

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 10 Issue 5**

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**Approved By:**

Evan Mangino

**Prepared By:**

FAS Japan Staff

**Report Highlights:**

Japanese Students Plant Vegetables in Ambassador's Garden; What Do People Eat When Watching Soccer; Visit to Japan's Largest Wholesale Market for Fresh Produce; FAS/Japan Visits Critical Grain Port of Kashima; APEC Conference on Enhancing Global Value Chains in Asia-Pacific Held in Tokyo; USSEC Educates Japanese Soybean and Soybean Meal Buyers; American Wine Day 2014 in Osaka

## General Information:

# The Wasabi

*HOT News from Japan - Vol 10, Issue 5*  
June 20, 2014

**Japanese Students Plant Vegetables in Ambassador's Garden:** On May 29, 2014, a group of five students and three faculty from Tokyo Horticultural High School spent a morning tilling the earth and planting vegetables at the Ambassador's Residence. Ambassador Kennedy joined students after the planting to chat about their interests in



agriculture and her own vegetable garden back home in New York. The students were fulfilling a promise made by their Principal earlier this year, when

Ambassador Kennedy recognized the Future Farmers of Japan organization and the FFA for their 35 years of successful exchanges and collaboration. The students will tend the garden throughout the summer and the vegetables from the garden will be used in meals prepared by the Ambassador's Chef, Brock Kuhlman. The history of the vegetable garden, also known as the Residence Garden, dates back to 2009 and is part of the USDA's global network of People's Gardens.



## What Do People Eat When Watching Soccer:

With the World Cup in full swing, J Sports, Japan's equivalent of ESPN, developed a series of interviews with Embassies whose teams qualified for the World Cup. U.S. Embassy officials – Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Director Steve Shnitzler and Cultural Attaché Jeff Adler were interviewed for the United States and discussed what people eat while watching soccer, and the popularity of “football” in the United States. The interview provided an opportunity to promote the variety, diversity, and wholesomeness of U.S. foods. ATO Director Shnitzler talked about snacking on healthy nuts and dried fruits, and how the international flavor of soccer influences what fans will eat while watching. To see the U.S. and other country interviews, please click: <http://www.jsports.co.jp/movie/football/>





**Visit to Japan’s Largest Wholesale Market for Fresh Produce:** On June 20, 2014, a team from the U.S. Embassy, Tokyo’s Office of Agricultural Affairs visited the Ohta Market in Tokyo, the largest wholesale produce market in Japan, specializing in fresh produce, meat, fish, and flowers. Agricultural Attachés Evan Mangino and Benjamin Petlock, Agricultural Specialist Nobuko Sugimoto, and Agricultural Scientist Yohei Kiyose from the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) met with the CEO of Tokyo Seika, the largest horticultural wholesalers in Japan and learned about the structure and functions of the market. Tokyo Seika handled \$20 billion U.S. dollars of sales in 2013, accounting for about 10 percent of total fruit and vegetable sales in

Japan. In the market, wholesale companies purchase fresh produce from producer cooperatives (mostly from the Japan Agriculture cooperative) and then sell those products to intermediate wholesalers through a daily auction which usually ends by 7:00 am. The team was able to see a sizable amount of U.S. fruit products at the market, including papaya, oranges, and cherries.

**FAS/Japan Visits Critical Grain Port of Kashima:**

On June 10, a team from U.S. Embassy, Tokyo’s Office of Agricultural Affairs conducted field research the strategic bulk cargo port of Kashima. Built during the boom years of the 1960’s, Kashima is an engineering marvel and remains essential to Japan’s food processing and feed industries. After traveling the central channel and viewing the Port’s nearly two mile-long breakwater, the team visited several private berths well as a major feed miller, oil crusher, and grain terminal. Kashima is one of five grain ports scheduled for major renovations through a government-funded infrastructure development program designed to lower CIF prices for Japanese commodity importers. Renovations have already begun at the port of Kushiro, the first grain port to be improved under the program and the primary point of entry for the U.S. feed grains that fuel Hokkaido’s sizable beef and dairy industries.



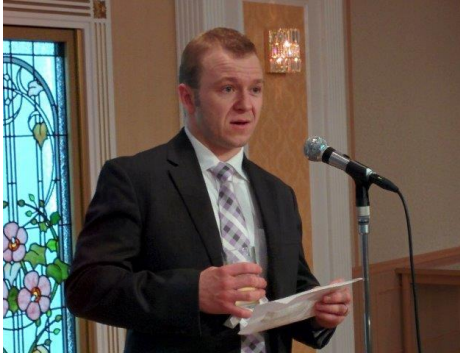
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**APEC Conference on Enhancing Global Value Chains in Asia-Pacific Held in Tokyo:**

On June 19, 2014, the APEC Conference on Enhancing Global Value Chains in Asia-Pacific was held in Tokyo, sponsored by Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). The focus of the conference was on how to sustain local farmers and the agricultural industry by adding market value through inputs both from private and public sectors. U.S. Embassy, Tokyo’s Senior Agricultural Attaché Elizabeth Autry, Agricultural Specialist Suguru Sato, and visiting USDA/APHIS International Trade Specialist Andrea Zizack attended the meeting. MAFF Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi gave a closing address, emphasizing the importance of the multilateral trading system and global food value chains. He also commented on Japan’s agricultural policy reform, which includes strengthening production, reforming agricultural subsidies, and increasing the demand for Japanese food (including exports from Japan).





**USSEC Educates Japanese Soybean and Soybean Meal Buyers:** On June 5, 2014, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo's Minister-Counselor for Agricultural Affairs David Miller hosted a reception for Japanese swine and poultry growers, feed millers and soybean crushers/traders. In spite of particularly nasty weather, more than thirty trade representatives gathered to share information and build relationships that will be strengthened as the U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) sends member of this group to the United States on study tours to deepen their appreciation for the superior quality of U.S. soybeans and products. Then, during the week of June 16, USSEC crisscrossed the Japanese islands holding animal nutrition and health seminars targeting swine and poultry producers in Sendai, Kagoshima and Tokyo. Professors Emeritus from the University of Illinois and the University of Florida explained the advantages of incorporating U.S. soybean meal into animal diets. Agricultural Attaché Evan Mangino made opening remarks and explained the advantages of the yuzu chuhai at a reception following the seminar.

**American Wine Day 2014 in Osaka:** On May 23, 2014, American Wine Day 2014, one of the biggest wine events to promote American wines in the Kansai region, was held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Osaka. The event, which was organized by the Kobe-based importer, Wine People, included over 20 exhibitors/importers, offering over 200 labels from wineries in California, Oregon, Washington, and New York. U.S. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Director Steve Shnitzler gave a greeting and thanked the guests for their support and promotion of American wines. This was the second year that "Wine Day" was held in Kansai, and it attracted hundreds of buyers and individual customers, highlighting the great potential of U.S. wines in this very competitive market.

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