



Foreign Agricultural Service
U.S. Agricultural Trade Office



FAS/Seoul Monitoring of Media Reporting on Agricultural Issues

Today's Date: **Friday, August 11, 2017**

For Coverage: **August 4 ~ 11, 2017**

Retail Chains Launch Gift Sets for Korean Thanksgiving Day Season

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20170810/85778128/1>

Summary: E Mart, the leading hypermarket store chain in Korea, announced on August 11 that its stores will start to offer 189 gift sets developed for the coming Korean Thanksgiving Day (October 4-6) from August 14. Home Plus and Lotte Mart, other leading hypermarket store chains, have also announced launchings of similar scale gift sets targeting Thanksgiving Day season.



Foreign Tourists Visiting Korea to Decline 27 Percent This Year

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20170810/85778159/1>

Summary: The Korea Tourism Agency (KTA) reported on August 10 that its trend analysis indicated that the number of foreign tourists visiting Korea this year would decline 27 percent from last year to 12.6 million. On the other hand, the number of Korean tourists traveling to foreign countries is likely to set a record high, 26.6 million this year. KTA pointed out that the dramatic decline of Chinese tourists is the key cause of the decline in the number of foreign tourists visiting Korea. The Chinese government implemented restrictions on tourist travel to Korea since early 2017.

Convenience Stores Stop Selling Belgian Waffle for Potential Health Risk from "Pesticide Eggs"

<http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2017/08/10/0200000000AKR20170810143900030.HTML?input=1195m>

Summary: Leading convenience store chains, including CU and GS25, have reportedly stopped selling waffle products imported from Belgium since August 10 due to potential food safety risk associated with the product. Earlier this week, EU reported that its investigation found "pesticide eggs" originated from farms in Netherlands and Belgium in many European countries. Although no evidence has been found that the Belgian waffle products used the contaminated eggs, Korean retailers have decided to remove related products from their shelves to calm down any consumer health concerns.

"Food Poisoning Bacteria Exceeding Three Times Food Safety Limit was Found in McDonald's Hamburger", Korea Consumer Agency

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017081060541>

Summary: The Korea Consumer Agency (KCA), a quasi-government agency, reported on August 10 that its recent survey found violation of food safety regulation on food poisoning bacteria contamination in hamburger sold by McDonald's Korea. According to KCA, it surveyed a total of 38 hamburger products sold by 11 hamburger restaurant chains and convenience store chains in Korea. The survey found one case of violation, which was McDonald's. The number of food poisoning bacteria found in McDonald's hamburger was over three times higher than the food safety standard set by the Korean authority.

Consumer Concerns over 'Pesticide Eggs' Spread in Europe ... Investigation Found Distribution in UK, Germany, and France ... MFDS to Tighten Import Inspections

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20170809/85742181/1>

Summary: Consumer concerns over 'pesticide eggs' are spreading in Europe. The EU reported on August 7 that its investigation found 'pesticide eggs' in Germany, Sweden, Swiss, France and England. The EU recommended increased alert among the consumers on the issue. 'Pesticide eggs' were originated from poultry farms in Netherlands and Belgium as many of the farms were contaminated by a toxic chemical contained in a pesticide used in the farms. The pesticide was manufactured by a Belgium company. Korea Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) reported on August 8 that it will strengthen inspections on imported eggs to prevent the 'pesticide eggs' from entering the market. MFDS added that its inspections so far had not detected the toxic chemical in question.

Divided Paths of Pizza and Fried Chicken ... Pizza Restaurants are one a Decline while Fried Chicken Restaurants Continues a Growth

<http://news.donga.com/3/all/20170808/85741432/1>

Summary: Mister Pizza, the leading pizza restaurant franchise, reported that the number of stores under its umbrella has been on a continuous decline after hitting an apex (386) since 2014 down to 290 as of this year. Pizza Hut Korea also saw a continuous decline from 111 in 2014 down to 69 this year. Marketers point out that pizza is recognized as fast food among the Korean consumers and as a result is getting less consumer attention today. On the other hand, fried chicken restaurants are reporting a solid growth. BBQ, the industry leader, reported that it now has 935 stores, a significant increase from 818 in 2014. Fried chicken-beer pairing remains a very popular dining trend in the market. In addition, fried chicken has developed an image of 'food for group gathering' among the consumers.

Health & Beauty Store Industry to Expand Further ... Lotte and Shinsegae Plan for Active Investment

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017080475701>

Summary: Health & Beauty (H&B) store industry is likely to see a rapid expansion in the coming years as large-scale retail companies have committed active investment to open up additional stores. Olive Young (by CJ), the leading player in the industry, has opened up 68 new stores during the first half this year. Total number of Olive Young stores in Korea is likely to exceed 1,000 by the end of this year. LOBs (by Lotte Shopping Co.) has added 33 new stores during the first half this year. Lotte plans to have a total of 120 LOBs stores by the end of this year. Shinsegae launched Boots in May this year. Shinsegae pointed out that Boots will be the leader of premium H&B store segment and all Boots stores will have in-store pharmacy to offer upscale products and services to the consumers.

