

An Analysis of Japan Imports of Asparagus, fresh or chilled

Definition

This report covers an analysis of imports into Japan of Asparagus, fresh or chilled.

Harmonised Code Tree Structure

070920000 Asparagus, fresh or chilled

| | |
|---------|---|
| 2 Digit | 07 - Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers |
| 4 Digit | - 0709 Other vegetables, fresh or chilled |
| 6 Digit | - 070920 Asparagus, fresh or chilled |
| 9 Digit | - 070920000 Asparagus, fresh or chilled |

Key Statistics

Asparagus, fresh or chilled

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | Up to July 2009 |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Quantity (Kilograms) | 17,468,913 | 14,976,266 | 12,541,611 | 10,437,707 | 6,427,040 |
| Value CIF \$US* | \$79,284,933 | \$71,484,565 | \$65,166,580 | \$62,478,010 | \$34,657,626 |

Major Supply Countries - Quantity (Kilograms)

| | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Mexico | 3,545,571 | 2,930,729 | 2,165,492 | 2,639,093 | 3,552,538 |
| Thailand | 3,918,632 | 3,725,467 | 3,102,631 | 2,212,439 | 1,174,506 |
| Australia | 3,828,312 | 2,924,746 | 2,927,933 | 2,542,692 | 2,380 |
| Philippines | 2,999,087 | 3,339,149 | 1,977,928 | 824,226 | 257,283 |
| U.S.A. | 1,580,424 | 627,543 | 1,050,608 | 805,174 | 891,596 |
| Peru | 575,061 | 732,550 | 695,126 | 934,189 | 471,694 |
| New Zealand | 623,406 | 387,401 | 322,467 | 407,016 | - |
| China | 327,574 | 233,246 | 238,356 | 2,100 | 3,336 |
| France | 50,417 | 50,408 | 52,373 | 50,686 | 53,011 |
| Italy | 10,544 | 8,351 | 1,431 | 9,456 | 3,954 |

Major Supply Countries - Value CIF \$US *

| | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mexico | \$14,884,736 | \$12,767,968 | \$10,221,385 | \$12,284,521 | \$16,079,619 |
| Thailand | \$20,390,009 | \$20,430,416 | \$18,782,691 | \$14,809,122 | \$8,066,782 |
| Australia | \$16,532,019 | \$13,974,054 | \$15,088,059 | \$15,778,289 | \$18,473 |
| Philippines | \$9,890,664 | \$11,875,741 | \$7,300,489 | \$3,756,780 | \$1,064,722 |
| U.S.A. | \$7,955,548 | \$3,185,985 | \$4,821,403 | \$4,301,957 | \$4,619,213 |
| Peru | \$3,924,679 | \$5,082,888 | \$5,097,016 | \$7,378,291 | \$3,610,951 |
| New Zealand | \$3,376,155 | \$2,232,605 | \$2,057,607 | \$2,826,775 | \$0 |
| China | \$1,168,954 | \$782,993 | \$766,499 | \$5,891 | \$16,193 |
| France | \$857,676 | \$820,102 | \$900,008 | \$1,000,310 | \$858,119 |
| Italy | \$123,240 | \$123,587 | \$17,641 | \$145,719 | \$61,050 |

* CIF \$US = Cost Insurance and Freight - so includes insurance and freight costs

Summary

Japan imports of Asparagus are highly seasonal and generally declining over time. The major supply countries are Australia, Mexico, Thailand and the Philippines. Thailand and the Philippines are all year around suppliers and Australia and Mexico are seasonal suppliers. The decline in imports volumes in recent years has been from a decline from Thailand and the Philippines and not the seasonal suppliers Australia and Mexico.

