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Lotte Shopping Co. to Invest \$2.7 Billion to Expand On-line Retail Business ... Targets to Achieve \$18 Billion On-line Sales by 2020

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20180515/90095620/1>

Summary: Lotte Shopping Co., a leading retail company in Korea, announced on May 15 that it will invest 3 trillion won (about \$2.7 billion) over the next three years to expand its on-line retail business. Lotte pointed out that the new strategy targets to increase its annual on-line sales three times to 20 trillion won (\$18 billion) by 2020. The key tool revealed under the new strategy is merging 8 different on-line shopping platforms that different business divisions under Lotte Shopping Co. currently operates into one single, consolidated on-line venue. Lotte's investment will also include building of additional on-line distribution centers.

EMART Launches 'Early Morning Home Delivery Service' for On-line Shoppers

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2018051423731>

Summary: EMART, the leading hypermarket grocery store chain in Korea, announced that it has launched 'early morning home delivery service' for its on-line shoppers. Under the new service, on-line orders made before 6:00 p.m. will be delivered to the shopper's home as early as 6:00 - 9:00 a.m. the following morning. Delivery fee is 5,000 won (\$4.6) for an order below 40,000 won (\$37) or 2,000 won (\$1.8) for an order of 40,000 won or higher. Before, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. was the earliest delivery slot available to the on-line shoppers. According to EMART, many on-line shoppers, particularly people living alone and families with both parents working outside the home, have been requesting early morning deliveries. Other competitor on-line retailers have also launched early morning home delivery services. EMART expects that fresh agricultural products and ready-to-cook prepared foods will account for a significant portion of the early morning deliveries. EMART current offers 50,000 products (SKUs) in its on-line store which includes fresh agricultural products such as meat, fish, and fresh produce.

Imported Beer Expands Market Share with Lower Price ... 5,000 Won for 4 Cans

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2018051381741>

Summary: Imported beer market share is expanding in Korea not only for local consumers' demand for quality and diversity but also for lower price. Imported beer is offered at as low as 5,000 won per 4 can pack in local convenience stores. Local breweries argue that local tax regulations are structured to provide advantages to imported beer as the tax charged to imported beer is based on the import price registered by the importer. On the other hand, tax on locally brewed beer is tightly monitored by the local authority and is inclusive of the cost of brewing, operation, marketing, plus profit. Liquor tax on beer is 72 percent and accounts for a significant part of retail prices. Large-scale Korean breweries have seen a continued reduction in their production volume since 2013 under the expansion of imported beer. Ironically, leading Korean breweries have also become import distributors of foreign beer. Lotte Liquor has recently added Miller, Blue Moon, and Coors in its imported beer portfolio. OB Beer (a subsidiary of AB Inbev) has had its 'Cass Worldcup' beer brewed by a partner brewery in the U.S., which is offered in Korea at a price 12 percent lower than its regular 'Cass' beer.

Colored Plastic Bottles to be Banned by 2020

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20180511/90026947/1>

Summary: The Korean government announced on May 10 that colored plastic bottles will be banned for consumer beverage product packaging in 2020. This is part of measures newly established to reduce use and improve recycling of disposable plastics in the market. Other measures include a ban on providing plastic shopping bags in retail stores and a mandatory 10 percent price discount provided to consumers who bring their own takeout mug cups or tumblers in cafés.

ROKG to Import 4,410 MT Fresh Potatoes within May to Stabilize Market Price

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20180509/90006456/1>

Summary: The Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced on May 9 that it will import 4,410 metric tons of fresh potatoes within the month to curb the surging price of potatoes in the market. The price of local fresh potatoes in April was 77 percent higher than a year ago due to a poor harvest last year as well as this spring under unfavorable weather conditions.

The information in this report was compiled by the [Agricultural Trade Office](#) (ATO) at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, South Korea. The press summaries contained herein do NOT reflect USDA, the U.S. Embassy, or other U.S. government agency official policy or view point. U.S. food exporters can learn more about market opportunities in South Korea by reviewing ATO Seoul's [Exporter Guide](#) and other reports available at www.fas.usda.gov by clicking on "attaché reports."