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Japan

Agricultural Situation

This Week in Japan

2001

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Report Highlights:

MAFF proposes WTO Safeguard Investigation on Wood Products; Fair Trade Commission Issues First Warning on False "Pure Berkshire Breed" Labeling; Great American Menu Campaign kicks off with a "Friendly" Press Promotion; ATO Supports Successful American Christmas Fair at Daiei Hyper Mart.

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
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- i MAFF proposes WTO Safeguard Investigation on Wood Products:** After a preliminary investigation, the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has proposed an investigation on whether World Trade Organization (WTO) safeguard measures to restrict imports on lumber, laminated wood products and plywood would be justified. After an investigation, where a domestic industry suffers serious injury or a threat of serious injury as a result of imports, member countries may restrict imports by increasing tariffs or imposing quotas. Sawn lumber and laminated wood product imports are under preliminary investigation on the emergency fast-track, while plywood imports are under preliminary investigation on a lower level. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

- i Fair Trade Commission Issues First Warning on False "Pure Berkshire Breed" Labeling:** Japan's Fair Trade Commission issued a warning against a supermarket in Tokyo accused of labeling and selling a non-Berkshire breed as "Kurobuta" (black hog). The store apparently violated the commission's Law for the Prevention of Unjust Premiums and Misleading Representation. In response, the Tokyo District Meat Fair Trade Council took samples of the pork, requested DNA testing at a research institute, and found the pork was not pure Berkshire. In May 1999, MAFF issued a Kurobuta definition leading to an amendment of the "Fair Competition Rule Concerning Meat Labeling" in February 2000. Both domestic and imported pork is subject to the labeling requirement. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

- i Great American Menu Campaign kicks off with a "Friendly" Press Promotion:** At a March 1, ATO/Osaka and the Friendly Co., Ltd., owners of a 61 outlet family-style restaurant chain "Kicked-off" a two-month Great American Menu promotion with a highly successful press conference at one of Friendly's outlets. Approximately 30 press including TV, radio, newspapers and magazines attended the press promotion during which they sampled, photographed and discussed the great taste of the American food menu. Agricultural Minister Counselor Susan Hale and ATO Osaka Director Daniel Martinez made remarks recognizing the importance of the Japanese food market and asked for support in the campaign. Participating U.S. cooperators include USMEF, US Potato Board, National Dairy Export Council, California Strawberry Board and the USA Rice Federation who were also introduced to the press by ATO Osaka. (ATO Osaka)

- i ATO Supports Successful American Christmas Fair at Daiei Hyper Mart:** Daiei Hyper Mart, a subsidiary of the Daiei Group, recently announced the results of its "American Christmas Party" fair supported by the ATO this past December at the chain's 31 outlets located throughout Japan. The five-day promotion resulted in total sales of U.S. food products of 82 million yen (roughly \$745,000), including U.S. beef, frozen chicken, salmon, Alaskan crab, ice cream, french fries and other processed food items. (ATO Tokyo)

Upcoming events: Mar 2-13 Architecture & Construction Trade Show; Mar 8: GMO Seminar; Mar 13-16: Foodex 2001; Mar 20-30: Codex Biotech Subcommittee/U.S.-Japan Bilaterals; Mar 21-23: NAEGA/USGC/NCGA; May 7: Hop Trade Delegation