-    Import key points: safety standards (i.e. non-polluted),
recipe recommendations (as the younger generation are not learning
traditional cooking techniques), importance of fresh and chilled
products (they are still preferred over frozen or salted).

-    Changing lifestyles in Japan are very important in marketing
and there are three primary social phenomena to consider in
understanding the market:

1)   More females in the workforce: As of 1988 the female ratio
     in the workforce is rapidly increasing and their disposable
     income and work/social positions are improving. This has lad
     to an evolution of sophisticated consumers who are demanding
     better nutrition and freshness.

2)   Rapid ageing of society - The ageing population is increasing,
     currently senior citizens (over 65) as 1 in 5.3, by 2000, the
     figure will be 1 in 3.8.

3)   Increased leisure time and other changes in lifestyles:

     -    Cooking time in the weekdays still demands simplicity but
          longer weekends now afford more time for more complex
          dishes.

     -    More holidays per year by companies mean greater
          recreation and travel opportunities which then increase
          the demand for specialty foods on weekends and holidays.
          Returning travellers bring an awareness of wider food
          interests and demands for genuine foreign products.

     -    Different members of the family now eat at different
          times, requiring more convenience foods, especially for
          the younger, working housewives.

     -    Positioning, packaging and size of imported food products
          is important, especially for the higher-priced imported
          seafoods in demand, notably crab and shrimp (182 percent
          increase - 1977-88).

     -    Preferred methods of cooking are baking and fresh (raw) -
          alternate methods of cooking fish are largely unfamiliar
          and there is a cultural resistance due to odour. Most
          fish is thus consumed as sashimi.   (This is also a
          reason for shifting to meat - the easy preparation via
          traditional methods and the attractive smell).   The
          increasing use of the microwave in Japanese households
          (currently the highest per capita ratio globally), offers
          a convenient and versatile method for a different