

Frozen Foods

August 8, 2014

FROZEN FOOD PRODUCTS ~ POPULAR ITEMS AND TRENDS ~

◇ The Consciousness of Japanese Towards Food Safety

Frozen food products have grown into one of the fields that support Japanese dining. Consumption volume has doubled over the past 20 years. On the other hand, many consumers feel anxious about food safety from the continuing safety problems in recent years. As a result, product labels are starting to gather more attention. When there is an incident that threatens the safety of frozen goods that are manufactured and exported from overseas, consumers would check the labels and refrain from buying goods made in specific countries. Below is an opinion poll conducted on Japanese consumers about food safety. Use it for your reference.

Concerns About Food Safety (Multiple answers/n=977)

Production district or country of origin (domestic or imported)	62.1%
Additives such as preservatives, colors, etc.	57.3%
Residual agricultural chemicals	57.2%
Food hygiene and quality control during processing	54.8%
Food labeling	49.2%
Genetically modified food	31.8%
BSE (mad cow disease)	31.1%
Endocrine disruptor	26.6%
Food allergens	23.5%
Others	2.0%
None / I don't know	0.4%

Source: Central Research Services Inc. "National Opinion Poll on Food Safety"

◇ Changes and Trends of Japanese Frozen Food Products

Frozen food products began to spread in Japan after 1965. Since the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, freezing and cooking technology for frozen food products were developed and used in the food-service industry. In the 1970s, due to spread of refrigerators and microwaves as well as family restaurant chains with central kitchens, business use also started to grow. Together with advancement of technology, the variety of items began to diversify. Today, breakfast menus, cakes, and different types of whip cream served in cafes are frozen food products for business use. As for cakes, there are wide ranges from pancakes

and cheesecakes to even short cakes. Of these cakes, frozen short cakes are called frozen cakes and they are served after defrosting naturally. This is different from ice cream cake, which is ice cream molded into a cake shape.

Also, there are cases where prepared fish (bones taken out) or cooked fish (under high pressure) are used for hospital or school meals. Some products can be put directly into the lunch box from the freezer, and the food will be defrosted by lunchtime. It takes less effort in making lunches and the frozen products keep the other foods cool. Recently, some products use the name of famous hotels, restaurants, or chefs. These are high-end frozen food products where consumers can enjoy the taste of the restaurant at home.

One advantage of frozen food products is that the prices and supply volume are more stable compared to fresh products. When fresh vegetable prices are high due to poor weather, frozen vegetables will not be affected as long as there are stocks from the previous harvest. Now, more people are showing interest towards frozen food products than ever.

◇ Imported Frozen Products -Best Sellers and Popular Products

Here are the best sellers and popular products based on the different distribution channel. First, let's take a look at the best sellers at major GMSs such as AEON and Ito Yokado. AEON's sales are 6.4 trillion yen and they have 168 malls inside and outside of Japan, while there are 611 GMCs. Ito Yokado has 183 GMC domestically and their sales are 1.3 trillion yen.



Country of Origin: Brazil
 Acai Smoothie Mix



Country of Origin: USA
 Ore Ida's Hashed Potatoes



Country of Origin: USA
 Potato Skin Fries



Country of Origin: Chile
 Grapes



Country of Origin: USA
 Blueberries



Country of Origin: Costa Rica
 Pineapples (defrost naturally)

The top left photo below reads "frozen foods," "frozen vegetables," "frozen shrimps," and "frozen noodles / rice" from the top. The space taken up by freezers is on the rise each year.



Country of Origin: France
 R Mini Cabatta Plain



Country of Origin: China
 Chocolate Croissant

Next, let's take a look at food specialty stores. Kitano Ace has 70 stores around Tokyo and Kansai region. Putting effort into creating a layout that matches the area and environment, no two stores are alike. They have pride in their wide variety of products that matches the local community's culture and lifestyle (photo: bottom left). KALDI Coffee Farm began as a coffee bean shop, but now handles imported goods and alcoholic beverages. Including restaurants and cafes, they have 322 stores domestically.



Country of Origin: France
6 frozen escargots



Country of Origin: Ireland
Murphy's Irish Seafoods



Country of Origin: New Zealand
Frozen Pie Sheet



Country of Origin: USA
Frozen Raspberries



Country of Origin: Australia
 Mango Ice Cream



Country of Origin: Australia
 Mango and Cream



Country of Origin: Mexico
 Guacamole



Country of Origin: Thailand
 Green Curry Fried Rice

Next is Hanamasa, a store with the catch phrases "business use supermarket" and "store for professionals." Out of 54 stores, 18 stores have home delivery services. While the products sold in their stores are bigger than what is seen in regular supermarkets, Hanamasa is not specialized for food service and most stores target home-use. Most stores are open 24 hours.



Country of Origin: China
Lychee



Country of Origin: Italy
Mozzarella Pizza



Country of Origin: USA
Peas and sweet corn



Country of Origin: USA
Black cod, flatfish with roe



Country of Origin: Brazil
Frozen Chicken



Country of Origin: Philippines
Black Tiger



Country of Origin: USA
Short rib beef



Country of Origin: China



Freezers on both sides of the aisle

The final store that we will introduce is Costco, a membership only warehouse club from the USA. There are 650 warehouses in the world and 20 in Japan. Products are from the US and other countries. Kirkland Signature is Costco's original brand.



Country of Origin: Belgium
Mashed Potato



KIRKLAND Cooked/Tail-on Shrimp



KIRKLAND Atlantic Salmon



KIRKLAND Pork Dinner Franks



Country of Origin: Sicilia
 Red Oranges Juice



Country of Origin: Canada
 72 Waffles



Country of Origin: USA
 Churros



Country of Origin: Belgium
 Crepe



KIRKLAND Vanilla Ice Cream



Country of Origin: Italy
 Pizza Margherita



Country of Origin: Chile
 Mussels Garlic Butter Flavor



Country of Origin: USA
 Fillo Factory's Assorted Quiche