



Foreign Agricultural Service

**GAIN Report**

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 6/12/2000

GAIN Report #JA0066

## Japan

### Agricultural Situation

#### This Week in Japan

2000

Approved by:

**Casey E. Bean**

**U.S. Embassy, Japan**

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: MAFF Announces 1st OMA Rice Tender; Weekly Prices for Non-GMO and Regular Soybeans Futures; MAFF Introduces New Organic Standards and Mandatory Third-Party Certification; American Wood Designs Symposium A Success; and Osaka Restaurant Association Conducts U.S. Culinary Tour.

---

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. 23** **June 12, 2000**

**i MAFF Announces 1st OMA Rice Tender:** On June 8th the Food Agency (FA) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) announced plans to hold the first Ordinary Minimum Access (OMA) rice tender on June 13th for Japan Fiscal Year 2000 (April 2000 - March 2001). The total quantity to be tendered will be about 5,000 metric tons to be used for rice-based liquor (Awamori) production in Okinawa. Last year at the first OMA tender, FA purchased 15,000 metric tons of rice, all from Thailand, for the same purpose. (AgAffairs Tokyo, see JA0065)

**i Weekly Prices for Non-GMO and Regular Soybeans Futures:** (Tokyo Grain Exchange for 12/2000 Settlement, Yen per MT)

	June 5	June 6	June 7	June 8	June 9	Average
Non-GMO	25,480	25,170	24,060	25,170	24,090	24,794
Regular	23,970	23,930	22,830	23,800	22,840	23,474
Spread	1,510	1,240	1,230	1,370	1,250	1,320

**i MAFF Introduces New Organic Standards; Mandatory Third-Party Certification:** On June 10, MAFF officially introduced its new organic production standards and certification system, with enforcement set for April 1, 2001. Traders report limited supplies of domestically grown products that meet MAFF's new definition of an organic product and, as a result, predict a continued shift away from foods marketed as "organic", to alternative labels not subject to third-party verification (e.g. "reduced chemical", "healthy vegetables"). Meanwhile, some trading houses project increased import opportunities, as buyers broaden their search globally to source products that meet the new standards. Buyers are reportedly most interested in fresh and frozen vegetables, rice, soybeans, and juice concentrates. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

**i American Wood Designs Symposium A Success:** On June 6, the American Forest & Paper Association sponsored, with support from FAS/Japan, the *American Wood Designs* Symposium in Yokohama. U.S. Ambassador Thomas Foley, in his opening speech, highlighted the creative and functional use of U.S. wood in residential and non-residential construction. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

**i Osaka Restaurant Association Conducts U.S. Culinary Tour:** ATO/Osaka organized and accompanied a delegation from the Osaka Restaurant Management Association (ORA) that traveled May 19-26 to Chicago, New York and San Francisco to learn about trends in the U.S. food service industry. Specific areas of interest included food sanitation systems, purchasing, restaurant industry technology, organic products, and high quality American cuisine. ATO/Osaka worked closely with the National Restaurant Association, the Culinary Institute of America and ATO/Japan's Executive Director to arrange the meetings and site visits. Promoting reliable U.S. food safety and culinary educational programs help to enhance the image of U.S. food products in Japan leading to expanded export sales. (ATO Osaka)