



Foreign Agricultural Service

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## **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:**

- **Under Secretary Schumacher Advances U.S. Farm Trade Policy Interests in Meetings with Senior GOJ Officials;**
- **USDA Under Secretary Kicks-off Summer Tomato Promotion at Seiyu.**
- **"Stop GMO" Ad Campaign Launched by Major Retailer;**
- **GOJ Says No Unapproved GM Varieties Found in Snacks;**

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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. 15**  
**April 10, 2000**

- i Under Secretary Schumacher Advances U.S. Farm Trade Policy Interests in Meetings with Senior GOJ Officials:** USDA Under Secretary August Schumacher raised a range of issues, including U.S. expectations for the next round of WTO agricultural trade negotiations, in separate meetings with Ministry of Agriculture (MAFF) Minister Tamazawa and Vice Minister Kumazawa on April 3 in Tokyo. The Under Secretary also met with Health Ministry Vice Minister Haketa to discuss U.S. concerns regarding proposed new labeling and import monitoring requirements for GM foods. While in Japan, the Under Secretary also shared views on the next round with U.S. cooperator representatives in Tokyo and members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan. Finally, the Under Secretary improved awareness and market opportunities for U.S. cranberries and tomatoes by participating in marketing events held in Tokyo (see below).
- i USDA Under Secretary Kicks-off Summer Tomato Promotion at Seiyu:** During his brief visit to Japan last week, Under Secretary Schumacher joined Mr. Hashimoto, the President of Seiyu Foods, one of Japan's leading national supermarket retailers, to kick-off the summer retail promotional season for U.S. roma tomatoes. ATO Tokyo arranged an exclusive one-day promotional event with cooking demo and press conference at Seiyu's national test store in Tokyo to which USA Tomatoes supplied romas. Building on ATO Japan's close working relationship with the President and top decisionmakers, while leveraging the PR value of the joint promotion with the Under Secretary, Seiyu moved quickly to finalize plans last week to carry U.S. romas this summer. Moreover, at ATO's suggestion, the executive management of Seiyu Foods and Seiyu Food Systems, Seiyu's national foodservice "sister" chain, are actively pursuing opportunities to collaboratively purchase U.S. produce to achieve economies of scale through coordinated summer marketing campaigns. This is expected to spark a competitive response from other major retailers, promising even more industry-wide purchases of U.S. tomatoes this year. (ATO Tokyo)
- i "Stop GMO" Ad Campaign Launched by Major Retailer:** Symbolizing continuing misperceptions and anxiety about GM foods among consumers in Japan, Consumer Co-op (which accounts for just over 5 percent of retail food sales in Japan) has launched a major anti-GM food campaign. The retailer has recently published full-page ads in major media announcing its opposition to GM foods and is increasing the number of foods marketed as "non-GMO" in its stores.
- i GOJ Says No Unapproved GM Varieties Found in Snacks:** On March 31, the Government of Japan (GOJ) announced it has concluded its investigation of the Genetic ID and Japan "No GMO Campaign" claim that five unapproved genetically modified (GM) varieties of corn were discovered in a snack food in 1999. The joint statement from the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Health and Welfare concludes: "from the results of our analysis, we conclude there is no possibility that the corn snack (identified by the consumer group) contained GM corn varieties whose safety is not confirmed in Japan."