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**Preliminary market research
on
Thai Mango
at
Thai Festival, Tokyo, 2016**

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CONTENTS

Summary	3
I. Purpose of the research	5
II. The venue and period of the research & the questionnaire to be collected	5
III. Research method	5
(1) Interview to consumers at tasting stand of OAA booth	5
(2) Interview to the owner / manager of fruit shops	13
IV. The results of research, evaluation and discussions	16
(1) The results of questionnaire	16
(2) Interview to the owner / manager of fruit shops	25
(3) Review of the research and evaluation & discussions of the results.....	25
V. Advice to Thailand	28
VI. APPENDIX.....	29
APPENDIX-1 Interview to the owner / manager of fruit shops	29
APPENDIX-2 Japanese import of mango	31
APPENDIX-3 Photos	x

Summary

The comparison of sample tasting of two varieties of mango

In this research, we found a clear difference of the evaluation of two varieties of mango by respondents. Khiawsawoey gained good reputation while Chok Anan did not. There were larger numbers of respondents who liked to eat Khiawsawoey than those who did not like it upon tasting with and without dipping sauce. On the other hand, there were far larger number of respondents who did not like Chok Anan, almost three (3) times more than those who liked it, when eaten without dipping sauce, although there were slightly larger number of respondents who liked it when eaten with dipping sauce. This research suggested Chok Anan was difficult to be preferred by Japanese consumers.

Buying interest of two varieties of mango

There was also a big difference in buying interest of these two varieties. Number of respondents who wanted to buy Khiawsawoey was 2.6 times bigger than those who did not want to buy it, while the number of respondents who did not want to buy Chok Anan was 3.7 times bigger than those who wanted to buy it. Chok Anan was the least to be chosen in the research of buying interest.

Price range consumers want to buy

The price range most frequently quoted by respondents at which they wanted to buy the fruit was “151 – 200 yen/fruit”, followed by “251 – 300 yen/fruit”. The average price quoted was 220 yen/fruit.

The information source of new fruit

The “POP at supermarket” (206 respondents) was the best information source listed by respondents, followed by Internet (149) and TV news (103). So most of Japanese consumers are considered to get to know new fruit at the point of purchase of the retail shop, like supermarket. Many of the respondents who listed “POP at supermarket” commented that “sample tasting is essential as we do not know how to eat (enjoy) those new fruit”, suggesting the importance of promotion at the point of purchase. There were also additional comments explicitly suggesting “SNS” in answers who listed “Internet” or “From friend” as their source of information. As SNS was not listed in options of the questionnaire, we expect that there must be many more people who get such news from SNS hidden in the answer of “Internet” or “From friend”.

Advice to Thailand

Evaluation of two varieties

There was a big difference in the evaluation of Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan by visitors to Thai Festival. Khiawsawoey gained better reputation than Chok Anan. The big difference was seen both in the questions of the taste preference and buying interest. There were 317

respondents who wanted to buy Khiawsawoey, 2.6 times bigger than 122, who did not want to buy. In case of Chok Anan, however, there were only 92 respondents who wanted to buy, while 342 people, 3.7 times bigger number of people, did not want to buy. From these results, we believe the marketing efforts should be focused only onto Khiawsawoey because Chok Anan is deemed to be unsellable in Japan unless the taste and quality are substantially improved.

The marketing methods in Japan

(Selling as vegetable)

The mango varieties studied this time were not sweet and different from other sweet fruit. So it would not be sold well if placed on the shelves of the fruit corner in supermarkets. It would be rather better to be sold in the vegetable corner in supermarkets, as it has more vegetable-like texture and taste.

(Tasting at the point of purchase)

As shown in the results of interview, “POP at supermarket” was the best venue for consumers to get the information of new fruit. So, this would be, inevitably, the best venue for the communication with Japanese consumers. Many of them do not know how tasty the new fruit is, and how to eat and enjoy such new fruit. So, offering sample tasting at the point of purchase (supermarket, etc.) by promotion ladies would be very effective marketing opportunity to tell the value of the new fruit to Japanese consumers.

(Tie-up promotion with chain-restaurant)

It would be also effective to tell the value of new fruit introduced from Thailand, if collaboration or tie-up project is done with restaurant-chain operator. Such restaurant-chain could probably create new dishes (like salads) using new Thai mango suitable for Japanese consumers' taste. Offering such new dishes in the restaurant-chain, OAA would be able to elevate the awareness and reputation of newly introduced Thai mango among Japanese consumers.

(Appointing influential bloggers)

The use of smart-phone and SNS is getting more and more popular also in Japan. Having influential bloggers post their findings and opinions in SNS is getting highly effective for the promotion of new products. This is now considered to be one of the most important communication channels in marketing. So, we believe this would be one of the most effective options of marketing for new Thai mango varieties OAA should consider.

(Support of marketing or promotion expenses)

It would be a good help to Thai mango growers and exporters if OAA could financially support the sample tasting at supermarket, promotional tie-up with chain-restaurant operator, or appointing influential bloggers.

