

**Special points of interest:**

- Japan's exports to Switzerland soared 61.6 % in October year-on-year.
- JETRO Geneva organized two seminars to present Japanese foodstuffs.
- The Japanese government unveiled a ¥ 7.2 trillion (CHF 82 billion) economic stimulus plan.
- Black garlic helps to reduce risks of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

**Inside this issue:**

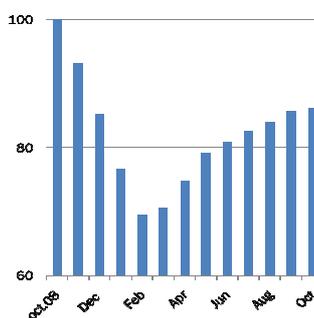
Japan's economic situation	1
JETRO foodstuff seminars	1 & 2
Interview. Dominique Gauthier, Chef in Geneva	2
Japan unveiled its fourth stimulus plan	3
Japanese apples and black garlicks at Globus	3
A plant thriving in desert areas	4

## Japan's current economic situation

According to the November 19 OECD Economic Outlook on Japan, "the severe recession triggered by the global crisis has bottomed out, thanks in part to a rebound in exports, although production remains well below capacity".

Major economic indicators show a recovery of the economy. Total Japan's exports increased 3.9% from September to October 2009, whereas they dropped a 23.2% in a year. Exports to Switzerland remains relatively stable from September to October (-1.1%) and soared 61.6 % in October from a year earlier. The index of industrial production also went up 0.5% from September to October to 86.1, showing an increase for the eight straight month (see graph). Moreover, the Cabinet revised its estimate for real GDP growth for the July-September period to 0.3% (1.3% at

**Index of industry production (value added)**  
Seasonally adjusted  
2005 average=100  
Source: METI



annual rate) growth from an initial estimate of 1.3% (4.8% at annual rate). Furthermore, the Tankan index for large manufacturers increased 9 points from minus 33 in September to minus 24 in December, showing a third consecutive quarterly improvement. The Bank of Japan forecasts the index to rise to minus 18 in March 2010. The index is the difference between companies describing favorable business conditions minus those describing negative business con-

ditions. The number of corporate bankruptcies also fell 1% in November to 1,000 year-on-year. The unemployment rate declined to 5.1% in October from 5.3% in September and a post-war record high of 5.7% in July.

However, some economic and financial indicators show that the economic recovering still is fragile. Private-sector machinery orders, excluding volatile ones, fell a seasonally adjusted 4.5% in October, showing the first fell in three months. On the financial front, the strong yen (91.16 yen per dollar on December 17) damages the competitiveness of exports. Core consumer prices also fell 2.2% in October from previous year, showing the eight straight months of decrease. As deflation affects corporate earnings and delays consumption, it remains a threat to the economic recovering.

## JETRO foodstuff seminars

JETRO Geneva organized two seminars to present Japanese foodstuffs. Around 40 food specialists took part in the November 24 seminar organized, in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of

Geneva, in Hotel Beau-Rivage, in Geneva. About 60 people attended the public seminar held on November 25, in ground floor room of the Consulate-General of Japan at Geneva. Participants discovered

Japanese seasonal products, such as fruits, vegetables, condiments and alcohols. Many of these products are still yet unknown in Switzerland.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## JETRO foodstuff seminars



Seminar for foodstuff specialists, November 24, 2009, Hotel Beau-Rivage, Geneva

(Continued from page 1)  
In his welcome statements, Mr. Watanabe, JETRO Geneva Director General, said that thanks to the Switzerland - Japan Free Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement, access of Swiss specialties (cheeses, chocolates, wines, dried meats...) to the Japanese market and of Japan's foodstuffs (miso, soy sauce, sake...) to the Swiss market are enhanced. Ushio Oshima, Sembikiya's Executive Planning Director, explained that before the company was set up, 175 years ago, Japanese people used only to eat few traditional

fruits. Still today, fruits remain luxury goods in Japan.

