

TABLE 14

Champignon Volumes and Tokyo Wholesale Market Prices

Year	Volume (tonnes)	Price (¥/kg)
1985	584	1 576
1986	660	1 514
1987	773	1 352
1988	907	1 209
1989	1 021	1 145

Source: Tokyo wholesale market statistics.

Asian Countries Dominate Imports

Asian countries have the advantages of proximity, low labour and raw material costs and a tradition of growing mushrooms. Profiles of the leading exporters to Japan follow:

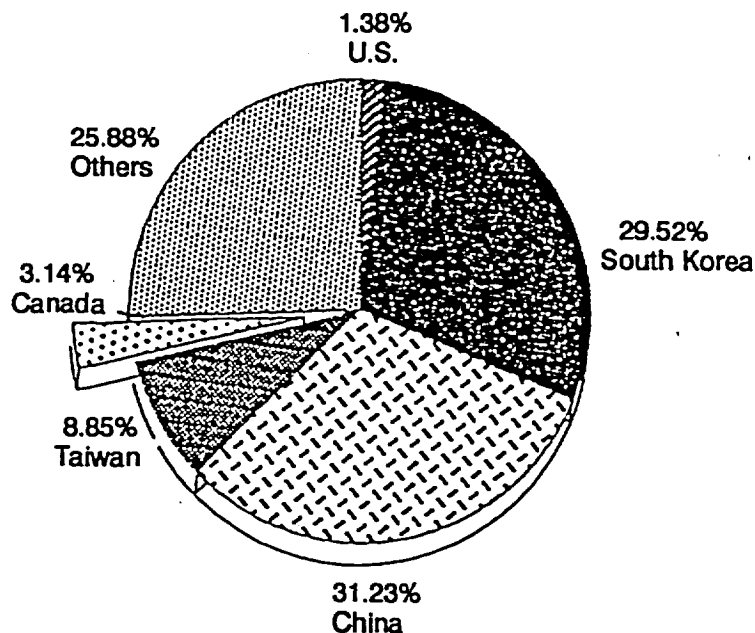
- **China** was the leading exporter of mushrooms to Japan in 1989 with a 31.2 per cent share on a value basis. Though Chinese mushrooms are considered slightly inferior to domestic produce, the growing restaurant and prepared/processed food industries have greatly increased demand for cheaper, lower-quality mushrooms. In recent years, China has been improving its production facilities and developing cultivation methods to increase its exports.
- **South Korea** has a 29.5 per cent market share of imports on a value basis and its government is researching new methods for mushroom cultivation, especially for shiitake, hiratake and matsutake. Its matsutake is most popular because it is almost identical to the Japanese variety.
- **Taiwan** is a major producer and exporter of dried kikurage and various fresh mushrooms, excluding matsutake. Taiwan is carrying out advanced research in mushroom cultivation and has started trading information with China. Its 1989 import market share was almost 9 per cent. A major problem for Taiwan is meeting mushroom demand in its own domestic market.

In 1989, Canada's market share was just over 3 per cent. Canada was strongest in the most lucrative matsutake market sector where it was the fourth leading supplier with just under a 10 per cent share by volume. Canada was also the second leading exporter to Japan of other fresh mushrooms, next to Taiwan. Although figures are unavailable, it is estimated that the majority (80 to 90 per cent) of the 350 of other fresh mushrooms imported from Canada in 1989 were champignon (see Table 4).

The U.S., following Canada's lead, is beginning to make a dent in both the matsutake and other fresh mushroom markets, ranking fifth and third respectively. The U.S. has become active in recent years in the production of hiratake, enokitake and shiitake. In 1989, it held a 1 per cent share of the import market.

FIGURE 2

Import Market Share by Value -- 1989



Source: Ministry of Finance import statistics.