I. Purpose of the research

Japanese government recently allowed the importation of two varieties of mango, i.e., Khiawsawoey (abbreviated as “KS” in the table describing the results of interview) and Chok Anan (abbreviated as “CA” in the table describing the results) from Thailand. These two varieties of mango are popular in Thailand and eaten as fresh fruit or as an ingredient of dishes like salad. These two varieties are, however, little known in Japan and hence Office of Agricultural Affairs, Royal Thai Embassy in Tokyo (hereinafter referred to “OAA”), wishes to conduct the research of marketability of these mango varieties in Japan, utilizing Thai Festival in Tokyo, a very popular event among Japanese consumers. The objectives of this market research are as follows: -

1. To study attitudes of Japanese consumers on these Thai mango varieties such as, 1) if they like the taste or not, 2) if they like to eat as fresh fruit without dipping sauce or with dipping sauce, 3) the reasons of their preferences, 4) if they want to buy these mango varieties in retail shops and 5) the price range they want to buy.
2. To propose a provisional plan of the entry strategies to Japanese market for these two varieties of Thai mango to OAA, identifying how they could be sold in Japanese market based on the information of Japanese consumers’ preference and attitudes to these mango varieties collected in this research.

II. The venue and period of the research & the questionnaires to be collected

Venue: OAA booth in Thai Festival, Yoyogi Park, Tokyo

Period: 10:00am – 6:00pm on two days, May 14 (Sat.) and May 15 (Sun.)

Questionnaires to be collected: 400 minimum

III. Research method

The research was conducted by following methods.

(1) Interview to consumers at tasting stand of OAA booth

Key Research Net Corp. (hereinafter, KRN) arranged five (5) interviewers for this research and they conducted the interview at the OAA’s booth (Photo-XX). Interviewers approached to the visitors to Thai Festival who were walking around OAA booth and asked for their cooperation to the interview of Thai mango showing the panel (Photo-XX) prepared by KRN beforehand to visitors. Then interviewers invited those who agreed to the interview (respondents) to the tasting table in the OAA booth and addressed questions based on questionnaire (refer Table-XX), offering tasting samples, i.e., two varieties of Thai mango, and recorded their answers.

Tasting samples were offered to the respondents by following procedures.

1. The sliced samples of Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan were offered to the respondents placed together on one paper plate. Also two small containers with different type of dipping sauce, one is paste type and another powder type, were placed on the paper plate together (refer Photo-XX).

2. Then respondents were requested to do tasting of the samples in the following order: -

Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce, Khiawsawoery with dipping sauce, Chok Anan without dipping sauce and Chok Anan with dipping sauce.

The following dipping sauces were used.

1) Paste sauce, mixture of Miso, Mayonnaise and Sugar

2) Powder sauce, mixture of Sugar, Salt and Chili

After the interview, interviewers handed a package of sliced mango together with explanatory leaflets of Thai mango to respondents as a gift showing our thanks for their cooperation. (On the second day, sliced mango was replaced by several pieces of peeled Som-O, as mango run short.)

3. All the answers from respondents were recorded by interviewers to keep the quality of the record consistent.

Questionnaire on the two new varieties of Thai mango (A) @ OAA's Tasting Stand

(To be filled in by Interviewer) → Please mark ✓ on items applicable.

Q-1 (Offer the tasting of a slice of Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce)

This is the new variety of Thai mango recently allowed to import in Japan. Do you like the taste?

Like very much Like Rather do not like Do not like

Q-2 (On the tasted sample of Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Sweetness Sourness Crunchiness Other _____

Q-3 (Offer the tasting of a slice of Khiawsawoey with dipping sauce)

How do you like it when you eat it with dipping sauce?

Like very much Like Rather do not like Do not like

Q-4 (On the tasted sample of Khiawsawoey with dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Sweetness Sourness Crunchiness Other _____

Q-5 (Offer the tasting sample of a slice of Chok Anan without dipping sauce)

This is also the new variety of Thai mango recently allowed to import. Do you like the taste?

Like very much Like Rather do not like Do not like

Q-6 (On the tasted sample of Chok Anan without dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Sweetness Sourness Crunchiness Other _____

Q-7 (Offer the tasting of a slice of Chok Anan with dipping sauce)

How do you like it when you eat it with dipping sauce?

Like very much Like Rather do not like Do not like

Q-8 (On the tasted sample of Chok Anan with dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Sweetness Sourness Crunchiness Other _____

Q-9 What is your most favorite sample you tasted?

Khiawsawoey (First variety tasted) Without dipping sauce With dipping sauce

Chok Anan (Second variety tasted) Without dipping sauce With dipping sauce

Q-10 Do you want to buy these new varieties of Thai mango if available at nearby shops?

Khiawsawoey (First variety tasted) Want to buy Do not want to buy

Chok Anan (Second variety tasted) Want to buy Do not want to buy

Q-11 (To those who wanted to buy) At which price do you want to buy per fruit?

A. _____ Yen / fruit

Q-12 These two new varieties of Thai mango were recently allowed to import to Japan. In general, from where or how do you usually get the news of such newly available fresh fruit?