On November 24, the seminar was moderated with dynamism by Mr. Meyer, Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Geneva. Dominique Gauthier, Chef of the restaurant *Le Chat Botté*, presented the dishes he prepared and expressed his impressions (see interview below). Mr. Kurahayashi presented the Usagiyama restaurant, the only one-Michelin-star Japanese restaurant in Switzerland and the Kaiseki, the traditional Japanese multi-course dinner.

On November 25, Tatsuya

Uchitomi, manager of Japanese shops in Switzerland, explained how to cook miso soups and cookies.



From left to right: Mr. Kurahayashi, hotel-restaurant Usagiyama Director, Mr. Watanabe, JETRO Geneva Director General, Mr. Meyer, Director, International Affairs Department, Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services of Geneva, Mr. Oshima, Sembikiya's Executive Planning Director, Mr. Mizushima, Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva.



Dominique Gauthier, Chef of *Le Chat Botté* in Geneva

## Interview. Dominique Gauthier, Chef in Geneva

Dominique Gauthier, Chef of the one-Michelin-star restaurant *Le Chat Botté* in Geneva, prepared a dish for the November 24 JETRO Japanese foodstuff seminar. Fascinated by Asia, he wanted to know more about Japan: "I love this culture based on respect, I think this is a common feature with Switzerland". He also emphasized that "Japanese cuisine can very easily be digested, is light and flavors dishes".

### **What was your impression when you cooked the Japanese foodstuffs?**

It was the first time I used your fresh products. The root of Wasabi was a great discovery. I grated it and the blend with scallop was

perfect. I also loved the yuzu (a citrus fruit originating from East Asia). I loved its zest. While the lemon has a very aggressive taste, the one of yuzu is rounder and has a stronger flavor. Initially, I found the carrot of Kyoto as tough as rutabaga. But I liked its interesting color that brought something cheerful in my dish.

### **Do you think Japanese foodstuffs go well with French cuisine?**

I think using Japanese foodstuffs makes look the dish more beautiful and modern. I already use Asian foodstuffs in my dish and I would like to go further. I hope that it will be getting easier and easier to find stuffs like fresh

wasabi, enokitake and Japanese kaki. It is always extremely rewarding to discover new flavors. One of the usual rules of French cuisine is to have three products and three flavors. This time I had more flavors, but some had a soft one and others a strong one.



Dominique Gauthier's dish  
Grated mix of red Kyoto's carrots and of Rutabagas covered by scallops and enokitakes (white mushrooms used in Japanese cuisine). Emulsion of squashes and of sweet potatoes.

## Japan unveiled its fourth stimulus plan

On December 8, the Japanese government unveiled a ¥ 7.2 trilion. (CHF 82 bio.) economic stimulus plan, 1.5% of GDP.

This stimulus plan is the fourth plan since the beginning of the world economic crisis and the second in fiscal year 2009. In April this year, the former Japan's government already agreed a ¥ 15.4 trilion. (CHF 170 bio.) package. On December 2, the Bank of Japan also approved a ¥ 10 trilion. (CHF 114 bio.) program to cope with deflation and strong yen pressures.

The objective of this new stimulus plan is "to make the economic recovery solid in the face of the

current severe economic and employment situation, the yen's rise and deflation", the government said.

¥ 3,500 bio. (CHF 40 bio.) will be used in tax grants to local governments to support rural areas.

¥ 1,700 bio. (CHF 19 bio.) will be spent to expand emergency loans for small and medium sized companies.

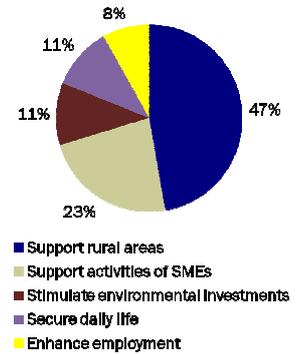
The government will also allocate ¥ 800 bio. (CHF 9 bio.) to stimulate environmental investments. "Eco-points" will be provided to customers who invest in environmental-friendly accommodations. The subsidy granted to environmental-friendly cars,

including hybrid cars, is extended until late September 2010. The "eco-point" program, which provides consumers incentives to purchase environmental-friendly products, is also extended.

