

Table 2

Hokkaido's Share of Japan's Food Production — 1987

Product	Percentage Share
Sugar beets	100.0
Green beans	93.1
Potatoes	76.8
Wheat	52.3
Azuki beans	51.1
Onions	44.3
Milk	39.9
Fish	17.3
Soybeans	11.2
Beef	9.7
Rice	7.6

However, despite all these efforts in support of the fishing industry, Hokkaido's fleet continues to diminish. There are hopes that the Kurile Island dispute will soon be resolved and island fishermen will gain access to rich salmon grounds now controlled by the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mining and Manufacturing

An economic mainstay since the 19th century, Hokkaido's coal-mining industry has been plagued by high costs, depleted seams, the rising popularity of oil, and stiff global competition. Once productive gold, mercury and silver mines have also been closed or forced to reduce production.

Over the last few decades, some of Hokkaido's older primary industries have fallen on hard times. Of the traditional industries, only pulp and paper are buoyant.

To bolster its economy, Hokkaido is trying to attract new secondary and tertiary industries from other parts of Japan and from abroad. The island has many attributes, including a large inventory of spacious, serviced sites in nearly 150 industrial parks and a plentiful labour supply. Uncongested roads and an attractive lifestyle are also hailed as reasons to move north.

In 1987, Hokkaido's secondary industries employed only 220 703 workers in 9 509 workplaces. Industrial shipments ranked 18th overall and constituted only 2 per cent of the national total. Per capita industrial production is approximately 40 per cent of the national average.

While Hokkaido's manufacturing industry lags behind other parts of the country, its food processing industry is a stellar performer. In 1987, the food industry accounted for 42 per cent (¥2 trillion) of the island's total industrial production (¥4.9 trillion).

Resource-based industries such as pulp and paper (11 per cent), lumber and wood products (7 per cent), coal (6.4 per cent), oil products (5 per cent), and metals (5 per cent) round out Hokkaido's industrial production.

Retail and Distribution

Hokkaido's retail and distribution system differs from the rest of the country. In many ways it resembles the Canadian model. Where Tokyoites make frequent trips to neighbourhood stores by foot, Hokkaidans shop less often and tend to drive further afield to larger stores.