POP at supermarket From Friend Newspaper TV news Internet

Net shopping Other _____

Respondent:

Nationality: Japanese Thai Other _____

Gender : Male Female
Occupation : Office worker Business owner House wife Student Other _____
Age : 10's 20's 30's 40's 50's 60's or above

Interviewer _____





(Left)

Panel interviewer used to approach visitors (Translation is given below)

(Bottom)

Five interviewers

Recently started to import

Thai Green Mango

Please get a **special souvenir**
upon answering to our
questionnaire

Royal Thai Embassy
Office of Agricultural Affairs
Tel: 03-6661-3844







The tasting sample and dipping sauces:

Mango: Khiawsawoey – stick cut, Chok Anan - sliced

Dipping sauce: Paste (miso sauce) - the mixture of miso, mayonnaise and sugar

Powder (chili powder) – mixture of sugar, salt and chili





(Top) Khiawsawoey
(Bottom) Chok Anan



(2) Interview to the owner/manager of the fruit shop

During Thai Festival, KRN visited three fruit shops selling Khiawsawoery and Chok Anan and conducted the interview (Photo-XX) to the shop owner or manager, questioning the sales trend of these two varieties of mango, response of their customers, if they wish to handle these two varieties continuously, and what could be effective methods to increase the sales of these new varieties of mango, etc., based on the questionnaire given below: -

Questionnaire to owner (manager) of the fruit shop

Q-1. What was the response of consumers to these two new varieties of Thai mango? List comments by general consumers.

Q-2 What was the sales of these two new varieties of Thai mango? Were they sold well in these two days?

Q-3 Do you want to handle these two new varieties of Thai mango in your business?

Q-4 Do you want to handle these two new varieties of Thai mango in Thai Festival next year?

Q-5 Import of these two new varieties of Thai mango was only allowed recently in Japan. What kind of supports do you think useful to increase the sales of these Thai mango in Japan?

Q-6 Other comments

Respondent :

Shop name :

Interviewer _____



(Top) The shop of P&F Techno Co., Ltd.

(Right) Interview to the owner of P&F Techno Co., Ltd

(Bottom) The shop of Siam Export Mart Co., Ltd. (SEM)





Interview to the shop manager of Siam Export Mart Co., Ltd. (SEM)



(Top) The shop of Thamai Agriculture Cooperative Limited

(Left) Interview to the manager of Thamai Agriculture Cooperative Limited

IV. The results of research, evaluation and discussions

(1) The results of questionnaire

We have collected 447 answers in two days. The results are shown in the following tables.

Key findings of each question pertaining to these two new varieties of mango are stated under each table, together with KRN's evaluation and discussions of the results.

Q-1 Khiawsawoey: Do you like the taste of this variety without dipping sauce?

KS: Taste preference without dipping sauce	# answer	
Like very much	88	19.7%
Like	270	60.4%
Rather do not like	81	18.1%
Do not like	8	1.8%
Total	447	100.0%

The number of respondents who replied as (they) "like (the tasted sample) very much" or (they) "like (the tasted sample)" were, in total, 80.1%, suggesting almost 8 among 10 people like this variety, Khiawsawoey.

Q-2 (On the tasted sample of Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Reason why they like KS without dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	154	31.4%
Sourness	201	40.9%
Crunchiness	67	13.6%
Other	69	14.1%
Total	491	100.0%
Breakdown of the reasons replied as "Other"		
Light, Fresh, Refreshing	33	47.8%
Good texture (Good toughness)	18	26.1%
Feels something like vegetable	9	13.0%
Not too sweet	5	7.2%
Feel something like salad	4	5.8%
Total	69	100.0%

Reason why they do not like KS without dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	15	16.1%
Sourness	24	25.8%
Crunchiness	18	19.4%
Other	36	38.7%

Total	93	100.0%
Breakdown of the reasons replied as “Other”		
Smells too young, smells too green	12	33.3%
Feel like vegetable、 Cannot feel like fruit	9	25.0%
Bitter	7	19.4%
Not juicy, rather dry	4	11.1%
Hard, Too hard	1	2.8%
Bad texture	1	2.8%
Not sweet	1	2.8%
Not tasty	1	2.8%
Total	36	100.0%

The most frequently listed answer as the reason why respondents “like very much” or “like” was “Sourness”, followed by “Crunchiness” and “Sweetness”.

The “Sourness” listed as the reason why they “like very much” or “like” means that the respondent liked the “degree of sourness” of the Khiawsawoey they tasted. The “Sourness” listed as the reason why they “rather do not like” or “do not like” means that they did not like the “degree of sourness” of the sample they tasted. Similarly, the “Sweetness” listed as the reason why they liked it does not necessarily mean that the sample was “sweet”. It simply means they liked the “degree of sweetness” of the sample. The mango offered as tasting sample this time was actually not sweet. So the “sweetness” listed by those who liked it means the tasting sample has “appropriate sweetness” or “absence of too much sweetness”. This is consistent with “Other” comments where many replied as “refreshing” or “feel something like vegetable”.

Also, the “Sweetness” listed as the reason why they do not like means “they did not like it because it is not sweet” or “I would like it if it were sweet”.

Recently, many Japanese became to stay away from sweet foods, but we still have many consumers who love sweet fruit.

