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Global Agricultural Information Network

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FAS Japan Honors Japanese Supporters of U.S. Agricultural Products; FFA National Officer Team Visits Japan; Seminar Explains a New Opportunity for Japanese Soy Food Promotion; USDA Team Visits Orange Production sites in Shizuoka; ATO Osaka Gives a Lecture on U.S. Foods and Food Culture at Kansai University; Elementary School Students in Tokyo Enjoy Learning about American Food Culture

General Information:

The Wasabi

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(From left to right, ATO Japan Director Rachel Nelson; Ms. Eiko Egami, Principal, Egami Cooking School; Ambassador Caroline Kennedy; Mr. Jun-ichi Moriya, President and Representative Director, Tokyo Seika Trading Co., Ltd.; Mr. Yasuhiro Kurosu, Director, Royal Holdings Co., Ltd.; and Agricultural Minister-Counselor David Miller)

FAS Japan Honors Japanese Supporters of U.S. Agricultural Products: On January 21, 2015, Ambassador Caroline Kennedy hosted a lunch to honor key players in the Japanese market who have continuously supported imports of U.S. food products. The lunch included a ceremony inducting honorees into the FAS Fourth Annual U.S. Agriculture Hall of Fame (HOF) which honors those individuals and companies that have been stalwart supporters of U.S. agriculture and food throughout the years. This year's inductees included: Ms. Eiko Egami who, in addition to influencing millions of Japanese cooks through her cooking school and publications, has also had a long history of collaborating with FAS in Japan to help promote the high quality and safety of U.S. ingredients; Mr. Junichi Moriya, who as the head of Tokyo City Seika, plays a critical role in linking U.S. fruit and vegetable products to the Tokyo metropolitan area; and Mr. Seiji Yazaki and the Royal Host chain of family-dining restaurants who have long promoted U.S. beef and other U.S. agricultural products across Japan. Ambassador Kennedy recognized the group for their foresight, innovation, and most importantly, their continuous support of U.S. agriculture. Each honoree received a framed letter from the Ambassador that included her thanks and appreciation. FAS Japan has set up a special [Agriculture HOF website](#) where all honorees, present and future, will be acknowledged.

FFA National Officer Team Visits Japan: On Monday, January 26, 2015, the Office of Agricultural Affairs (OAA)'s Suguru Sato, Midori Iijima, and Evan Mangino organized a day-trip for the 2015 FFA

National Officers to the national agricultural research campus in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture. The trip kicked off the team's 10-day visit to Japan and gave them a rare chance to experience some of most high-tech research happening in Japan today.



The team learned about the National Institute for Agrobiological Sciences' (NIAS) genetically engineered silkworm program,



which has developed hundreds of genetically engineered strains of domesticated silkworms since the first successful experiment in 2000. As the silkworm's cocoon is 95 percent protein and the domesticated silkworm cannot fly (let alone survive without human cultivation), the silkworm represents an increasingly attractive alternative to other genetically engineered animals (notably brewer's yeast and *E. coli*) in efforts to mass produce valuable protein sequences. Some of the more wearable developments that NIAS has produced include phosphorescent silk fabrics and silk threads that are up to five percent spider silk, the strongest of which can be over ten times tougher than Kevlar.

The team also had an opportunity to learn about the National Agriculture and Food Research Organization's (NARO) driverless farm equipment programs. As the Japanese agricultural labor force continues to age, the Abe administration is placing a greater emphasis on robots (including driverless equipment) to enhance agricultural productivity. The FFA team was delighted to see several pieces of equipment, including the automated soybean and rice harvesters pictured here.



On Tuesday, January 27, 2015, the Office of Agricultural



Affairs organized a visit to Tsukiji Market, the largest fisheries market on the planet, for the FFA team. Accompanied by Agricultural Attaché Evan Mangino, the team learned about trends in fisheries trade flows both in and out of Japan, how major national grocery chains have fundamentally altered the marketing and sourcing of fisheries products over the last 20 years, and Japan is competing with increasingly affluent neighbors for global fisheries resources. The team marveled at the world-famous early morning tuna auctions and the sheer scale of Tsukiji's daily operations, handling over 2,000 tons of

fisheries products each day worth nearly \$20 million.

