

Pre-cooked food expenditures, as a percentage of the total expenditures on food, were relatively even throughout Japan, with the highest percentage in the Tokai and Okinawa regions, while Hokkaido had the lowest expenditures. The eating-out category represents the largest share of four categories in the Central and Southern region (except Chugoku). The eating-out expenditures were the highest in the Kanto region which includes the greater Tokyo metropolitan area -- which accounts for 33% of the Japan's total population.

EXPENDITURES BY INCOME

In general, expenditures on eating-out increase with an increase in income, while the share of expenditures devoted to pre-cooked food decreases. Higher income groups spend significantly more on seafood, meat and eating-out than lower income groups. Expenditures for all categories increased as income level increased, however eating-out expenditures had the strongest correlation to income level. Eating-out expenditures rose from an annual average of 6,850 yen per month for the lowest income level to 18,760 yen for the top income level, an increase of 174%. Similarly measured, expenditures on fish and shellfish and meat rose 61% and 86% respectively, while expenditures on pre-cooked food increased by 54%.

Percentages of food expenditures reveal some interesting findings. The share of eating-out expenditures is higher than all other categories for all income groups with the exception of the lowest income group. Seafood expenditures account for the largest share of food expenditures for the lower income group. Seafood's share of expenditures are higher than either meat's or pre-cooked food's, indicating that despite changing consumption patterns, seafood still commands a large portion of the "food budget". Expenditures on pre-cooked food as a percentage of food expenditures declined as income increased.

As more women enter the workplace, households with two incomes are becoming increasingly common. The income of double-income households in 1992 was 613,946 yen, 19.6% higher than single earner households. Wives in double income households accounted for 20.5% of household income. Double-income households spent a larger portion of their expenditures on food for eating-out than did single earner households.

FRESH

The bulk of the Japanese catch is marketed in fresh form. The transport of live seafood is one form of distribution of seafood in Japan. Live fish is mainly consumed at restaurants. The species which are used as gifts are generally crustaceans and molluscs such as spiny lobster, homard lobster, *kuruma* prawn, various crab, abalone, sea snail, etc. Live fish was getting popular under the economic boom but the current economic situation has made the business very soft. Over the longer term, however, live fish sales are expected to increase.

FROZEN

In recent years, the production of frozen fish has been increasing steadily. However, only a few fish and shellfish are sold in frozen form to end users at the supermarket or department store as in Japan fish and shellfish imported or distributed in frozen form are thawed and sold as fresh to consumers. This applies not only for fish for raw consumption (*sashimi*) but also for fish taken in other forms. The typical Japanese household has little in the way of refrigerated storage space, so fish purchases are usually consumed the same day. This being the case, techniques used by processors and foreign suppliers for freezing and cold storage are particularly important.