

Table 2**Japan's Food Self-Sufficiency by Food Commodities (%)**

Food Commodities	1960	1975	1983	1986
Total Food	90	74	71	70
Cereals	82	40	32	33
Rice	102	110	94	107
Wheat	39	4	11	14
Pulses	44	9	7	8
Vegetables	100	99	96	95
Fruits and Nuts	100	84	81	73
Meat	91	77	80	78
Milk and Milk Products	89	82	86	86
Seaweeds	92	86	74	N.A.
Fish and Shellfish	N.A.	99	97	95

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Population

In 1987, the total population of Japan was 122 million. This is expected to increase slowly to 130 million by the year 2010, after which there will be a gradual decline. Of the total population, approximately 61 per cent is concentrated around the three major metropolitan areas of Tokyo (Kanto area — 39 million people), Osaka (Kinki area — 20 million) and Nagoya (Tokai area — 14 million), allowing relatively easy access for sales and marketing activities to most of the population. Land values are extremely high in these major centres, resulting in growing suburbanization. A more car-oriented commercial structure has followed the population into the suburbs, leading to strong growth in supermarkets and fast food stores in recent years.

One of the most significant changes occurring in the Japanese population is the rapidly growing proportion of senior citizens — from approximately 10 per cent of the total population at present to 22 per cent by 2020. This will be a higher growth rate than that experienced in other developed countries.

The average Japanese household in 1985 was 3.1 persons, down from 4.1 in 1965. Fewer couples now live with their parents and there are more single-person households than previously.

Japanese women now constitute 40 per cent of the total labour force, and 60 per cent of these women are married, thus contributing significantly to the growing affluence of the average Japanese family.

The smaller households, coupled with high disposable income and more working housewives, have created a greater demand for frozen, ready-made and other convenience foods.

Household Expenditure

In the past five years, the average income growth rate of 3.2 per cent has steadily outpaced the inflation rate of less than one per cent. The average annual household income in 1987 stood at ¥5.5 million or about \$53 000 (Cdn) (Canada \$1 = ¥104)*, of which fully 84 per cent was disposable (gross income less taxes and social welfare deductions).

This growth in income has influenced Japanese spending patterns. A large proportion of Japanese consumer expenditure is shifting from basic food and shelter to more non-essentials such as services and leisure activities. The proportion of household income spent on food fell from 36 per cent in 1965 to 25 per cent by 1987 (See Figure 2), but food still remains the second largest expenditure category. Consumer durables such as colour TVs, refrigerators, washing machines, etc. have reached the saturation point; more than two-thirds of Japanese households own a car.

* In this profile the exchange rate used is Cdn \$1 = ¥104.