai region were introduced to an exciting, new concept of American "Healthy Gourmet" Cuisine (New Spa Cuisine) using a wide range of American food ingredients and featuring a guest chef from one of the world's leading health spas, "Canyon Ranch Resort Hotel" in Arizona. The promotions included a Great American Food Show Reception at the Hyatt Regency Osaka, an American "Healthy Gourmet" Cuisine presentation & seminar, and an American "Healthy Gourmet" Cuisine Cooking Seminar at the Tsuji Culinary Academy targeting the region's top chefs. Multiplier benefits were achieved in a tie-up with Toho Co., Ltd., a major food service wholesaler who co-organized the Tsuji cooking seminar. Through all of these events, a number of new American food products were introduced to the Western Japan food service industry, including Alaskan halibut and salmon, turkey, pork, tomatoes, yellow squash, hominy, black beans, tortillas, fresh limes, lemons, and frozen cranberries. Yellow squash, in particular, attracted a great deal of attention, with chefs very interested in its color, taste and versatility. Toho has received many inquiries regarding all of the new products introduced and is looking into prices and availability. (ATO/Osaka)

i ATO/Tokyo Holds "Healthy Gourmet" Menu Seminar for Institutional Food Service Industry: In cooperation with Kuze Co., Ltd, one of the top food service wholesalers in the Kanto region, ATO/Tokyo held a chef seminar and cooking demonstration in Tokyo on November 1 at Kuze's headquarters kitchen studio featuring Executive Chef Scott Uehlein, a guest chef from a well-known spa in Tucson, Arizona. Following Chef Uehlein's performances in Osaka (detailed above), he assisted ATO/Tokyo in introducing health-oriented American cuisine featuring various U.S. food ingredients to 25 buyers from eight leading Japanese institutional food service companies and two hotel restaurant companies, as well as several press representatives. ATO/Tokyo will be following up on this promotion with a buyer showcase sometime early next year which will also target Japan's growing institutional food service sector. (ATO/Tokyo)

i Upcoming Events: October 17 - November 8, Ralse American Food Shop in Sapporo; November 22-25, Japan Foodservice Show in Yokohama; January 22, "GAF Team" Regional Buyer Showcase in Nagoya.