

Trends in the Trade of Japan's Agricultural, Forestry & Fishery Products



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Exports of Agricultural, Forestry & Fishery Products at Record High in 2024

On the back of a domestic rice shortage issue in Japan, trends in the trade of Japan's agricultural, forestry, and fishery products are gaining attention. According to the "Overview of Information on Import and Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products" (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries), the export value of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products in 2024 was 1.4092 trillion yen (year-on-year growth of 3.8%) and the import value was 13.4049 trillion yen (year-on-year growth of 4.7%). The export value exceeded the historical high and the import value was also comparable to that of 2022 (13.4224 trillion) which marked a historical high. The trade balance of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products in 2024 was a deficit of 11.9557 trillion yen and is comparable in size to 12.0851 trillion yen in 2022.

As shown in the [Chart](#), Japan's agricultural, forestry, and fishery products are on a rising trend for both exports and imports. Exports

are 4.5 times the 314.9 billion yen of 2000, while imports are 1.9 times the 6.914 trillion yen of 2000, and the growth in exports is significant. The percentage of exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products of total export value was 1.3% in 2024, and while this is not large, it is double the 0.6% of 2000. On the other hand, the percentage of imports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products of total import value was 16.9% in 2000 but fell to 11.9% in 2024.

Focusing on export destinations, the top five countries and regions in 2024 were the United States, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and South Korea in that order, and these five make up 63.4% of total exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products. China was the top country in 2023 but decreased by approximately 30% year on year in 2024. China's ban on imports of Japanese fishery products and others had an impact.

The top five countries and regions for imports in 2024 were the US, China, Thailand, Australia, and Canada, and these five make up 47.8% of total imports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products.

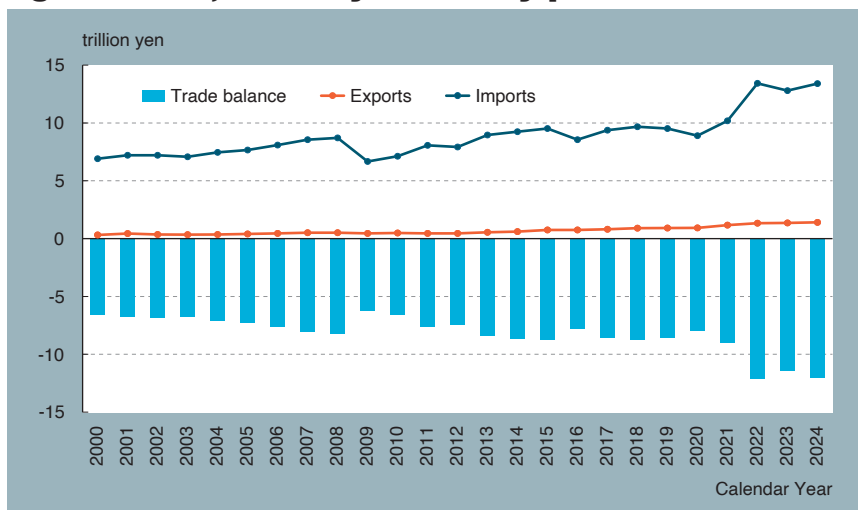
According to the cumulative amount for January to June confirmed at the time this article was written, the value of exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products was 759.7 billion yen, up by 16% year on year, and that of imports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products was 6.8124 trillion yen, up by 3.8% year on year. Exports and imports are both on a rising trend.

Top Export Was Alcoholic Beverages, Top Import Was Tobacco

Focusing on the top 20 commodities by product as shown in the [Table](#), the top export item was alcoholic beverages at 133.771 billion yen, accounting for a little less than 10% of exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products. Alcoholic

CHART

Trends in the import & export values of agricultural, forestry & fishery products



Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, "Overview of Information on Import and Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery"

