

ASA-IM JAPAN SUPPORTS JAPAN'S NATTO INDUSTRY

Japan Country Director Brabant and Marketing Manager Tateishi represented ASA-IM Japan at The Federation of Japan Natto Manufacturers Cooperatives 15th Natto Competition this February in Kyoto. This national and annual event promotes the technological innovation in sustainable natto production and raises awareness of the health and nutritional benefits of natto. Widely covered by the Japanese media of some 171 product entries 144 were made from Japanese soybean varieties with 10 varieties from the U.S., 9 from Canada and 8 from China. The number of competition entries was up more than 50% over last year and of the 12 award categories the U. S. was the only non-Japanese variety to win an award. The U. S. currently supplies more than 80% of all the soybeans used for natto production in Japan. Winners earn the right to label products with the award distinction for up to 5 years, historically increasing individual manufacturer sales dramatically. The Federation of Japan Natto Manufacturers Cooperatives has proposed ASA-IM Japan establish a U.S. variety soybean category in future competitions in recognition of the importance US soybeans play in Japanese natto production.



Photo: 15th Annual Japanese Natto Competition



Photo: Competition Judge Testing Natto Stringiness