

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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### **The WASABI - Hot News from Japan Vol. 12 Issue 4**

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**Report Highlights:**

Promoting Trail Mix at “Wild” Film Premiere; The Largest Food Ingredients / Additives Show in Japan; New York Fair at Hankyu Department Store; Harvesting Everything but the Squeal; Grains Council Touts U.S. Corn Ethanol; Japanese Buyers Attend Biggest U.S. Restaurant Show; ATO LES Engages with MD/VA Agriculture; Farewell, Beth

**General Information:**

# The Wasabi

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June 10, 2016



**Promoting Trail Mix at “Wild” Film Premiere:** ATO Japan has been working with the tourism industry for five years to cross-promote U.S. agriculture and travel to the United States. Over that time, we have featured recipes and products that were unique to U.S. tourism destinations such as New Orleans, Oregon, Texas, California and many more.

Brand USA is an umbrella organization that is responsible for promoting travel to the United States and manages the USA Pavilion at Japan’s largest tourism tradeshow, Expo Tourism

Japan. ATO presented a number of California products at the 2015 Tourism Japan show, including cheese, beer, and almond milk. One of most popular items was ‘trail mix’. Visitors were given bags and invited to create their own blend of trail mix from California almonds, almonds, walnuts, raisins, and figs.



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As part of its efforts to highlight U.S. National Parks in 2016, celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Park Service, Brand USA hosted a Tokyo premiere of a promotional film called “Wild” at an IMAX 3D theater on May 19, 2016. ATO Japan worked with Delta International, a major handler of U.S. dried fruits and nuts, to apply the successful make-your-own trail mix concept at the premiere event. Nearly 300 guests and media enjoyed filling trail mix bags at the premiere, providing a fun, healthy snack and promoting California dried fruits and nuts.

**Largest Food Ingredient / Additive Show in Japan:** The International Food Ingredients / Additives Exhibition and Conference (IFIA) is Japan’s largest tradeshow dedicated to these industries. Several ATO and OAA staff supported U.S. exhibitors and met new contacts at this year’s show from May 18 – 20 at Tokyo Big Sight. Several U.S. exhibitors, including the U.S. Dairy Export Council, Sunsweet Prunes and a number of U.S. state representative offices, comprised the U.S. Pavilion at this year’s show. Exhibitors reported that although the total number of attendees was not as high as expected, the quality of the contacts they developed was very high. ATO Japan met with several serious buyers who asked for information about new products, and also coordinated with an association that is bringing many large Japanese companies to the July International Food Technologists Show in Chicago.



### **Hankyu Highlights Brooklyn at 5<sup>th</sup> Annual New York Fair:**

Hankyu, a major department store based in Osaka, held its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual New York Fair from May 11 to 17 at its flagship store in Osaka. Hankyu has held a New York Fair since 2011, featuring food items and fashion apparel from New York. Over the years, ATO Osaka has worked closely with Hankyu to provide information on New York food culture and food products and to introduce Japanese importers to Hankyu. The 2016 New York Fair, which highlighted Brooklyn as its special theme, resulted in yet another great success. The ‘ramen burger,’ cupcakes from One Girl Cookies, apple pies from Four & Twenty Blackbirds, and pastrami sandwiches from Junior’s restaurants were

among the most popular items in 2016.

**Grains Council Touts U.S. Corn Ethanol in Japan:** On May 18, Senior Agricultural Attaché Elizabeth Autry gave opening remarks at a U.S. Grains Council (USGC) workshop in Tokyo promoting the virtues of U.S. corn ethanol from environmental and economic viewpoints. Ms. Autry highlighted an environmental advantage of corn ethanol by saying, “in 2015, the 53 billion liters of ethanol blended into gasoline in the United States helped reduce greenhouse gas emissions from on-road vehicles by 38 million metric tons, the equivalent of removing 8.4 million automobiles from the road.” USGC experts discussed how U.S. corn-based ethanol meets the Japanese Government’s Life Cycle Assessment for Biofuels requirements as a result of further advances in production technology, and they demonstrated how the use of corn for transportation fuel does not impact the food supply. More than twenty attendees with interest in and influence on Japanese biofuels policies attended the workshop.

**55 Japanese Buyers Attend National Restaurant Show in Chicago:** ATO Japan supported the U.S. National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show, held from May 21 to 24 in Chicago, by accompanying nearly 60 Japanese restaurant representatives – 3 independent buyers and 55 buyers organized by the Japan Foodservice Association (JF). In Chicago, ATO Tokyo Marketing Specialist Masayuki (Alex) Otsuka gave a presentation to the buyers about the trade potential of U.S. agricultural products and about current trends in the U.S. foodservice industry. The food service sector in Japan was valued at over \$300 billion in 2015, and JF represents more than 65,000 restaurant companies, including major U.S. chains. ATO Japan connections with JF and continued support for buyers missions to the NRA show are instrumental components of ATO Japan’s efforts to expand Japanese food service sector demand for U.S. food and agricultural products.

### **Harvesting Everything but the Squeal in College**

**Station:** Agricultural Attaché / ATO Deputy Director Evan Mangino attended Pork 101 at Texas A&M University from June 1 – 3. The training is sponsored by Pork Checkoff funds, the American Meat Science Association, and major industry partners to raise awareness of the industry’s continual efforts to improve U.S. pork quality. Working from live animal handling practices through slaughter, fabrication and value-added processing, the course provided a comprehensive overview of current U.S. pork production and where the industry is headed. Alongside USMEF Mexico City Trade Manager Lorenzo Elizalde, representatives from the Thai pork industry, and a very talented A&M grad student, Mr. Mangino took part in breaking down a 220-lb. hog carcass. He also took advantage of the opportunity to deliver a recruitment seminar to Texas A&M Meat Science students and to develop contacts with U.S. firms interested in exporting U.S. pork and pork products to Japan.





**2016 FAS Locally Employed Staff Ag Tour:**

ATO Tokyo Marketing Specialist Juri Noguchi was one of fourteen FAS locally employed staff (LES) on this year’s LES Agricultural Tour, which included two days of briefings and consultations at FAS headquarters in Washington, DC, followed by ag road trip around Maryland and Virginia. In addition to meeting fellow LES colleagues from around the globe and meeting with Washington, DC counterparts, Ms. Noguchi was able to experience mid-Atlantic food and agricultural production first-hand during visits to Roseta Farms, McCormick Spice, Seawatch International, the Port of Norfolk, Montague Farms, Crown Orchard, Bold Rock Hard Cider, and Polyface Farms. In addition to

meeting with FAS luminaries, the group also met with the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture.

**Farewell, Elizabeth Autry:** On June 2, FAS Japan bid a fond farewell to Senior Agricultural Attaché Elizabeth Autry. Beth is on way to head the FAS office in sunny Santo Domingo, where she’ll responsible for USDA activities in the Dominican Republic and We wish her safe travels and all the best in her next assignment!



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