

Seasonings, Spices and Other Ingredients

November 12, 2018

THE DOMESTIC SPICE MARKET INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO GROW

The domestic spice industry continues to grow mainly around home use seasoning spices. Other Western-style spices and powder / liquid spices also continue to maintain steady growth, and the overall market is doing well. Home use seasoning spices have grown to over 3 billion yen and leading the market. In addition, Western-style spices also exceeded the previous year, and spices are steadily penetrating Japanese households. The import value of various spices in 2016 - 2017 is generally rising and the breakdown of each item is as follows.

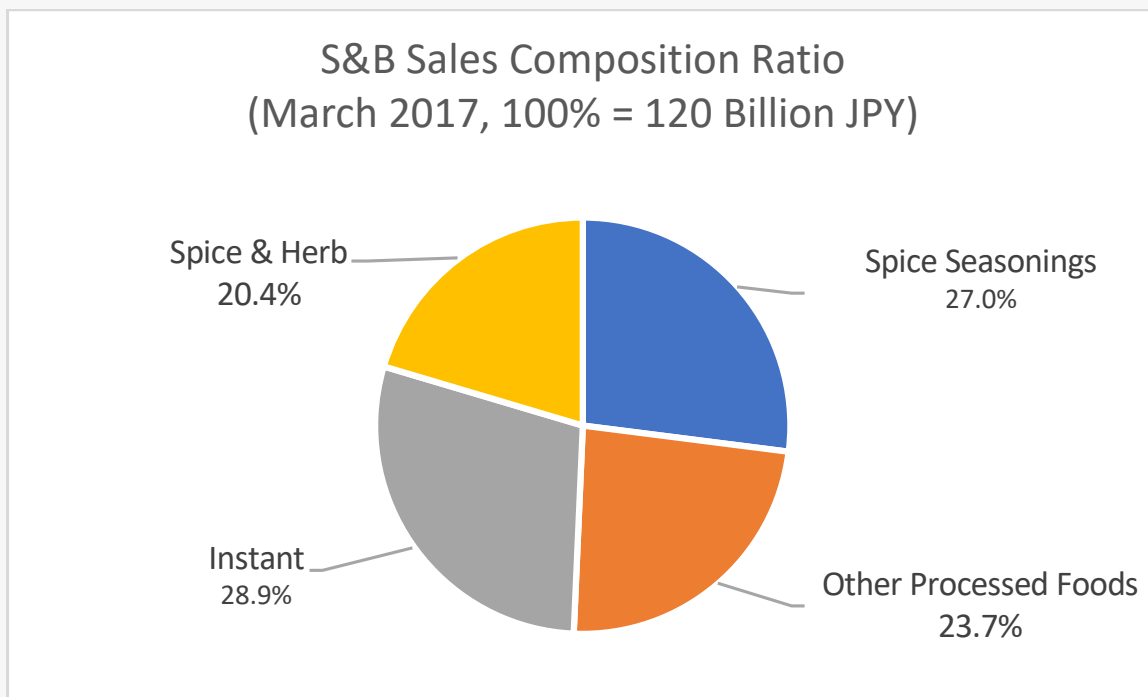
Import Value of Spices (2016-2017)

Unit: kg / JPY1,000

No.	Item	2016		2017	
		Volume	Value	Volume	Value
1	Pepper	8,740,673	11,525,785	8,193,416	8,267,174
2	Allspice / red pepper	12,488,459	5,702,190	12,399,263	5,961,706
3	Vanilla	64,261	1,377,082	76,471	4,004,188
4	Cinnamon	2,001,584	913,923	2,239,439	1,099,431
5	Clove	285,494	264,038	379,609	357,423
6	Nutmeg	548,955	791,358	512,686	690,769
7	Mace	38,321	69,387	56,342	92,987
8	Cardamom	300,992	373,115	388,880	629,715
9	Coriander	3,252,855	621,750	4,113,814	785,193
10	Cumin	1,894,683	758,977	2,389,203	1,033,681
11	Anis / caraway / fennel	755,851	297,666	701,008	305,216
12	Ginger	68,839,851	10,712,022	66,872,560	11,221,311
13	Safran	2,102	423,687	1,779	344,750
14	Turmeric	3,626,100	953,804	3,824,161	1,041,321
15	Curry	90,452	78,524	97,409	88,686
16	Mix of more than 2 spices	260,854	249,433	279,164	366,725
17	Others (thyme, laurel)	2,468,249	1,630,370	2,580,521	1,611,524
Total		105,659,736	36,743,111	105,105,725	37,901,800

Source: All Nippon Spice Association

Looking at the sales composition ratio of the leading food company, S&B Foods in FY 2016, spices and herbs accounted for about 20% of the total sales. Recently, “seasoning salt” or salt blended with herbs and spices are drawing attention and widely circulated in the market. It is written as "seasoning salt", but this "seasoning" refers to salt, sugar, spices, condiments, sauces, or anything that is used to add flavors.



Source: S&B Foods Inc. (2805) March 2017 Summary of Accounts

A famous example of seasoning salt is the "Crazy salt". It is a blend of American rock salt with multiple herbs and potherbs such as garlic and onion. This seasoning salt developed by a 60-year-old woman in the 1960s caused a major boom and was even recognized by First Lady of former President Nixon and the founder was later invited to the White House.

Crazy Salt was first introduced to the Japanese market in 1980 by Japan GreenTea, which at the time mainly handled herbal tea. They were introduced to Crazy Salt by another American company because of the connection with herbs. “A bottle of Crazy Salt is all you need for flavoring” – its easiness and full flavors captured the hearts of the Japanese consumers and rapidly spread across the country.

Although other leading Japanese food manufacturers such as S&B Foods and House Foods developed seasoning salts for certain food menus, it did not become a great hit.

However, the market made a big shift in 2008. S&B Foods introduced the “Magic Salt” series and made extensive promotional efforts. In 2016, House Foods advertised their “Kaori (Flavor) Salt” on TV commercials. In 2017, S&B Foods increased their lineup of the “Magic Salt” series. In February 2018, Kewpie introduced a “Salad Salt” series. All of these examples show a positive trend for seasoning salts.



Magic Salt by S&B Foods



Salad Salt by Kewpie



A few months ago, S&B Foods launched a new seasoning brand called “My Repertoire Seasoning” and GABAN Seasoning series from House Foods continue to introduce new products. In addition, a popular BBQ chain “Gyukaku” started selling a useful and veritable spice mix.

Not limited to spice itself, many new items use catch phrases that include the word “spice”. Freshness Burger’s “Spice Curry Chicken Burger”, Seven Eleven’s “Spice flavored curry udon”, and Koikeya’s “Eat the spice Karamucho” are some examples. As the new trend suggests, the spice industry is expected to continue growing in the future.

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