This is the same for “Crunchiness”. The “Crunchiness” listed as the reason why they liked it means that respondents liked the hard texture of the tasted sample. The same “Crunchiness” listed as the reason why they did not like means that they did not like its texture, including “too hard”, “not juicy” and “rather dry”.

(Note)

We requested respondents to choose the reasons why “they liked” or “did not like” from following four options, “Sweetness”, “Sourness”, “Crunchiness” or “Other”. So, it is difficult to know the detailed reasons from their choice of these four options. To understand their detailed reasons, it would be better to check the breakdown of the reasons they commented as “Other” reasons. So, please refer the breakdown of “Other” comments in the following

questions, also.

Q-3 (Tasting of Khiawsawoey with dipping sauce)

How do you like it when you eat it with dipping sauce?

KS: Taste preference with dipping sauce	# answer	
Like very much	92	20.6%
Like	215	48.1%
Rather do not like	125	28.0%
Do not like	15	3.4%
Total	447	100.0%

In this tasting, 68.7% of the respondents replied as “Like very much” or “Like” when they eat it with dipping sauce. This figure is lower than those who replied the same for Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce, which was 80.1%

Q-4 (On the tasted sample of Khiawsawoey with dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Reason why they like KS with dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	123	56.4%
Sourness	58	26.6%
Crunchiness	10	4.6%
Other	27	12.4%
Total	218	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Became palatable, less bitterness & less too green	11	40.7%
Feel like eating vegetable or salad	10	37.0%
Match nicely with dipping sauce	6	22.2%
Total	27	100.0%

Reason why they do not like KS with dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	21	27.3%
Sourness	17	22.1%
Crunchiness	6	7.8%
Other	33	42.9%
Total	77	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Does not match with the taste of dipping sauce	18	54.5%
Sauce taste is too strong and kills mango taste	10	30.3%
Feel like vegetable, Not fruity taste	3	9.1%
Not tasty	2	6.1%
Total	33	100.0%

The most frequently listed reason for “Like very much” and “Like” was the Sweetness. This does not mean Khiawsawoey is sweet and thus they liked it. Rather, respondents liked it because the sweetness is just appropriate being not too sweet, or because it is entirely not sweet. The most frequently listed reason for “rather do not like” or “do not like” was “does not match with the taste of dipping sauce” followed by “Sauce taste is too strong and kills mango taste”. There seems many consumers who thought the taste of dipping sauce hampered the original taste of mango.

Q-5 (Tasting of Chok Anan without dipping sauce)
How do you like the taste?

CA: Taste preference without dipping sauce	# answer	
Like very much	15	3.4%
Like	99	22.1%
Rather do not like	268	60.0%
Do not like	65	14.5%
Total	447	100.0%

Chok Anan was not liked when eaten without dipping sauce and the respondents who replied as “Rather do not like” and “Do not like” were, in total, 74.5%. This variety was not preferred by Japanese consumers if eaten without sauces.

Q-6 (On the tasted sample of Chok Anan without dipping sauce)
What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Reason why they like CA without dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	14	12.8%
Sourness	60	55.0%
Crunchiness	24	22.0%
Other	11	10.1%
Total	109	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Feel like vegetable	7	63.6%
Refreshing	3	27.3%
Good texture and toughness	1	9.1%
Total	11	100.0%

Reason why they do not like CA without dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	44	10.3%
Sourness	119	27.9%
Crunchiness	100	23.4%
Other	164	38.4%
Total	427	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Too many fibers, Too fibrous	52	31.7%
Bitter, Acrid, Astringent	44	26.8%

Too young, Too green	25	15.2%
Not juicy, Dry	21	12.8%
Something like vegetable	9	5.5%
Bitter	4	2.4%
Tasteless, Taste is too faint	3	1.8%
Not feel like fruit	2	1.2%
Not sweet	2	1.2%
Not tasty	2	1.2%
Total	164	100.0%

The most frequently listed reason why they do not like this mango was “Other”. The most frequently quoted reason in the breakdown of “Other” reasons was “Too many fibers” and “Too fibrous”. Together with the “Crunchiness” the respondent listed, the texture of this variety seems to be the biggest reasons for their negative response. This might be because there is little fibrous feeling in mature and sweet mango which Japanese consumers are familiar. Other reasons why they did not like this mango include “Sourness”, “Acrid”, “Astringent” and “Too young or too green”.

Q-7 (Tasting of Chok Anan with dipping sauce)

How do you like it when you eat it with dipping sauce?

CA: Taste preference with dipping sauce	# answer	
Like very much	59	13.2%
Like	212	47.4%
Rather do not like	146	32.7%
Do not like	30	6.7%
Total	447	100.0%

While those who do not like Chok Anan was 74.5% when it is tasted without dipping sauce, the majority of the respondents, 60.6% of them, replied that they like to eat Chok Anan when it is tasted with dipping sauce.

Q-8 (On the tasted sample of Chok Anan with dipping sauce)

What is the reason you like or do not like it?

