



JFC HONG KONG LIMITED

A Taste of Japan

Hong Kong's deep connection to Japanese food & beverage items and brands involves both heavy domestic product consumption and the city's role in global distribution, shares MASATOSHI SAKANE.

Restaurants and bars all over Hong Kong enjoy over 80 different types of Japanese saké 日本酒, whisky, and shōchū 焼酎 distributed by JFC Hong Kong Limited. A Kikkoman Company, the Japanese food importer and wholesaler is also the sole agent of Suntory The Premium Malt's and Sapporo Premium Beer in the Hong Kong Market.

JFC was first established in San Francisco in 1906, an importer of Japanese foods and condiments. The business has since expanded across the Americas, Europe, Asia and Oceania, focusing on Japanese food items, helping spread the lore of oriental food around the world.

"The international interchange of food culture contributes to the actualization of a richer society," shares Masatoshi Sakane. "We at JFC have aimed toward building an enterprise whose existence is meaningful to society."

The Hong Kong Connection

Since 2007, Hong Kong has ranked as the first export destination of Japanese foods around globe, and the amount of export has increased each year. The number of Hong Kong travellers to Japan has continually increased, and tourist experi-



JFC Hong Kong Limited General Manager Masatoshi Sakane.

ences have added to a greater familiarity with 'made in Japan' products such as beer, whisky, saké, and shōchū, rapidly increasing the domestic demand.

JFC in turn is ready to fulfill this demand with a wide range of product offerings. The company is the leading supplier of several noted brands including Kikkoman, Morinaga, Suntory and Sapporo Beer.

"We have special agreements and close relations with many top brands, allowing us to develop numerous collaborative marketing activities," shares

Sakane.

JFC Hong Kong has more than 30 years of experience operating in the city. The company offers private brand development for supermarket and restaurant chains. Taking advantage of its global network, the company plans further business deployment in other countries across North and Central America, Europe, Asia, and Oceania by utilizing Hong Kong as a gateway.

Industry Benchmark

Even before the Fukushima incident, export food products from Japan have undergone a rigorous inspection process, and only those that conform to strict safety standards are shipped, guaranteeing that only those of top quality make it to stores. Hong Kong port controls however have kept a tighter watch of Japanese food imports since the March 2011 disaster. Such regulation would hinder JFC, if not for the strength of its brands and the company's record of achievement.

With Hong Kong as a strategic, geographic envoy of Japanese food products to the worldwide market, JFC Hong Kong seeks to further support the Japanese food service industry in terms of business expansion, helping many participants take advantage of the valuable position they are in. Close communication with suppliers and customers, and a commodity strategy that has been very successful at catching market changes precisely, have built a stream of satisfaction for JFC. Its continued performance will do much good for the industry. ■



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