TABLE

Top 20 agricultural, forestry & fishery products by import & export value

Rank	Export		Import	
	Commodities	Value	Commodities	Value
1	Alcoholic beverages	133710	Tobacco	713621
2	Scallops (fresh, chilled, frozen, salted, dried, smoked)	69489	Pork	645738
3	Beef	63588	Maize (corn)	596259
4	Sauces and mixed seasonings	62988	Beef	475145
5	Soft drinks	57431	Fruits and nuts (fresh, dried)	431995
6	Yellowtail (Buri) (live, fresh, chilled, frozen)	41427	Alcoholic beverages	390698
7	Pearls (natural, cultural)	41189	Preparations of chicken	344772
8	Green tea	36380	Frozen vegetables	331869
9	Confectionery (excluding rice products)	34372	Wood in chips or particles	313637
10	Wood in the rough	28227	Soy beans	287604
11	Apple	20136	Trout, pacific salmon (fresh, chilled, frozen)	278959
12	Tuna (fresh, chilled, frozen)	20095	Wheat	256644
13	Tobacco	19947	Coffee, not roasted	243988
14	Scallop (preparation)	17717	Lumber	231038
15	Soup broth	16133	Poultry	217622
16	Wheat flour	15499	Shrimp and prawns (live, fresh, chilled, frozen)	208629
17	Milk powder	15187	Natural rubber	191126
18	Compound feeds, formula feed	14155	Tuna (fresh, chilled, frozen)	189390
19	Instant coffee	12420	Natural cheese	188829
20	Soy sauce	12189	Rape or colza seeds	170681

Note: Amounts are in units of one million yen

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, "Overview of Information on Import and Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products"

beverages were also at the top in export value by commodity in 2000, but back then it was only 14.184 billion yen. It has expanded by a little less than 10 times in the last 24 years. Confirming the breakdown of alcoholic beverages from the "Recent Export Trend in Alcoholic Beverages Made in Japan" (National Tax Agency), the three major items were whiskey (43.635 billion yen), sake (43.456 billion yen), and beer (21.045 billion yen). The main export destinations for alcoholic beverages were the US, China, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, and these five alone make up 70%.

Scallops (fresh, chilled, frozen, salted, dried, smoked) were in second place in export value by commodity, but have grown by more than nine times from 7.431 billion yen in 2000 to 69.489 billion yen in 2024. Beef, in third place, was not among the top export commodities back in 2000.

On the other hand, tobacco, which was the top import item, was top in export value of agricultural products in 2000 (18.03 billion yen). It was in 13th place in 2024 (19.947 billion yen) but has not grown much. The import value of tobacco (713.621 billion yen) is 35 times that of its export value. The top five countries for imports of tobacco were Italy, South Korea, Romania, Greece and Indonesia, which together make up 85%.

Pork, in second place, and corn, in third place, for imports were also among the top in 2000 (pork at 347.517 billion yen, corn at 203.343 billion yen). Pork has grown by a little less than twice and corn by three times. Canada and the US account for around 50% of imports of pork, and the US alone for a little less than 80% for corn.

Rice Saw a Rise in Exports & Fall in Imports, But ...

The export value of rice, which has been a hot topic recently, was 12.0287 billion yen in 2024, an increase of 23.4% compared to the previous year. The top export destinations were Hong Kong, the US, and Singapore, and these three make up 60%. On the other hand, the import value of rice in 2024 was 94.8690 billion yen. This was a fall of 9.2% compared to the previous year, and it is just under eight times the export value. The US, Thailand, and Australia were the three main countries of origin and account for 94% of imports.

Looking at the cumulative total for January to June 2025, export value rose by 22.6% year on year and import value decreased by 2.7% but volume rose 9.2% year on year. Reflecting on the shortage of rice domestically, import volume of rice is likely to continue to rise.

NOTE: This article was based on available information as of August 6, 2025.