Reason why they like CA with dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	77	38.7%
Sourness	76	38.2%
Crunchiness	14	7.0%
Other	32	16.1%
Total	199	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Became easy to eat, turned to be palatable	10	31.3%
Matched nicely with taste of dipping sauce	7	21.9%
Became something like salad	7	21.9%

Fibrous	3	9.4%
Astringency was decreased or disappeared	2	6.3%
Good taste was showing up	1	3.1%
Unfamiliar aroma was decreased	1	3.1%
Young, green odor was disappeared	1	3.1%
Total	32	100.0%

Reason why they do not like CA with dipping sauce	# answer	
Sweetness	16	13.2%
Sourness	41	33.9%
Crunchiness	39	32.2%
Other	25	20.7%
Total	121	100.0%
Breakdown of reasons replied as “Other”		
Dry, Not juicy	7	28.0%
Taste did not match with dipping sauce	6	24.0%
Mango taste disappeared	5	20.0%
Felt like vegetable, No fruit taste	2	8.0%
The taste of dipping sauce was too strong	1	4.0%
Bitter, Acrid	1	4.0%
Not tasty	1	4.0%
Too many fibers, Too fibrous	1	4.0%
Too young, Too green	1	4.0%
Total	25	100.0%

While majority responded that they did not like Chok Anan when tasted without dipping sauce, many of them turned to be fond of this variety, voicing up “became easy to eat”, “matched nicely with taste of dipping sauce” or “became something like salad”. This is considered that the taste of the dipping sauce masked the astringent, acrid, bitter and too young taste or aroma which young Chok Anan might have.

Q-9 What is your most favorite sample you tasted?

Khiawsawoey	# answer	
Without dipping sauce	259	57.9%
With dipping sauce	169	37.8%
No answer	19	4.3%
Total	447	100.0%
Chok Anan		
Without dipping sauce	43	9.6%
With dipping sauce	186	41.6%
No answer	218	48.8%
Total	447	100.0%

The results showed sharp contrast, i.e., respondents preferred to eat Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce, while they liked to eat Chok Anan with dipping sauce. This suggests Japanese consumers will eat Khiawsawoey without any sauces, but little of them will eat Chok Anan without sauces.

Q-10 Do you want to buy these new varieties of Thai mango if available at nearby shops?

Khiawsawoey	# answer	
Want to buy	317	70.9%
Do not want to buy	122	27.3%
No answer	8	1.8%
Total	447	100.0%
Chok Anan		
Want to buy	92	20.6%
Do not want to buy	342	76.5%
No answer	13	2.9%
Total	447	100.0%

In case of Khiawsawoey, 70.9% of the respondents answered that they want to buy. On the other hand, only 20.6% of the respondents replied that they wanted to buy Chok Anan and the far many 76.5% of them replied that they did not want to buy it.

Q-11 (To those who want to buy) At which price do you want to buy per fruit?

Below 100 yen	41	9.2%
101~150 yen	41	9.2%
151~200 yen	108	24.2%
201~250 yen	28	6.3%
251~300 yen	103	23.0%
301~400 yen	32	7.2%
400~500 yen	11	2.5%
Above 500 yen	5	1.1%
No answer	78	17.4%
Total	447	100.0%
Average	220	

The price range the respondents wanted to buy most was “151 – 200 yen/fruit”, followed by “251 – 300 yen/fruit”, and the average price they wanted to buy was 220 yen/fruit.

Q-12 These two new varieties of Thai mango were recently allowed to import to Japan. In general, from where or how do you usually get the news of such newly available fresh fruit?

POP at supermarket	206	33.8%
Internet	149	24.4%
TV news	103	16.9%
From friend	38	6.2%

Newspaper	10	1.6%
Internet shopping	4	0.7%
Other	100	16.4%
Total	610	100.0%
Others (multiple answers)		
Exhibition, Event (like Thai Festival)	25	25.0%
SNS	20	20.0%
Magazine	16	16.0%
Restaurant	11	11.0%
Department store, Supermarket, Retail shop	11	11.0%
Overseas (when visited)	8	8.0%
TV advertisement	4	4.0%
Leaflet or insert in newspaper	3	3.0%
From family member	2	2.0%
Total	100	100.0%

The respondents get the information of the new fruit most frequently from “POP at supermarket”, followed by “Internet” and “TV news”. Also respondents voluntarily listed up various information sources among which, “Exhibition and Events” like Thai Festival were most frequently quoted, followed by SNS. This suggests the importance of these events and the use of SNS in marketing.

Q-13 Nationality

Japan	442	98.9%
Thai	1	0.2%
China	1	0.2%
Korea	1	0.2%
Unknown	2	0.4%
Total	447	100.0%

Q-14 Gender

Male	140	31.3%
Female	291	65.1%
Unknown	16	3.6%
Total	447	100.0%

Q-15 Occupation

Office worker	274	61.3%
Business owner	23	5.1%
Housewife	75	16.8%
Student	40	8.9%
Other	31	6.9%
Unknown	4	0.9%
Total	447	100.0%

Q-16 Age

10's	21	4.7%
20's	59	13.2%
30's	105	23.5%
40's	141	31.5%
50's	84	18.8%
60's or above	35	7.8%
Unknown	2	0.4%
Total	447	100.0%

(2) Interview to the owner / manager of fruit shop

KRN visited three fruit shops handling Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan in Thai Festival and interviewed their owner or manager. They all commented that the response of Japanese consumers and the sales of these two varieties are excellent. Actually, almost all of these two new varieties of mango were sold out on the first day of the festival and little was left in the morning, around 10:00am of the second day. In addition, all three shop wanted to handle these new varieties in their business and join Thai Festival next year continuously.

