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Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

USA Pavilion at Tokyo's 2013 Supermarket Trade Show; ATO Director Talks on U.S. Beef Safety Measures on National Television; and First Round of the North Asia Chef Competition takes place in Tokyo.

General Information:

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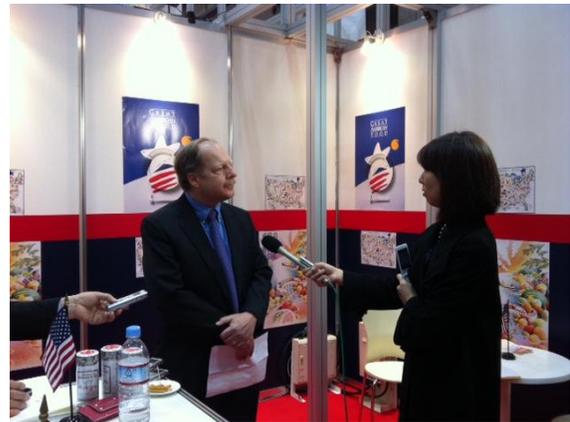
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USA Pavilion at Tokyo's 2013 Supermarket Trade Show: ATO Japan hosted its largest pavilion ever at the annual Supermarket Trade Show (SMTS) on February 13-15, 2013 in Tokyo. Working together with Food Export Northeast and Food Export Midwest, the pavilion featured more than 30 U.S. exhibitors who demonstrated U.S. food products from candy to artisanal cheese. The SMTS is the second largest food show in Japan and caters specifically to the supermarket and smaller market trade. More than 80,000 trade visitors attend the show. The show is organized by the New Supermarket Association of Japan (NSAJ). NSAJ represents about 7,000 supermarkets in Japan, about half of all supermarkets in Japan with total revenues JPY 10 trillion (\$106 billion). Last year, potential sales for U.S.

exhibitors from the show exceeded \$8,070,000 and on-site sales totaled \$420,000.

ATO Director Talks on U.S. Beef Safety Measures on National Television: On February 13, 2013, at the Supermarket Trade Show, the U.S. Embassy's Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Director Steve Shnitzler was interviewed by NHK, Japan's public broadcasting. The NHK reporter wanted to feature beef as Japan recently relaxed its beef import regulations on February 1 and Japan's U.S. beef imports will likely increase. Responding to a question about U.S. beef safety, ATO Director was quoted as saying, "Consumers can rest assured that we are taking measures to ensure safety." The interview was broadcasted in two of NHK's popular news shows. The total viewership of the shows is estimated approximately three million.



First Round of the North Asia Chef Competition takes place in Tokyo: The U.S. Embassy's, Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Tokyo along with California Agricultural Economic Council and U.S. Meat Export Federation proudly completed the first round of "United Tastes of America, Evolution of American Food for professional chefs" Japan competition on February 17, 2013. Working with ATO Taipei, Hong Kong and Shanghai this first round competition is only the beginning of a North Asia chef competition.



In the first Tokyo Round, ten teams were selected based on submitted recipes. The ten teams represented major hotels such as Hotel Okura Tokyo, well-established restaurants such as Lawry's the Prime Rib, Tokyo, and diners such as Baker Bounce. Ovens were lit at 10:30 a.m. and knives immediately hit the cutting boards. "It was exciting to watch all ten teams concentrating on their culinary skills and moving swiftly through the kitchen", said Tommy Aoki, Marketing Specialist of ATO Tokyo. All ten teams prepared their appetizers by 12:30 p.m. and the desserts were done by 2:30 p.m. Judges had a difficult time deciding on the five teams that would go on to the Tokyo finals, which will be held on March 1. ATO

Tokyo looks forward to seeing which team will get to go to the Taipei finals.

Through this competition, the ATOs in Taipei, Hong Kong, and Shanghai hope to increase awareness about American food and cuisine among North Asian chefs. The winning team will be able to take part in the United States of America North Asia Finale in Taipei in June 2013. The Number One American Food chef in North Asia will be awarded the grand prize of a one week trip to the United States to participate in a professional training program organized by the Culinary Institute of America(CIA), the United State's premier culinary education institution.

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