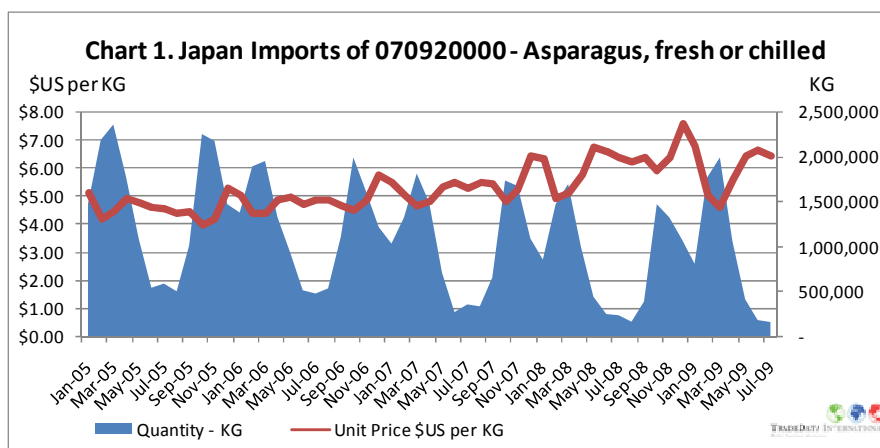
As a highly perishable product asparagus is usually air freighted into Japan into Narita or Kansai airports.

Average prices have increased slowly over the period but fell with the onset of economic recession in mid 2008. Average prices have started a mild recovery again from April 2009. Australia is a relatively high price supplier compared to the other seasonal supplier Mexico.

Because of the seasonal nature of Mexico and Australian product import volumes are volatile. There are no apparent data errors.

Price and Quantity

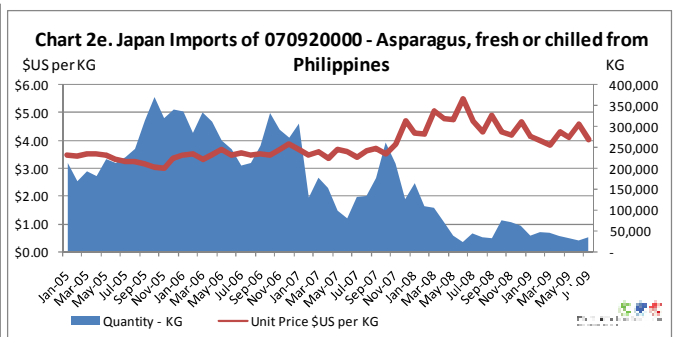
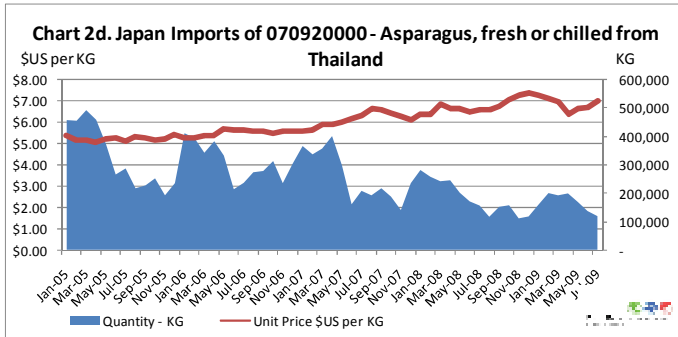
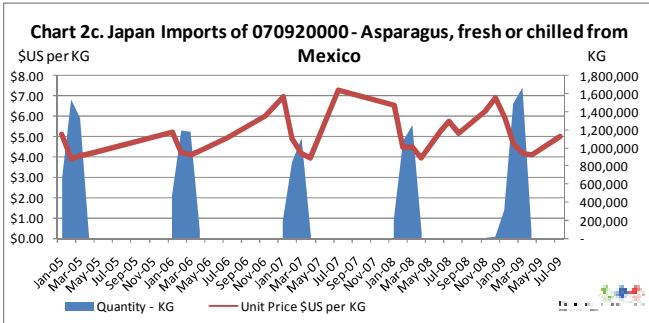
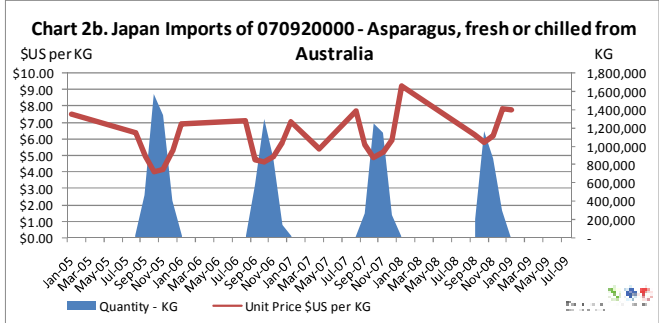
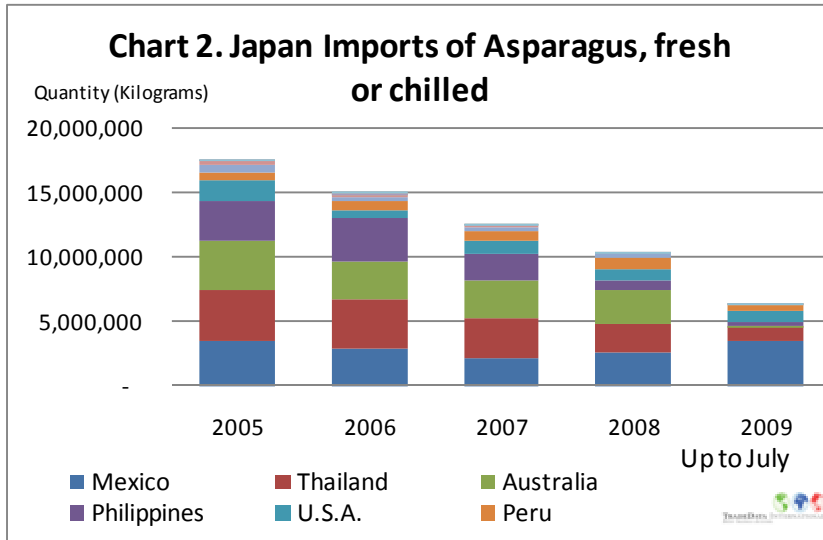
Japan imports of Asparagus are highly seasonal with peak sales at the end/start of each year and seasonal troughs in the middle of each year. Imports are decreasing over time with both peak and trough sales lower in recent years than in previous years. Average prices have tended to increase over the 2006 to 2008 period but fell sharply in the second half of 2008 and early 2009 with the onset of recession in Japan. Since April 2009 average prices have started to recover.



