

Food and beverages - JAPAN

Summary of findings related to international market opportunities for Norwegian food and beverage products to Japan

Date: 27 July 2016

Contact person: Keisuke Nakayama keisuke.nakayama@innovationnorway.no

1. Brief facts about the market

In 2015, share of household budget spent on food in total was 25.0%, of which 1.5% was beverages, 1.1% was Alcohol beverages, 4.8% was dining out.

Consumer Spending in Japan (2015)			
		Total Household	
		Monthly ave. (JPY)	% of total
Total Spending		247,126	100.0%
	Food	61,833	25.0%
	Grain	5,002	2.0%
	Seafood	5,067	2.1%
	Meat	5,515	2.2%
	Dairy/Egg	2,985	1.2%
	Vegetable/Seaweed	7,120	2.9%
	Fruit	2,349	1.0%
	Oil/Fat/Condiment	2,759	1.1%
	Sweets	4,440	1.8%
	Cooked food	8,130	3.3%
	Beverage	3,708	1.5%
	Alcohol	2,754	1.1%
	Dining out	11,944	4.8%
	Housing	18,690	7.6%
	Utility/water	19,558	7.9%
	Furniture/Housekeeping	8,545	3.5%
	Clothing/Footwear	9,832	4.0%
	Healthcare	10,906	4.4%
	Transportation/Telecommunication	33,436	13.5%
	Education	7,521	3.0%
	Culture/Leisure	24,980	10.1%
	Other	51,826	21.0%

Created by Innovation Norway Tokyo: (Data Source) Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Japan imports a large volume of food and beverage products. And there are number of countries supplying the similar items. Beef from 13 countries; Pork (18 countries); Cheese/Curd (33 countries); Cereals (69 countries); Fruit (100 countries); Sugar/Honey (63 countries); Coffee/Tea/Cocoa/Spice (108 countries); Feed (62 countries); Alcohol (93 countries) of which beer (50 countries).

Japanese Import of Food and Beverages 2015						
			Unit	Volume (MT)	Value (JPY 1000)	Number of Supply countries
Food and Animals in Total					6,233,571,706	
Meat and Meat Products			MT	2,585,254	1,380,786,800	
	Beef		MT	493,986	336,869,452	13
	Sheep/Goat		MT	18,505	16,375,126	
	Pork		MT	790,651	425,067,963	18
Dairy and Eggs			MT	396,031	176,122,583	
	Cheese and Curd		MT	249,286	127,202,144	33
Fish and Fish Products			MT	2,130,814	1,575,287,076	
Cereal and cereal products			MT	24,009,659	871,060,809	69
Fruit and Vegetable			MT	5,133,118,663	1,080,985,231	100
Sugar and sugar products/Honey			MT	1,601,668	110,836,754	63
Coffee/Tea/Cocoa/Spices			MT	860,879	397,470,121	108
Feed			MT	6,548,202	421,516,195	62
Beverages			KL	1,254,316	344,795,939	99
	Alcohol		L	711,567,828	290,737,066	93
		Whiskey	L	31,131,110	36,341,626	
		Brandy	L	3,043,483	8,572,793	
		Wine	L	294,289,081	181,799,148	
		Beer	L	38,146,075	7,328,344	50

Created by Innovation Norway Tokyo: (Data Source) Trade Statistics of Japan

2. Opportunities for Norwegian companies in Japan

The areas of opportunities for Norwegian food and beverage producers are probably:

- Mineral water because Sparkling water is getting popularity, in addition to the strong demand on still water.
- Bakery products especially the crisp bread because Norway used to have a good share.
- Beer because of the increased interest in craft beers.

The image of Scandinavia is still good in Japan. In addition to the Scandinavian image, image of Norway is clean.

3. Challenges for Norwegian companies in Japan

There are no significant import barriers for Norwegian suppliers to enter the Japanese market. Norwegian suppliers should be aware that Japanese culture is different from Norway or other western countries. In order to enter into and achieve the acceptable volume in the market, it will take much longer time regardless of the product's strength.

Difference in food culture and Competition:

Japanese consumers do eat the same types of food as in Norway. But the frequency and the volume at a time are much less. Common food in Norway would be a very niche item in Japan.

Japan imports products from a number of countries. As an example, 10 brands each from 50 countries; that is the number of foreign competitors you would face in this market.

4. Recommendations to Norwegian companies considering export of food and beverages to Japan

We recommend a study trip to Japan as a part of your target market selection. We can help designing your visiting plan. For example a visit to Foodex Japan (Food exhibition) held in March every year, and to visit local supermarkets and department stores to learn the market.