



Foreign Agricultural Service
U.S. Agricultural Trade Office



FAS/Seoul Monitoring of Media Reporting on Agricultural Issues

Today's Date: **Wednesday, November 7, 2018**

For Coverage: **October 22 ~ November 7, 2018**

Melons with Edible Rinds are now in the Market

http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?art_id=201811051113001

Summary: The Korean Institute of Planning and Evaluation for Technology in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (IPET) announced on Nov. 5th that it has developed melons that have softer rinds and sweeter fruits. It has developed 2 types of Korean melons that are 20% softer and more than 3 brix higher in sugar content than regular Korean melons. It has also developed 3 types of Chinese Oriental melons that have soft and edible rinds, which are targeted for the Chinese market. Korean melons are a good source of folic acid known for preventing anemia, dementia, and birth defects. Folic acid is contained more in the rinds than in the fruit, which makes the new variety more attractive.

CJ Cheiljedang Expands 'Hatban' (Precooked Rice) Production

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2018103017561>

Summary: CJ Cheiljedang, the leading food processor in Korea, announced that its new plant in Jincheon Korea started to produce 'Hatban', the number one brand in the precooked-microwavable rice product market in Korea. The Jincheon plant, which is a half billion dollar project to expand CJ's production capacity for various HMR and prepared products including Hatban by 2020, will eventually produce 220,000 packs of Hatban per day (current capacity is 150,000 packs a day). Hatban's annual sales is forecast to reach 400 billion won (about \$370 million) this year, which will account for over 73 percent of precooked-microwavable rice products in Korea.

Shinsegae Group to Consolidate On-line Retail Businesses under SSG.com next year ... Secures \$1 Billion Investment

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2018103026551>

Summary: Shinsegae Group, a food-retail conglomerate business group in Korea, announced earlier this year that all of its on-line businesses operated under different sister companies, including EMART and Shinsegae Department Store, would be consolidated into a separate entity, SSG.com, early next year. Shinsegae Group has recently secured \$1 billion of investment from international financial partners to establish the new, consolidated on-line retail company. Shinsegae Group's overall cash-register sales from on-line retail businesses amounts to 2.5 trillion won currently, which is much smaller than the industry leaders (eBay Korea 14 trillion won; 11st Street 9 trillion won; Lotte 8 trillion won). Shinsegae Group intends to see a rapid growth of its on-line retail business by consolidating its resources into SSG.com.

GM Potatoes Getting Hot Debates Ahead of the First Import - "Reduced harmful ingredients" vs "GMO ag. products may be poured into Korean market"

<http://www.hankookilbo.com/News/Read/201810241687782559>

Summary: Controversy is mounting as the government is more likely to accept imports of genetically modified potatoes. Until now, GM foods that can be eaten directly have never been imported, except those used as ingredients of processed foods such as cooking oil and syrup. The import side claims that the GM potato has been confirmed to have no safety problem and there is a positive effect of eliminating Acrylamide when making fried potatoes although it has been genetically engineered. However, there is a growing concern that once this kind of GM import is approved, more GM crops will surge in the Korean market.

MFDS Orders Recall on ‘Luncheon Meat’ Canned Ham by Daesang Co. for Microbial Contamination

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20181025/92574536/1>

Summary: MFDS announced on October 24 that it had ordered recall on ‘Luncheon Meat’ canned ham processed by Daesang Co. on May 16, 2016 as its inspection found microbial contamination in the product. Total volume of the product processed and distributed to the market was 110,000 cans. Daesang Co. made a public apology and announced that it would stop the processing plant that was responsible for the recall until they identify and fix the cause of the contamination.

7-Eleven Korea to Expand ‘Self-Service’ Convenience Stores

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2018102408521>

Summary: 7-Eleven Korea announced that its 4th ‘Signature’ store, located in Lotte City Hotel Ulsan, started operation on October 24. 7-Eleven ‘Signature’ store is ‘self-service’ convenience store that operates without cashiers or in-store assistants. Consumers need to join Hand Pay app, a bio-authentication tool, to enter the store and shop. Signature stores are also equipped with new in-store info-tech tools developed by 7-Eleven Korea, including ‘VENI’ artificial intelligence shopping assistance robot.



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.”