After a wardrobe change and a quick breakfast, the FFA team travelled to U.S. Embassy, Tokyo to learn all about Japanese food and agricultural production from the OAA team. A highlight of the visit was when Ambassador Kennedy joined the team to discuss their trip to Japan and their goals as FFA National Officers in 2015.



The FFA team wrapped up a busy day in Tokyo on Wednesday, January 28, with an interactive



question and answer event organized by the Office of Agricultural Affairs and the Public Affairs Section. The FFA team spent more than two hours with Japanese students from local agricultural high schools and colleges, asking and answering questions about agriculture in the United States and Japan as well as what the future may hold for these two valuable trading partners. After Tokyo, the FFA National Officer Team travelled on to Tochigi Prefecture to see beef and dairy operations, on to Aichi Prefecture for agricultural homestays and a visit to grain terminals in Nagoya, before finishing out their trip in Kyoto Prefecture.



Seminar Explains a New Opportunity for Japanese Soy Food Promotion: On January 29, 2015, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo's Agricultural Attaché Evan Mangino officially opened the first-ever seminar on the U.S. Soy Sustainability Assurance Protocol (USSSAP) in Japan. From January 28 - 30, the U. S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) held seminars for soy food manufacturers and soybean importers as well as press conferences at Roppongi Hills and the Hotel Okura to launch the USSSAP, which will allow Japanese importers and manufacturers to market their products as “sustainable” or using “sustainable soybeans.” Judging that sustainability is an increasingly attractive marketing approach, USSEC is looking to the USSSAP to help differentiate U.S. soybeans (especially non-GMO

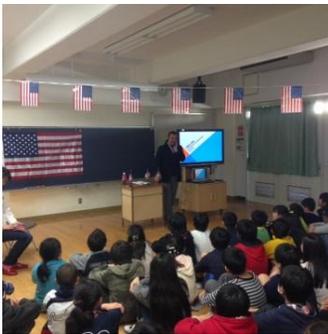
beans for food use) from other imported soybeans at no additional cost to importers. Japan is the third largest export market for U.S. soybeans and the United States' largest market for variety-specific, non-GMO soybeans. U.S. soybean exports to Japan were worth nearly \$1 billion in 2014.

USDA Team Visits Satsuma Orange Production Sites in Shizuoka, Japan: From January 28-30, 2015, FAS Tokyo Agricultural Specialist Nobuko Sugimoto joined APHIS Asia-Pacific Regional Manager Darya Chehrezad and Agricultural Scientist Yohei Kiyose during their visit to the Shizuoka prefecture to learn about Japan's plant quarantine/fumigation process for shipments of Satsuma mandarin destined for the United States. Shizuoka's citrus producers are now preparing their first shipments to the United States following APHIS's November 2014 decision to remove certain restrictions on imports of Japanese mandarin. The tour included site visits to mandarin groves that are located on the tops of mountains and hills, requiring cable cars to transport the fruit down to base areas. The team also reviewed packing



houses in the area where mandarins are sorted by their size and °brix/acidity level resulting in 35 different grades of fruit.

ATO Osaka Gives a Lecture on U.S. Foods and Food Culture at Kansai University: On January 8, 2015, ATO Osaka participated in the International Education Seminar held by Kansai University. The quarterly seminar is intended to help students learn about foreign cultures and prepare them to study and work in a global environment. Agricultural Marketing Specialist Akiko Kashiwagi spoke about the diverse and dynamic nature of American food culture, as well as the variety and versatility of U.S. agricultural products. Her lecture focused on the latest U.S. trends ranging from BBQ to healthy eating and was combined with videos, displays, and innovative recipes to increase the students' interest in U.S. foods and American cuisine. The lecture also attempted to dispel the misunderstanding and distrust of U.S. food and agricultural products. Each year, the university sends over two hundred exchange students to the United States.



Elementary School Students in Tokyo Enjoy Learning American Food Culture: On January 26, 2015, Agricultural Attaché Benjamin Petlock and Agricultural Marketing Specialist Tommy Aoki visited the Chofu Yagumodai Elementary School in Tokyo to discuss American food culture. During the visit, Mr. Petlock and Mr. Aoki, joined by Chef Ema Koeda, met with local first through sixth graders. Mr. Aoki also gave a presentation about the role of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, food culture in the United States, and the importance of vegetables, such as celery and broccoli, in a healthy diet. The students also learned about the importance of the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States and were able to taste examples of a Thanksgiving meal during their school lunch.