We found this noteworthy differences in the results between interview done at OAA booth and fruit shops. Majority of respondents at OAA booth did not show buying interest on Chok Anan, while the sales at fruit shops were excellent. KRN assumes that this difference would be caused by limited number of consumers who had been living in Thailand or familiar with this variety or green mango who became enthusiastic buyer of Chok Anan. During interview session, one of the representatives of KRN met a few Japanese consumers who exclaimed “Oh is it green mango? I loved it when I was living in Thailand! Where can I buy it?”.

On our query what kind of support they want to have in order to increase the sales, they expressed their thanks to Thai government for their strong and varying supports to them and they were very satisfied with such supports. On the marketing side, however, they pointed out the strong needs of the promotion activities such as sample tasting at supermarkets, because little is known by Japanese consumers how they can eat these mango varieties delicious, suggesting they would be happy if they could receive supports in such activities.

(3) Review of the research and evaluation & discussions of the results

1. Review of the design and method of interview

1) Interview in OAA booth

There was a banner showing photos of durian, banana, pineapple and pomelo in front of OAA booth. So there were many visitors who stood in the queue believing that they could eat those tropical fruit and noticed that this was the interview of green mango only a minute before being seated in OAA booth. So, it would be better to show a big banner or panel clearly stating the purpose of the event when OAA conducts similar interview next time.

As to the venue of the interview, we originally planned to do interview at fruit shops also sparing two of the interviewers, in addition to OAA booth. Expecting the congestion of the Festival, we abandoned this original plan and concentrated our interview activity in OAA booth only. This was found to be the right decision considering the following reasons: -

- The congestion right before fruit shops was outrageous and there was no room for interviewer to communicate with visitors.

- There was no place around fruit shops for consumers to taste and reply to questions.
- The people working in fruit shops were too busy in selling their products and had little time to help interviewers (in supplying tasting sample, etc.)

As to the interview space in OAA booth, the size of the table and the number of chairs were not sufficient for five (5) interviewers. Although the interview session itself proceeded smoothly as three to four interviewers, at most, addressed questions to respondents at a time and the remaining interviewer(s) took a role to show respondents their seats, distribute tasting samples, set and distribute gift, etc., the interview they had to do at kneeling position (because of the scarcity of chairs) in a very limited space was very painful and tiring.

2) The question style of the Questionnaire

In the questionnaire, the respondents were requested to give the reasons why they like or do not like the taste in four categories, i.e., “Sweetness”, “Sourness”, “Crunchiness”, and “Other”. Therefore, it was difficult to know if a respondent (who replied “like very much” because of the “Sweetness”) liked it because it “was sweet” just matching his/her preference, or liked it because it “was not sweet” as he/she does not like something sweet. Same is true for “Sourness” and “Crunchiness”. We cannot know if a respondent liked it because it “was sour” or because it “was not sour”, or a respondent did not like it because it was “crunchy” or it was “not crunchy”. We can only know the factor on which the respondent depended in judging whether they “liked” the taste or “not”. KRN dared to take this question style which returns rather vague results because there were so many questions to be replied in a brief interview, in crowded conditions. In case OAA needs to get more deep and precise reasons, the design of the interview, i.e., venue, occasion, number of respondents, etc., needs to be totally reviewed together with the questionnaire.

2. Interpretation, evaluation and discussions on results

1) Interpretation of the results

In the interpretation of the results of this research, it would be important to take the following nature of Japanese people into consideration: -

Japanese people tend to value harmony and avoid the direct conflict with others by reading the mind of other people. So reply by Japanese people tends to be soft and vague so that their reply would not hurt the feeling of others. Namely, they might have been hesitant in explicitly voicing up that “they do not like it”, even when they really did not like it. So it would be better to assume that there would be such respondents in this interview who might have replied that “they liked it”, even though they rather did not like it. In addition, respondents have received the gift after the interview and this might have caused them to return “soft” answers. So, it would be better to expect that the actual score would be harsher than the results recorded in this

interview.

2) Evaluation of two varieties of mango by consumers

The comparison of the evaluation of two varieties

There were clear differences in consumers' evaluation of two varieties of mango. Khiawsawoey was highly evaluated rather than Chok Anan. When tasted without dipping sauce, 358 people among total 447 respondents (80.1%) replied that they liked Khiawsawoey, while only 114 people (25.5%) replied they liked Chok Anan, i.e., majority of 333 people (74.5%) replied that they "rather did not like" or "did not like" Chok Anan. In case of Khiawsawoey, the majority of 307 people (68.7%) replied that they liked it when tasted with dipping sauce.