Article translated from the original Japanese by Mio Uchida

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Calendar year, Quarter and Month	Real GDP		Nominal GDP		IIP rate of increase over previous year/term (month) (%)	CPI (All terms, less fresh food) rate of increase over previous year/the same term (month) of the previous year (%)
	Amount (trillion yen)	Rate of increase over previous year/term (%)	Amount (trillion yen)	Rate of increase over previous year/term (%)		
2017	551.2	1.7	553.1	1.6	3.1	0.5
2018	554.8	0.6	556.6	0.6	0.6	0.9
2019	552.5	-0.4	557.9	0.2	-2.6	0.6
2020	529.5	-4.2	539.6	-3.3	-10.4	-0.2
2021	543.8	2.7	553.1	2.5	5.4	-0.2
2022	549.0	1.0	560.6	1.4	-0.1	2.3
2023	555.8	1.2	590.7	5.4	-1.3	3.1
2024	556.4	0.1	608.4	3.0	-2.6	2.5
2024/3rd Qtr.	557.5	0.3	611.6	0.7	0.3	2.7
4th Qtr.	560.8	0.6	619.5	1.3	0.4	2.6
2025/1st Qtr.	561.6	0.1	625.4	1.0	-0.3	3.1
2nd Qtr.	563.0	0.3	633.3	1.3	0.4	3.5
2024/Nov.	—	—	—	—	-1.7	2.7
Dec.	—	—	—	—	-0.3	3.0
2025/Jan.	—	—	—	—	-1.1	3.2
Feb.	—	—	—	—	2.3	3.0
March	—	—	—	—	0.2	3.2
April	—	—	—	—	-1.1	3.5
May	—	—	—	—	-0.1	3.7
June	—	—	—	—	2.1	3.3
Sources	"SNA (National Accounts of Japan)", Cabinet Office				"Indices of Industrial Production", Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry	"Consumer Price Index", Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Calendar year, Quarter and Month	Foreign Trade Statistics									
	Exports amount (trillion yen)	Exports rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Imports amount (trillion yen)	Imports rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Exports amount to US (trillion yen)	Exports to US rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Imports amount from US (trillion yen)	Imports from US rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Exports amount to EU (trillion yen)	Exports to EU rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)
2017	78.3	11.8	75.4	14.1	15.1	6.9	8.1	10.5	7.1	9.5
2018	81.5	4.1	82.7	9.7	15.5	2.4	9.0	11.4	7.7	7.8
2019	76.9	-5.6	78.6	-5.0	15.3	-1.4	8.6	-4.2	7.4	-3.0
2020	68.4	-11.1	68.0	-13.5	12.6	-17.3	7.5	-13.7	6.3	-15.1
2021	83.1	21.5	84.9	24.8	14.8	17.6	8.9	19.6	7.7	21.4
2022	98.2	18.2	118.5	39.6	18.3	23.1	11.8	31.9	9.4	22.0
2023	100.9	2.7	110.4	-6.8	20.3	11.0	11.6	-1.7	10.4	10.9
2024	107.1	6.2	112.6	2.0	21.3	5.1	12.7	9.6	10.0	-3.9
2024/3rd Qtr.	27.1	4.5	28.7	6.8	5.4	1.4	3.1	8.6	2.5	-7.7
4th Qtr.	28.5	3.2	28.9	-0.5	5.5	-5.3	3.0	0.1	2.5	-7.6
2025/1st Qtr.	26.9	7.4	28.5	5.9	5.3	7.1	3.1	-0.7	2.4	-7.6
2nd Qtr.	26.5	-0.0	27.1	-3.2	5.0	-8.1	3.1	-8.9	2.4	0.7
2024/Nov.	9.2	3.8	9.3	-3.8	1.7	-8.0	1.0	-0.6	0.8	-12.5
Dec.	9.9	2.7	9.8	1.8	2.0	-2.1	1.0	1.4	1.0	0.5
2025/Jan.	7.9	7.3	10.6	16.3	1.5	8.1	1.1	5.2	0.7	-15.0
Feb.	9.2	11.4	8.6	-0.7	1.9	10.5	1.0	-2.6	0.8	-7.7
March	9.9	4.0	9.3	1.9	1.9	3.1	1.0	-4.5	0.9	-1.1
April	9.2	2.0	9.3	-2.1	1.8	-1.8	1.0	-10.6	0.8	-5.2
May	8.1	-1.7	8.8	-7.6	1.5	-11.0	1.1	-13.4	0.8	4.9
June	9.2	-0.5	9.0	0.3	1.7	-11.4	1.0	-1.9	0.8	3.6
Sources	"Trade Statistics of Japan", Ministry of Finance									