¥ 800 bio. will be used to reduce medical expenses of elderly people and to meet needs related to H1N1 virus.

¥ 600 bio. (CHF 7 bio.) will be sent to facilitate subsidies granted to companies to avoid lay-offs.

Around ¥ 2.7 trillion of the stimulus plan will be paid for from the previous administration's extra-budgetary fund.



Share of Japan's fourth economic stimulus plan

## Japanese apples and black garlics at Globus

From early December until Christmas, Globus Swiss stores sell black garlics and apples imported from the Aomori prefecture in the North of the Honshu's island.

Black garlic is produced by Kashiwazaki-seika Co. by fermenting garlic at 80 degrees during 30 to 40 days. This process increases the nutritional value while eliminating odor. Black garlic has approximately 5.8 times more polyphenol antioxidants than regular garlic. This compound helps to reduce risks of cardiovascular disease and cancer. The product has a subtle sweet taste, softer than

the one of normal garlic, and a creamy texture. It can be eat as a snack or added to salad or to sauce to enhance its flavor.

Shinich Kashiwazaki, Director of the company, who visited the Zurich's department store on December 4, expressed his belief that the product will be successful in Switzerland. On December 14, Globus Geneva's store already sold half of its stock of black garlic bulbs. Globus also sells high-class "Mutsu", "Kinboshi" and "Sekai-Ichi" apples. Japanese apples are bigger, sweeter and crisper than many Western apples. Yutaka Yamano, Di-

rector of Katayama Ringo Co., Ltd, the apple's exporting company, also said that he believes that the company will be able to expand to new markets.

Experience of sales in Switzerland will serve to assess whether exports should be extended to other European countries.



Japanese apples (from left to right): Mutsu, Kinsei and Sekai-Ichi.



Black garlics (Left picture: zoom on black garlic bulb)

## A plant thriving in desert areas

Idemitsu Kosan Co., Ltd., a Japanese petroleum company, founded in 1911 under the name of Idemitsu Shokai established Green Geo Co., Ltd. jointly with SBL Co. Ltd and Green Produce, Inc. to produce the Kurapia, a new plant with superior soil adaptability. As this new plant has lower maintenance cost in green space, it may serve to counter global warming and to prevent soil erosion.

Kurapia is a variety of *Lippia nodiflora*, a plant na-

tive from Brazil and the United States, in the family of Verbenaceae. In 1997, Professor Hitoshi Kuramochi of University Utsunomiya, in Tochigi Pref. (100 km North of Tokyo) identified this variety that was then registered under the Japan's Plant Variety Protection and Seed Act.

Established in April 4, 2008, with a ¥ 80 million capital, Green Geo Co. Ltd. expects sales of ¥ 2 billion by 2018. As Idemitsu Kosan confirmed the superiority of Kurapia, it

invested in a 50 % share of Green Geo Co. Ltd. to start the production and sale of Kurapia seedlings. Green Geo Co. Ltd. is today owned by Idemitsu Kosan Co. Ltd. (50 %), SBL Co. Ltd. (37.5 %) and Green Produce, Inc. (12.5 %).

Idemitsu Kosan began in April 2007 in-situ experiments to check resistance of the plant to hot temperatures and sowed the plant in Middle East desert areas. It confirmed its ability to thrive under temperatures of 50 degrees.

## Agenda

28<sup>th</sup> January: JETRO Japan Night in 2010 Davos World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, Central Sporthotel Japan dinner with sushi, 100 kinds of sake, Japanese fruits and demonstration of "Amezaiku"

18<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> Mar.: Japan Pavilion in Baselworld, Hall 6  
Ten Japanese pearl firms will exhibit

*JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.*

The JETRO Geneva Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online:  
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

# JETRO

**Japan External Trade Organization**

80, Rue de Lausanne  
1202 Geneva  
Phone: 022/732 13 04  
Fax: 022/732 07 72  
E-mail: [jetroge@jetroge.ch](mailto:jetroge@jetroge.ch)