The evaluation when tasted with or without dipping sauce

There were 259 respondents who preferred to eat Khiawsawoey without dipping sauce best, while 169 respondents felt it better to eat with dipping sauce.

In case of Chok Anan, there were 43 respondents who thought it better to eat it without dipping sauce, while 186 respondents like it better to eat with dipping sauce. This suggests that many respondents did not like Chok Anan without dipping sauce, but its taste was masked by dipping sauce and turned to be a little more palatable.

The buying interest by consumers

There was a big difference in buying interest shown by respondents. In case of Khiawsawoey, there were 317 respondents who wanted to buy, and 122 who did not want to buy. In case of Chok Anan, there were 92 respondents who wanted to buy, and 342 who did not want to buy. There were 3.7 times more people who did not want to buy Chok Anan.

The price range consumers want to buy

The most frequently indicated price range was "151 – 200 yen/fruit", followed by the range "251 – 300 yen/fruit". The average price indicated was 220 yen/fruit.

The information source: where consumers get the information of the new fruit

The "POP at supermarket" (206 respondents) was the best information source listed by respondents, followed by Internet (149) and TV news (103). So most of Japanese consumers were considered to get to know new fruit at the point of purchase of the retail shop, like supermarket. Many of the respondents who listed "POP at supermarket" commented that "sample tasting is essential as we do not know how to eat (enjoy) those new fruit". There were also additional comments explicitly suggesting "SNS" who listed "Internet" or "From friend". As SNS was not listed as options of answers, we expect that there were many who get such news from SNS hidden in the answers of "Internet" and "From friend".

V. Advice to Thailand

Advice on the methodology of the interview-research in big events

There was a banner showing photos of durian, banana, pineapple and pomelo in front of OAA booth. So there were many visitors who stood in the queue believing that they could eat those tropical fruit and noticed that this was the interview of green mango only a minute before being seated in OAA booth. So, it would be far better to show a big banner or panel clearly stating the purpose of the event in front of the venue, when OAA conducts similar research next time.

Advice based on the results of interview

Evaluation of two varieties

There was a big difference in the evaluation of Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan by visitors to Thai Festival. Khiawsawoey gained better reputation than Chok Anan. The big difference was seen both in the taste preference and buying interest. There were 317 respondents who wanted to buy Khiawsawoey, 2.6 times bigger than 122, who did not want to buy. In case of Chok Anan, however, there were only 92 respondents who wanted to buy, while 342 people, 3.7 times bigger number of people, did not want to buy. From these results, we believe the marketing efforts should be focused only onto Khiawsawoey because Chok Anak is deemed to be unsellable in Japan unless the taste and quality are substantially improved.

The marketing methods in Japan

(Selling as vegetable)

The mango varieties studied this time were not sweet and different from other sweet fruit. So it would not be sold well if placed on the shelves of the fruit corner in the retail shops, like supermarkets. So it would be better to be sold in the vegetable corner in supermarkets, as it has more vegetable-like texture and taste.

(Tasting at the point of purchase)

As shown in the results of interview, “POP at supermarket” was the best venue for consumers to get the information of new fruit. So, this would be, inevitably, the best venue for the communication with Japanese consumers. Many of them do not know how tasty the new fruit is, and how to eat and enjoy such new fruit. So, offering sample tasting at the point of purchase (supermarket, etc.) by promotion ladies would be very effective marketing strategy to tell the value of the new fruit to Japanese consumers.

(Tie-up promotion with restaurant)

It would be also effective to tell the value of new fruit introduced from Thailand, if collaboration

or tie-up project is done with restaurant-chain operator. Such restaurant-chain could probably create new dishes (like salads) using new Thai mango suitable for Japanese consumers' taste. By offering such new dishes in the restaurant-chain, OAA would be able to elevate the awareness and reputation of newly introduced Thai mango among Japanese consumers.

(Appointing influential bloggers)

The use of smart-phone and SNS is getting more and more popular also in Japan. So, appointing influential bloggers for the promotion of new product is now considered to be one of the most important communication tools in marketing. We believe this would be one of the options OAA should consider.

(Support of marketing or promotion expenses)

It would be a good help to Thai mango growers and exporters if OAA could financially support the sample tasting at supermarket, promotional tie-up with restaurant operator, or appointing influential bloggers.

VI. APPENDIX

APPENDIX-1 Interview to the Owner/Manager of Fruit Shops

1. Shop name : Siam Export Mart Co., Ltd. (SEM)

Respondent : Ms. Wirangrong Songsang, Managing Director

Q1 What was the response of consumers? Q2 What was the sales?

We have procured 450kg of Chok Anan and 500kg of Khiawsawoey. At this moment, 10:00am of the second day of the festival, May 15th, we have only 40kg of Chok Anan and 100kg of Khiawsawoey, which means we have sold 410kg of Chok Anan and 400kg of Khiawsawoey on the first day. They were sold almost equally. I think both varieties were well accepted by Japanese consumers. Many consumers bought Chok Anan when we offered its tasting sample which was mature and sweet. Also, the conditions of Khiawsawoey were good and so, we got very good response from consumers.

Q3 Do you want to handle these varieties in your business?