Major Supplying Countries

Mexico, Thailand, Australia and the Philippines are the major supply countries of Asparagus to Japan. Supply from the Philippines and Thailand has fallen substantially since 2006. Supply from Australia declined a little in 2008 and supply from Mexico has increased strongly thus far in 2009.

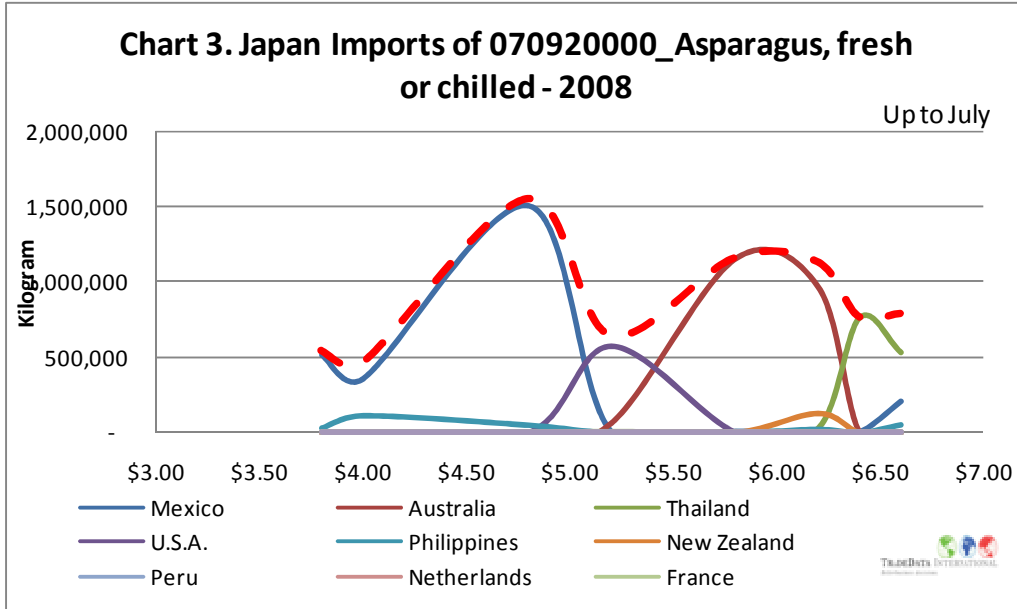
In total, Japan imported 17.5 thousand tonnes in 2005 and this had fallen to only 10.5 thousand tonnes in 2008. Most of these declines are from Thailand and the Philippines. Charts 2B to 2E show Mexico and Australia are peak season suppliers whereas Thailand and the Philippines supply all year around. Australia supplies between November and January, and Mexico between January and March.