Calendar year, Quarter and Month	Cash salary amount rate of increase over previous year/the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Active job openings- to-applicants ratio (time(s))	Unemployment rate (%)	M2 rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Balance of payments		Yen/\$ rate (averaged during the term)
					Trade balance (trillion yen)	Current balance (trillion yen)	
2017	0.4	1.50	2.8	4.0	4.9	22.8	112.2
2018	1.4	1.61	2.4	2.9	1.1	19.5	110.4
2019	-0.4	1.60	2.4	2.4	0.2	19.3	109.0
2020	-1.2	1.18	2.8	6.5	2.8	16.0	106.8
2021	0.3	1.13	2.8	6.4	1.8	21.5	109.8
2022	2.0	1.28	2.6	3.3	-15.5	11.4	131.4
2023	1.2	1.31	2.6	2.5	-6.6	22.2	140.5
2024	2.8	1.25	2.5	1.7	-3.7	29.4	151.5
2024/3rd Qtr.	2.9	1.24	2.5	1.3	-1.2	8.9	149.2
4th Qtr.	3.7	1.25	2.5	1.2	0.0	7.1	152.4
2025/1st Qtr.	2.2	1.25	2.5	1.1	-1.7	7.6	152.5
2nd Qtr.	2.2	1.24	2.5	0.7	-0.1	7.0	144.5
2024/Nov.	3.9	1.25	2.5	1.2	0.1	3.4	153.8
Dec.	4.4	1.25	2.5	1.3	0.1	1.1	153.7
2025/Jan.	1.8	1.26	2.5	1.3	-2.9	-0.3	156.4
Feb.	2.7	1.24	2.4	1.2	0.7	4.1	152.0
March	2.3	1.26	2.5	0.8	0.5	3.7	149.1
April	2.0	1.26	2.5	0.5	-0.0	2.3	144.3
May	1.4	1.24	2.5	0.6	-0.5	3.4	144.8
June	2.5	1.22	2.5	0.9	0.5	1.3	144.5
Sources	"Monthly Labour Survey", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	"Employment Referrals for General Workers", Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	"Labour Force Survey", Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications	"Money Stock", Bank of Japan	"Balance of Payments", Ministry of Finance		Bank of Japan

Calendar year, Quarter and Month	Foreign Trade Statistics									
	Imports amount from EU (trillion yen)	Imports from EU rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Exports amount to Asia (excluding China) (trillion yen)	Exports to Asia (excluding China) rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Imports amount from Asia (excluding China) (trillion yen)	Imports from Asia (excluding China) rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Exports amount to China (trillion yen)	Exports to China rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)	Imports amount from China (trillion yen)	Imports from China rate of increase over previous year/ the same term (month) of the previous year (%)
2017	8.0	7.0	28.0	13.3	18.6	14.8	14.9	20.5	18.5	8.5
2018	8.8	10.6	28.8	2.9	20.0	7.8	15.9	6.8	19.2	4.0
2019	8.8	0.3	26.6	-7.6	19.0	-5.3	14.7	-7.6	18.5	-3.9
2020	7.8	-12.1	24.1	-9.4	17.2	-9.4	15.1	2.7	17.5	-5.1
2021	9.5	21.8	30.2	25.0	20.7	20.6	18.0	19.2	20.4	16.4
2022	11.4	21.1	36.4	20.6	28.6	37.8	19.0	5.7	24.8	21.9
2023	11.4	-0.2	34.7	-4.6	27.6	-3.4	17.8	-6.5	24.4	-1.7
2024	11.9	3.9	38.0	9.4	28.6	3.6	18.9	6.2	25.3	3.6
2024/3rd Qtr.	3.2	10.1	9.8	12.5	7.5	10.2	4.7	1.5	6.3	5.2
4th Qtr.	3.1	2.0	10.2	11.1	7.3	1.7	5.1	0.7	6.9	5.2
2025/1st Qtr.	3.1	16.4	9.9	13.2	7.5	9.4	4.4	0.7	6.5	10.9
2nd Qtr.	3.2	7.1	9.8	6.6	6.8	-2.7	4.6	-4.7	6.4	3.2
2024/Nov.	1.0	-5.4	3.3	11.5	2.3	-4.5	1.7	4.1	2.3	4.2
Dec.	1.0	7.6	3.5	10.7	2.5	3.7	1.7	-3.2	2.1	5.7
2025/Jan.	1.1	37.8	3.0	12.1	2.7	18.9	1.2	-6.1	2.6	18.4
Feb.	1.0	15.2	3.4	16.5	2.3	1.8	1.5	14.0	1.7	-3.4
March	1.0	1.1	3.6	11.1	2.5	7.5	1.7	-4.8	2.1	15.9
April	1.0	-0.6	3.4	9.3	2.3	-2.3	1.6	-0.6	2.3	6.7
May	1.1	7.5	3.0	5.5	2.1	-9.4	1.4	-8.8	2.1	-2.2
June	1.1	14.7	3.4	4.9	2.4	3.6	1.6	-4.7	2.1	5.3
Sources	"Trade Statistics of Japan", Ministry of Finance									