Yes.

Q4 Do you want to exhibit them in the Thai Festival, next year also?

Why not? We have been here continuously for the last 7 years.

Q5 What kind of support could be useful for increasing the sales of these mango?

Thai government has been extending very good support to us and so, I do not think we have something special we need additional support from them. However, Japanese consumers do not know the taste of Chok Anan or Khiawsawoey. So, in order to sell these varieties more to Japanese, I think we need to offer tasting samples at retail shops so that they become to know the taste of these mango varieties. In this sense, I think it would be better if there are such support for such promotional activities at retail shops, such as tasting.

Q6 Others (who is your direct buyers in Japan?)

Nishimoto trading, Aeon, Royal and Showa Shoji

2. Shop name : Thamai Agriculture Cooperative Limited

Respondent : Ms. Kalong Prempool, Manager

Q1 What was the response of consumers? Q2 What was the sales?

In Thailand Chok Anan is a popular variety as it is sweet and having good aroma when it is ripen. Khiawsawoey is also popular in Thailand especially among teens or young people because it has very refreshing taste. So, we expected the same response from Japanese consumers. In Thai Festival, the response from Japanese consumers were very good as we expected. We have procured each 1500kg of Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan for this Festival and we have only 25kg of both varieties left at this moment, in the morning of the second day of the festival. So almost all were sold on the first day.

Q3 Do you want to handle these varieties in your business?

Yes.

Q4 Do you want to exhibit them in the Thai Festival, next year also?

Of course! We have been attending to this Festival continuously for the last 11 years.

Q5 What kind of support could be useful for increasing the sales of these mango?

We are satisfied with Thai Government as they have been extending very good support to us. So, I do not think if we need additional support from them. In addition, we are pleased to have very good relation between Thailand and Japan. For example, I was lucky to have an opportunity to pay a visit to JA, where I could learn about Japan's farm management. I hope we can maintain such good relationship and continue to learn each other. The challenge Thai farmers are facing right now is the climate. Farmers are now suffering from the drought.

Q6 Others (who is your direct buyers in Japan?)

Aeon, Seven and I, PK Siam

3. Shop name : P&F Techno Co., Ltd.

Respondent : Ms. Pimjai Matsumoto, Managing Director

Q1 What was the response of consumers? Q2 What was the sales?

We could procure very good Khiawsawoey and so, the consumers' response is very good. In case of Chok Anan, however, the quality is not sufficient and I think consumers are not able to appreciate its "real value". Chok Anan has the "cheap" image in Thailand and many are sold to the processing industry. I think Chok Anan could be sold better, if Thai farmers could improve the quality of this variety.

Sales record is very good. We have procured Khiawsawoey and Chok Anan, each 100 cases for this Festival. At this moment (around 10:00am of the second day of the Thai Festival), we have only a few cases left each.

Q3 Do you want to handle these varieties in your business?

Yes. However, these two varieties are little know by Japanese consumers. So, we need to do promotional activities like tasting at supermarket, etc.

Q4 Do you want to exhibit them in the Thai Festival, next year also?

Yes. We want to continue so that we can show Japanese consumers how they can eat these mango delicious.

Q5 What kind of support could be useful for increasing the sales of these mango?

It is myself who taught Thai and Japanese governments. I suggested to lift the import ban of Khiaawsawoey and Chok Anan to both governments. Problem is that most of Japanese consumers do not know how to eat them. So we need to teach them how they can eat these mango delicious.

Q6 Others (who is your direct buyers in Japan?)

We import these varieties directly from our contracted farms in Thailand and sell them to fresh market in Japan.

APPENDIX-2 Japanese Import of Mango

Janan's import of fresh mango (Value)

Unit:1,000Yen

	2015	2014	2013
Total (HS Code 0804.50.011)	3,405,263	3,697,536	3,972,960
Mexico	1,186,618	1,153,286	1,326,755
Thailand	724,027	731,381	753,240
Taiwan	710,512	654,652	638,681
Philippine	312,783	590,272	711,389
Brazil	161,561	205,185	228,797
Peru	156,466	206,961	207,273
Australia	65,965	54,524	60,587
Pakistan	44,347	914	842
USA	23,759	37,925	38,324
Vietnam	13,321	-----	-----
India	5,672	3,136	-----
Malaysia	232	-----	645
Dominican Republic		59,300	6,427

Janan's import of fresh mango (Volume)

Unit: kg

	2015	2014	2013
Total (HS Code 0804.50-011)	5,840,548	7,353,858	8,588,535
Mexico	2,740,373	2,848,778	3,568,790
Thailand	1,116,049	1,229,421	1,309,490
Taiwan	803,124	758,869	804,856
Philippine	463,738	1,299,761	1,733,459
Peru	250,019	514,741	548,617
Brazil	234,618	333,680	424,245
Pakistan	80,130	1,836	1,429
Australia	67,834	48,607	62,351
USA	38,601	99,856	109,362

India	23,765	4,745	-----
Vietnam	21,979	-----	-----
Malaysia	318	-----	2,128
Dominican Republic		213,564	23,808

APPENDIX-3 Photos