



Foreign Agricultural Service

**GAIN Report**

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 3/27/2000

GAIN Report #JA0033

## Japan

### This Week in Japan

2000

Approved by:

**Sarah D. Hanson**

**U.S. Embassy**

Prepared by:

The U.S. Agricultural Affairs Office (Tokyo) and Agricultural Trade Offices (Tokyo/Osaka)

---

#### 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 Intends to Finalize Mandatory GM Food Labeling Policy by this Summer;**
- **FDA Discusses U.S. GM Food Safety Assessment with Japanese Press and Consumer Groups;**
- **ATO Osaka Places U.S. Food in Universal Studio's Spotlight;**
- **"FOODEM 2000" and "Kato All Foods Fair" Smashing Successes in Western Japan.**

---

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. 13  
March 27, 2000

- i MHW Intends to Finalize Mandatory GM Food Labeling Policy by this Summer:** The Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW) Special Food Labeling Subcommittee is expected to submit its final recommendations for mandatory labeling of foods containing genetically modified ingredients by mid-summer, for implementation beginning April 1, 2001. While no formal proposal has been forwarded to-date, MHW officials say a "safety assurance" statement on food labels is needed to inform consumers that all GM foods have been safety assessed by MHW prior to market introduction. Details such as the range of products subject to labeling, threshold levels, and compliance issues, will be considered by the Subcommittee later this Spring. The requirements would be in addition to mandatory labeling for 23 foods imposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, also set to begin April 1, 2001. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i FDA Discusses U.S. GM Food Safety Assessment with Japanese Press and Consumer Groups:** FAS/Japan's GM Food Safety Seminar Series continued last week with presentations on the U.S. approach to safety assessment by James Maryanski, FDA Strategic Manager for Biotechnology, in two separate events at the U.S. Embassy/Tokyo on March 24. Participants in the consumer group session included representatives from key food safety-related organizations in Japan, including the Japan Consumers Union, the Consumer Science Federation, and the Japan Housewives Association. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i ATO Osaka Places U.S. Food in Universal Studio's Spotlight:** On March 22 ATO Osaka organized a custom-made presentation of American food products targeting Universal Studio Japan (USJ). ATO Osaka approached USJ last fall to propose an American food presentation with the theme park's 21 restaurant operations and 30 cart food services in mind. Universal Studios/Japan will open in Osaka in April 2001 and expects 8-10 million visitors per year. ATO/Osaka recruited 22 companies and Cooperators of which 9 were selected by the USJ for the presentation. Each company individually presented their products with menu ideas to key persons in USJ's food service division. The custom-made presentation included lime juice, baby leaf salad, oysters, catfish, frozen potato products, tortillas, chicken, soups, cookies, frozen cakes, etc. USJ expects 15 billion yen annual sales for their food service operation. (ATO Osaka)
- i "FOODEM 2000" and "Kato All Foods Fair" Smashing Successes in Western Japan:** Japan's eighth largest food wholesaler, Asahi Food Kinki branch held their annual show, March 15-16 in Osaka. About 300 Japanese major food manufacturers, processors and trading companies participated in this show which was visited by about 4,000 buyers from Kansai and Kanto. ATO Osaka organized a U.S. product area with 9 Japanese importers and agents displaying about 60 food items. Kato Sangyo, Japan's seventh largest wholesaler, held the Kato All Foods Fair, March 15-17 in Kobe. About 300 Japanese major manufacturers and importers participated in the show. ATO/Osaka has a long working relationship with Kato Sangyo's trade department which has imported several items directly from the United States. Recent items which Kato has promoted include cranberry juice which they purchased following FOODEX, as well as various soft drinks

and bagels. (ATO Osaka)