Price of Abalone Likely to Decline ... New Aquaculture Breed can Reduce Aquaculture Period by 6 Months

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017080340421>

Summary: Ministry of Marine & Fishery Resources (MMFR) reported on August 3 that it developed a new abalone breed that grows much quicker than conventional breed in aquaculture farm. According to MMFR, the new breed takes 30 months to fully grow, 6 month quicker than existing breed. MMFR pointed out that the new breed will bring the consumer price of farmed abalone down by 5,500 won per kilogram. Local abalone aquaculture farms

earned 347 billion won of sales in 2016, which accounted for 55 percent of total shell fish aquaculture industry sales in Korea.

Orion Co. to Enter Health & Functional Food Market ... Signs Partnership with Robinson Pharma

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017080341921>

Summary: Orion Co., a leading snack and confectionery company in Korea, reported on August 3 that it signed a partnership contract with Robinson Pharma USA which will allow it to be the exclusive distributor of various health and nutritional food supplement products under 'US Doctor's Clinical' brand in Korea. Orion pointed out that the partnership will provide the foundation for Orion to become a major player in the health and nutritional food supplement market not only in Korea but also in Asian market. According to the Ministry of Food & Drug Safety, the health & nutritional food supplement market in Korea saw an average 8.4 percent of annual growth since 2011 and generated 2.3 trillion won of sales in 2015.

'Hartford Court Pinot Noir' Served at President Summit Meeting in Whitehouse to be Launched in Korea

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017080743081>

Summary: Galleria Department Store in Seoul announced that it will start to offer at the end of August, 'Hartford Court Pinot Noir', a California wine served during the summit meeting of presidents Trump and Moon at the Whitehouse earlier in June. Galleria pointed out that Hartford Court has been supplying event wine to the Whitehouse since 1997. According to Galleria, it had received many requests from local consumers to offer the wine after the summit meeting. Galleria plans to offer a limited volume of the wine at 220,000 won per bottle.

Sales of Eel Soars ... Leading Summer Stamina Food

<http://news.hankyung.com/article/2017080743061>

Summary: E Mart reported that its sales of eel increased 48 percent in July this year compared to the same month last year. E Mart pointed out that the outstanding sales growth was due to the launching of ready to cook eel packages this year which minimize additional preparation or cooking by consumers at home.

Fishery Product Imports Amount to \$2.53 Billion During the First Half This Year in Korea

<http://news.mt.co.kr/mtview.php?no=2017080209422197911&outlink=1&ref=http%3A%2F%2Fsearch.naver.com>

Summary: Fishery product imports in Korea during the first half of this year reached a record high level. According to the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries in Korea (MOF), fishery product imports amounted to \$2.53 billion, an increase of 10.9% compared with \$2.28 billion over the same period last year. In terms of import items, fishery products such as shrimp, pollack, and salmon of which domestic consumption is on the rise led to the increase in overall fishery product imports. Especially, squid imports reached \$149 million, skyrocketed by 81.5% over the same level last year, as catches of squid in Korea had decreased. By country, the amount of imports from the largest importer in China was \$578 million, a drop of 2.2% due to decreased imports of the major items, such as small octopus, yellow corbina, and monkfish, while squid imports from Peru and Chile rapidly increased by 68% and 103% respectively. A MOF official said that the fishery product trade will become more active as a trend of health food preference continues all over the world.

Small Packaged Foods with the Amount of a Meal Sells like Hot Cakes in Korea

<http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2017/08/01/0200000000AKR20170801127600030.HTML?input=1195m>

Summary: As one-person households increase and 'Honbap (eating alone)' becomes a new trend in Korea, small packaged foods are recently selling like hot cakes both online and offline. According to E-Mart on August 2, one of the leading large-scale hypermarkets in Korea, small packaged fruit sales from January to July this year skyrocketed by 71.9%, compared to the same period last year. A sales growth rate for bite-size fruit in the small packaged fruit line reached as high as 713.6% over the same period. Targeting these demands for small packaged foods, E-Mart launched 'a slice of watermelon' and 'a portion of raw fish' that can be enjoyed alone, such as salmon and flatfish this year. In addition, Auction, one of Korea's online marketplaces, said that sales of mini watermelon (aka apple watermelon) drastically increased by 1,696% over the same period, and rice sales, packaged with less than 5 kilograms increased by 32% as well.



Is it Safe to Keep Beef in the Refrigerator? Should Eat within Two or Three Days of Purchase

<http://news.join.com/article/21797172>

Summary: Proper storage of meat in the refrigerator is as important as how it is cooked. Professor Joo, Sun Tae of the Department of Animal Husbandry at Gyeongsang National University in Korea and former editing staff of the U.K. science journal Meat Science, advised that beef should be kept in the refrigerator for up to two to three days or in the freezer for about six months. The reason why the surface of beef sometimes becomes dark red is because the red chromoprotein in muscle cells has changed by contacting air, in other words, it has not gone bad. Pork tends to decay more easily than beef from microbes; therefore, it should be covered tightly with plastic wrap in the refrigerator for up to two days. Chicken is the most perishable among the above meats so that it should be stored in an airtight container in the freezer for up to one month, unless it can be cooked right after purchase.

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."

