

In contrast to the above, the Kinki (Osaka-Kobe) and Chugoku regions appear to have less potential to promote consumption of AJITSUKE KAZUNOKO, despite the relatively lower awareness in these areas. Low trial and re-trial among respondents in these areas was related mainly to an aversion to the taste of the product, and there was a high rejection rate in terms of intention to purchase the product in future. Even if awareness and initial trial were to be raised in these regions, it is unlikely that consumption would be sustained at significant levels.

Males and older respondents were more likely to have tried AJITSUKE KAZUNOKO and were somewhat more receptive to its taste and mouthfeel than females and respondents in their twenties and thirties. In order to encourage greater use of AJITSUKE KAZUNOKO among females and younger consumers, however, the perception that "it is not to my taste" -- whether real or imagined -- will have to be overcome. Females, who comprised the majority of principle household shoppers, appear to need convincing of other product benefits apart from the practical ones related to ease of preparation and long shelf life.

While some consumers clearly rejected the product on the basis of their dislike and showed no interest in buying, about one in three did not seem to have any opinion one way or the other. This low involvement in the product was further reflected in the lack of strong product imagery. Apart from ease of preparation and, to a certain extent, pleasant mouthfeel, respondents' knowledge of other product benefits was vague, and they had no perception of the product as being healthy and nutritious.