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This Week in Japan

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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: Japan Foodservice Association (JF) Celebrates 25th Anniversary with Pan-Pacific Forum; Japanese Ag. Output Holds Steady in 1998 at 9.9 Trillion Yen; MAFF GM Rice Varieties Ready for Field Trials; Colorado Governor and ATO Kick off Opening of Second Quizno's Restaurant in Tokyo; GOJ to Draft Food Supply Crisis Plan; 1999 Building Experts Committee and JAS Meetings

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 Japan Foodservice Association (JF) Celebrates 25th Anniversary with Pan-Pacific Forum:** As a key international partner of the U.S. National Restaurant Association (NRA), JF celebrated its 25th Anniversary last week by hosting a two-day Pan-Pacific International Forum. The forum brought together leaders of the Japanese foodservice industry and partner associations from throughout the Pacific Rim, as well as top Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) officials, to discuss foodservice industry issues. ATO Executive Director delivered a congratulatory address to these top leaders, and former US NRA Chairman Joseph Fassler led a day of intensive discussions, while touting the global benefits of e-commerce and biotech foods. Following the forum, more than 5000 Japanese foodservice executives and buyers attended the two day annual JF trade show. ATO organized the U.S. pavilion which featured meats, fresh/processed fruit & vegetables and food safety info. (ATO Tokyo)
- i Japanese Ag. Output Holds Steady in 1998 at 9.9 Trillion Yen:** According to recently released MAFF production statistics for 1998, gross agricultural output totaled 9.9 trillion yen, up 0.3 percent from 1997, as higher output of fruits and vegetables (up 12 percent) offset declines in rice (down 8.4 percent) livestock (down 5.7 percent) and wheat and barley (down 9.3 percent). (AgAffairs Office)
- i MAFF GM Rice Varieties Ready for Field Trials:** According to today's Nihon Keizai Shimbun, MAFF has announced that field trials will be held in 2000 for two genetically modified rice varieties, developed by MAFF in cooperation with Kyoto University. The two varieties are genetically engineered to improve iron content and reduce cholesterol via recombination with soy protein. (AgAffairs Office)
- i Colorado Governor and ATO Kick off Opening of Second Quizno's Restaurant in Tokyo:** Advancing the positioning of U.S. restaurant franchises in Japan, ATO worked with the Colorado Gubernatorial Trade Mission to kick off the opening of the second Quizno's in Tokyo. ATO plans to further support the penetration of U.S. prepared meats, fresh vegetables and frozen dough through high visibility U.S. deli fast food franchises such as Quizno's. (ATO Tokyo)
- i GOJ to Draft Food Supply Crisis Plan:** The November 21 Yomiuri Shimbun reports the Government of Japan (GOJ), led by MAFF, will issue a food crisis manual early next year, that will recommend specific steps to be taken according to the level of food depletion in the event of a sudden decrease in imports. Steps include emergency planting of rice and potatoes. "The manual is also intended to stress the importance of food security", said a MAFF official, in advance of the November 30 WTO meeting to kick-off the next round of trade negotiations, where the GOJ will argue that continued protection of Japanese agriculture is warranted to ensure sufficient food supplies. (AgAffairs Office)
- i 1999 Building Experts Committee and JAS Meetings:** Key U.S. gov't. and industry officials attended the 10th annual Japan Building Experts Committee (BEC) and Japan Agricultural Standards (JAS) meetings held in Tokyo last week. The BEC discussion focused on performance-based standards to be introduced next year via the Building Standards Law and Housing Quality Assurance Law. (AgAffairs Office)