

MSU Product Center

For Agriculture and Natural Resources

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Edamame - Overview

Products included in the product line

- Edamame is a name of the family of soybean varieties that are used for vegetable production for human consumption. The primary market for edamame is Asia, but there appears to be a growing market in the U.S., particularly as a substitute for Lima beans, and as a snack food.

General market trends and information

- Edamame is used for a wide variety of products including salads, soups, stir fry or stews.
- In the U.S. edamame is found mostly in health food stores and stores that specialize in Asian products.
- Most of the edamame consumed in the U.S. was imported from Taiwan. Given the ability to produce soybeans in the U.S., domestic growers and firms should be able to expand production and eventually become exporters.
- The edamame market is a niche market. It has been estimated that it would only take 32,000 acres of edamame production to meet the entire U.S. market.
- If a large number of producers enter the edamame market the price is likely to collapse.

New product trends

- From April of 2000 through August of 2005 there were 39 new edamame product introductions in the U.S.
- There were three major types of product introductions: snack products, frozen or freeze dried vegetables, and edamame as an ingredient in a frozen or processed meal entrée.

Manufacturing and distribution issues

- This industry is maturing rapidly. However, there still appears to be opportunities for some new entrants. Some major firms have discovered the interest in edamame.
- While edamame may become a mainstream product, the primary outlets remain health food stores and Asian markets. This presents opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs to enter the market.

Overall assessment of opportunities

- There is some potential in developing products that appeal to the demand driver of wellness, ethnicity, and wellness. There are few opportunities in developing products that appeal to the demand drivers of convenience, value, ethnicity and indulgence.

Sources

Knudson. The Edamame Market.

Mintel. Soy-Based Food and Drink.

_____. Global New Products Database.