

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Japan

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### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 10 Issue 6**

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**Report Highlights:**

California Walnut Commission Hosts Brain Food Pairing; Great American Barbeque Trade Showcase 2014; ATO Osaka Holds American Healthy Cooking Seminar for Professionals; USDA and Japan Host Codex Colloquium; Yamanashi Visit; Iwate Wagyu Production Tour

**General Information:**

# The Wasabi

*HOT News from Japan - Vol 10, Issue 6*  
July 18, 2014

**California Walnut Commission Hosts Brain Food Pairing** – On U.S. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Deputy Director Evan Mangino provided welcoming remarks at a tasting seminar extolling the health benefits of California walnuts. In addition to a variety of recipes featuring walnuts, including particularly brain-bread (pictured here), health journalist Masahisa Yamada gave a presentation on the benefits of the essential Omega-3 fatty acid linoleic acid (ALA). Walnuts are the only nuts to have high levels ALA, which studies have shown to promote healthy brain functioning and combat the effects of aging on neuroplasticity.



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**Great American Barbeque Trade Showcase 2014:** On July 10, U.S. Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Tokyo conducted the second Great American Barbeque (BBQ) Trade Showcase, aimed at buyers from the hotels and restaurant industry and chain store retailers. ATO Tokyo created a classic U.S. BBQ setting for the showcase with the co-sponsorship of a Japanese agent importing Weber and Lodge Brand barbecue grills and outdoor goods from the United States. “Enjoy BBQ!” is the overall concept for this trade show highlighting U.S. fish, meats and poultry, related food products and alcohol beverages, including U.S. craft beer, wine and whisky. ATO Tokyo recruited a total of 23 cooperators and agents as exhibitors and attracted a total of 130 buyers. All Japanese buyers enjoyed and

tasted barbecued steak, seafood, and fried U.S. foods that were prepared by an executive hotel chef. Visitors mentioned that they were impressed by the huge variety of U.S. food and beverages related to U.S. barbecues. The exhibitors were also impressed by the high-level of visitors representing foodservice and retail buyers and executives.

**ATO Osaka Holds American Healthy Cooking Seminar for Professionals:** On July 17, U.S. ATO Osaka held a healthy eating seminar in cooperation with the executive chef at the Hilton Tokyo Hotel. The event, themed “All-Day Breakfast”, a variety of American ingredients for its menu, which included Sorghum pancakes, Oregon Blueberry cheesecake, California cheese and Honey Baked Ham frittata, California citrus and carrot salad, and a Romaine lettuce and blue cheese salad. Chef Phillipe Egalon and his staff from Hilton Hotels created the recipes for the ATO and demonstrated how easy it is to use



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quality U.S. products. The audience included menu developers from major hotels and restaurants in Western Japan who enjoyed the cuisine while learning about the versatile applications of American foods. ATO Japan Director Steve Shnitzler welcomed and thanked the guests and the cooperators who sponsored the event.



**USDA and Japan Host Codex Colloquium:** On June 25 – 27, 2014, USDA and Japan’s Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) co-hosted the Codex Colloquium for Asia in Tokyo, Japan. The meeting brought together over fifty participants from Codex member nations from across Asia, in addition to the United States, to discuss and learn about food safety regulatory issues and the functions and operations of Codex in advance of the July meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Switzerland. Codex standards are increasingly important as countries seek to minimize unwarranted non-tariff barriers to trade. MAFF’s proactive efforts to host and coordinate this event may be a positive sign in Japan’s willingness to work with food safety standards based

on sound-science.

**Yamanashi Visit:** On July 16-17, 2014, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo’s Agricultural Attaché Benjamin Petlock and Agricultural Specialist Nobuko Sugimoto visited Yamanshi prefecture, Japan’s largest producer of peaches, plums, and grapes, to about stone fruit production. The visit included a meeting with prefectural officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) and visits to the Yamanashi Fruit Tree Experiment Station (to learn about ongoing development in stone fruit production), peach and grape farms (to learn about production at the height of the growing season), packing houses and local farmers markets (to learn about Japan Agriculture Cooperative’s distribution system) and to Mann’s Winery (owned by Kikkoman) to learn about Yamanashi’s increasing efforts to become Japan’s most wine producing region.



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**Iwate Wagyu Production Tour** – On July 15 and 16, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo’s Agricultural Attaché Evan Mangino and Agricultural Specialist Kakuyu Obara traveled to Iwate prefecture in the far northeast of Japan’s main island to learn more about Japan’s fifth ranked producer of wagyu (Japanese beef cattle) and the home of “tankaku wagyu” (Japanese shorthorn) cattle. The Attaché and the analyst visited the Iwachiku slaughter facility, which is approved for export to the United States, to learn more about the Japanese meat grading system and the Iwate prefecture meat packers’ view of the domestic and international market environment. Unique to Iwate, tankaku wagyu cattle

producers raise their animals on communally managed pastures during the summer months, unlike black wagyu which are almost exclusively confined to indoor housing/feeding. While pasture grazing lowers the production costs of tankaku wagyu considerably, Iwate ranchers continue to abandon the breed in favor of black wagyu, which offers considerably higher profit margins.



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