



Foreign Agricultural Service
U.S. Agricultural Trade Office



FAS/Seoul Monitoring of Media Reporting on Agricultural Issues

Today's Date: **Thursday, December 11, 2019**

For Coverage: **November 22 ~ December 11, 2019**

EMART Reports 40% Sales Growth for Premium Local Fruits

<https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20191206130100030?input=1195m>

Summary: EMART, the leading hypermarket grocery store chain in Korea, reported that its sales of premium quality local fruits grew 40 percent this year through November. According to EMART, consumers were willing to pay more for higher quality fruits. Premium local fruits offered in EMART include Shine Muscat grapes, Envy apples, Shinbee peaches, and Janghee strawberries. Envy Apples, which is a high-brix (15) breed, accounted for 12 percent of all apples sold in EMART during the period. Post comment: South Korea is the largest export market for U.S. pomegranates. High quality U.S. pomegranates are widely sold in stores in Korea for \$3-6 each.

HMR Processors Target 'Care Foods' Market

<https://www.hankyung.com/economy/article/2019120801661>

Summary: Major HMR processors in Korea have launched or expanded their 'Care Foods' business recently to capitalize on the aging population. Care foods are processed foods catered to elderly consumers who have physical challenges due to their age, such as weak teeth, maldigestion, or nutritional concerns. For example, Hyundai Green Food has expanded its offers of ready-to-cook, microwavable meal packages such as 'easy bite & digestion' braised beef ribs. Shinsegae Food plans to launch next month gel-type meals for people who cannot take regular meals. Cheiljedang and Ourhome have also completed pilot tests of new care foods for office restaurants and hospitals.

On-line Restaurant Meal Delivery Service Marks 900 Billion Won Sales in October, Up 81%

<https://www.hankyung.com/economy/article/2019120303381>

Summary: Korea National Statistics Office (NSO) reported that on-line restaurant meal delivery companies reported a total of 900 billion won (about \$780 million) in sales in October 2019, 81 percent higher than the same month last year. NSO reported that 94 percent of on-line restaurant meal orders were made via devices such as smartphones.

U.S. Beef Takes up 50.4% in Korea's Imported Beef Market

<https://pulsenews.co.kr/view.php?sc=30800018&year=2019&no=1006084>

U.S. beef has taken up more than half of the imported beef market in Korea at the end of October as price appeal has completely erased safety concerns. According to data from the Korea International Trade Association (KITA) on Monday, the country imported 209,034 tons of beef from the U.S. from January to October, up 7.9 percent from the same period last year. Total beef imports amounted to 415,112 tons from the period, of which the U.S. products accounted for 50.4 percent. The share surpassed the 50 percent threshold for the first time since 2003 when beef imports from the U.S. were banned in Korea after an outbreak of mad cow disease in the U.S. Maeil Business News, December 3

ROKG Lowers Fat Content Standards for Top Grade Beef

<http://www.donga.com/news/Main/article/all/20191125/98532070/1>

Summary: Korea Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced on November 25 that its

revised quality standards for beef meat will take effect on December 1. The main change in the standards is lower fat content requirements for top quality cuts, 1++ and 1+. The fat content requirement for 1++ will be lowered from the current “17 percent or higher” standard to “15.6 percent or higher.” The requirement for 1+ will be lowered from “13 percent or higher, lower than 17 percent” to “12.3 percent or higher, lower than 15.6 percent.” MAFTA pointed out that the revised quality standards reflect on-going consumption trend of preferring less fat in the diet. MAFRA also added that the new standards will lead to shorter length of breeding time from 31.2 months to 29 months on average as a result, saving some \$100 million of cost for local cattle ranchers.

Craft Beer Industry Deploys Early Consumer Promotions as Transition to Volume-based Liquor Tax Approaches
<http://www.donga.com/news/article/all/20191125/98532331/1>

Summary: Local craft breweries are reportedly deploying early consumer promotions to capitalize on the historic transition to volume-based liquor tax system scheduled to take effect in 2020. The transition will lower the retail price of craft beer by about 30 percent. Leading breweries have recently launched price discount promotions to develop consumer awareness. Breweries are also launching new recipes to increase consumer interest.

Fresh Strawberry Season Starts One Week Early This Year ... Retailers and Restaurants Offer Aggressive Promotions

<http://www.donga.com/news/article/all/20191124/98513377/1>

Summary: Grocery stores and restaurants have launched in-store promotions under the theme of fresh strawberries during the week of November 24, about one week earlier than previous seasons as local greenhouse farms started harvests under warmer weather. Marketers point out that strawberries have become a top fresh fruit for winter months among local consumers. Promotions deployed include samplings for new varieties in grocery stores and new recipes in restaurants.

Wine Joins Top 10 Sellers in EMART for the First Time

<https://kr.investing.com/news/economy/article-290213>

Summary: EMART, the leading hypermarket grocery retailer in South Korea, reported that wine joined top 10 selling products in its stores for the first time this year through November 17. EMART’s wine sales increased 21.5 percent this year to account for 24.5 percent of overall alcoholic beverage section sales. EMART pointed out that its aggressive launchings of value-priced private label brands this year were the key driver of sales growth.

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.”