Price Product Segments (CIF Prices)

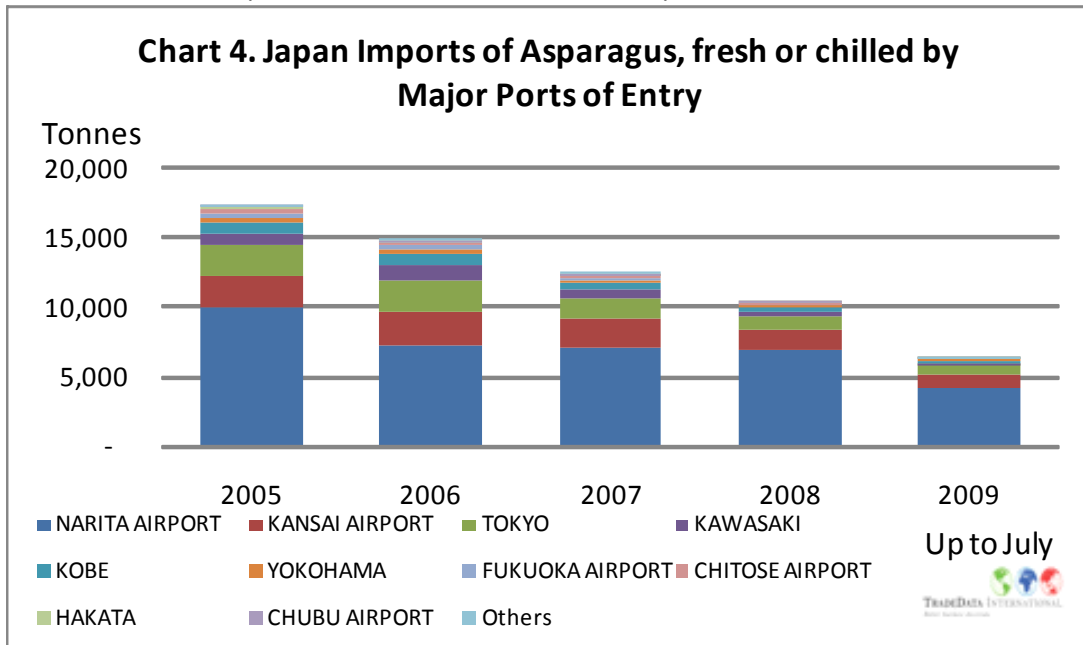
During 2008 all the major supply countries supply at slightly different price points:

- Mexico at \$US4.80;
- Australia between \$US 5.80 and \$US 6.20 per KG;
- The USA at \$US 5.20 per KG; and
- Thailand at \$US 6.50 per KG.



Ports of Entry

Most imports arrive via Narita airport and to lesser extent Kansai airports.



