

## Seafood

September 28, 2018

### ～CANNED SEAFOOD～

Japanese canned seafood items are often covered by popular Japanese TV programs and attracting attention for their healthy features of carrying a good source of nutrition.

Canned mackerels that contain nutritional values such as DHA and EPA are especially high-profile. One of the leading seafood companies, Kyokuyo Co., Ltd., marked a record high in its March 2018 sales at 254.7 billion JPY, up 7.7% from the previous year.

There were even cases where stocks of canned mackerels became scarce in supermarkets. In response to this, sales of canned sardines increased to cover the shortage of mackerels. According to an article from the Minato Daily (September 4, 2018), Maruha Nichiro Corporation's canned products grew significantly between April and July increasing 65% from the previous year.

Production Volume of Canned Seafood

Items	2016		2017	
	Volume (Unit: tons)	Boxes (Unit:1000)	Volume (Unit: tons)	Boxes (Unit:1000)
Crab	2,906	700	2,366	558
Salmon	2,550	350	2,284	312
Tuna	25,338	4,569	24,429	4,453
Bonito	10,406	2,635	9,516	2,409
Tuna / Bonito Related	35,744	7,204	33,945	6,862
Mackerel	37,117	4,123	38,977	4,366
Sardine	4,152	657	4,749	741
Pacific Saury	11,678	1,883	9,748	1,592
Whale	485	71	458	64
Squid	1,624	221	1,142	159
Other Fish	444	78	423	75
Oyster	90	19	61	12
Ark Shell	870	184	522	116
Manila Clam	388	70	520	93
Japanese Scallop	1,301	250	1,201	233
Other Shellfish	586	123	588	127
Processed Seafood	1,731	205	1,581	178
Total	101,665	16,139	98,566	15,489

Source: Japan Cannery Association

In the food service industry, there are canned food bars that serve canned foods as an appetizer to eat while drinking alcohol. Customers can enjoy searching for their favorite can from the wide variety that is lined up at the bar. “Kantsuma Bar”

that opened in Nihonbashi in June 2018 is operated by Kokubu Group. Kokubu has a 306-year history of its own since its foundation and is a general wholesaler that sells original canned foods. This is a collaborative work between Zetton Inc. and Kokubu. The main bar located on the first floor of Kokubu's head office can be used as place to meet with friends after work or simply for a quick drink.



Photos by Zetton website

The types of canned products sold at supermarkets are becoming diversified, ranging from the basic boiled or cooked seafood to ones with unique flavors. According to Nihon Keizai Shimbun, canned mackerels have the highest share in the market followed by canned tunas, canned Pacific sauries, and canned sardines. As the variety of canned products diversify, the way to eat these products are also making a shift. In addition to eating the canned products while drinking alcohol, it is used as a garnish or for a sandwich filling.

Due to the increasing number of working women and double income families, there is a tendency to prefer time saving cooking styles and avoid cooking fish, which takes time to prepare.

According to The Food Weekly, the production volume of canned seafood in 2017 was 98.566t (content volume), 91.6% from the previous year. There was a fall in production due to an increase in price for shrimps and scallops. However, the ready to eat food market is expanding because of its easiness and the production volume in 2017 marked a record high. Taking this into consideration together with the boom of canned mackerel and sardine, it can be predicted that busy families or single-person households are more likely to purchase healthy, easy, and wide-variety canned seafoods in the future.

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