Volatility Rating

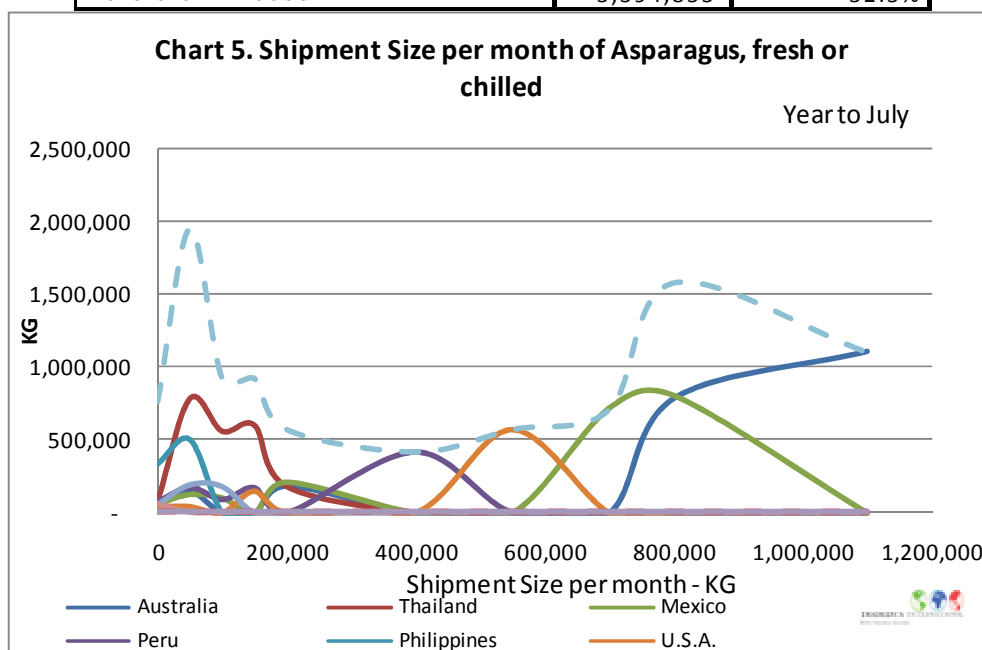
As a seasonal product from Mexico and Australia import volumes are volatile. Average prices are only moderately volatile.

| Volatility | | <u>Volatility Rating</u> | |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| | Per Cent | Not Volatile | less than 10% |
| Volume - Kilogram - Highly Volatile | 56.1% | Moderately Volatile | 10% - 20% |
| CIF Price - Kilogram - Moderately Volatile | 15.5% | Volatile | 20% - 40% |
| | | Highly Volatile | over 40% |

Monthly Shipment Size

Monthly shipment sizes vary substantially. Australia supplies in large volumes but as a seasonal supplier only for a few months a year. Mexico is similar to Australia. Whereas the other major suppliers supply in smaller volumes per month.

| <u>Shipment Size Distribution 2008</u> | | |
|--|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Asparagus, fresh or chilled | | |
| KG | Quantity | Data to July Per Cent |
| Less than 50000 | 1,943,821 | 18.6% |
| Between 50000 and 210000 | 3,204,502 | 30.7% |
| More than 210000 and less than = 700000 | 1,894,529 | 18.2% |
| More than 210000 | 3,394,855 | 32.5% |



Potential Data Errors

Data errors can occur at the collection point and can show themselves as exceeding large/small unit prices. For example if a quantity has been incorrectly entered as a tonne instead of a kilogram the associated unit price will be one thousand times larger/smaller than it should be. This study has analysed all transactions related to this report and has concluded that there are no significant data errors.

| Estimated Potential Errors | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| | % Observations | % Quantity |
| 2005 | 0.0% | 0.000% |
| 2006 | 0.0% | 0.000% |
| 2007 | 0.0% | 0.000% |
| 2008 | 0.0% | 0.000% |
| 2009 | 0.0% | 0.000% |

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by TradeData International Pty Ltd and sourced using statistics from Japan Customs Statistics covering the period from January 2005 to July 2009.

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