OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN MATSUTAKE MUSHROOMS

LUXURY FOODS

Tricholoma matsutake is one of the most expensive species of mushrooms in the world. Known as the matsutake mushroom, it is revered in Asia for its flavour and aroma. The viability of producing matsutake in South Australia is unclear and further technical research is needed into the potential cultivation opportunities.

PREMIUM FOOD AND WINE FROM OUR CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Government of South Australia

Primary Industries and Regions SA

This fact sheet presents a high level summary of the opportunities for South Australia to supply Matsutake Mushrooms to the eight countries analysed through the Functional and Luxury Foods Research Project.

Tricholoma matsutake is one of the most expensive species of mushrooms in the world. Known as the matsutake mushroom, it is revered in Asia for its flavour and aroma. The mushroom originated in Japan and subsequently has an established position in Japanese culture and cuisine. The mushroom cannot be artificially cultivated and is being threatened by disease and insect infestation in Japan which has seen a dramatic drop in Japan's domestic harvest. China, South Korea, North America and Canada now supply around 90% of Japan's matsutake mushroom demand.

CHINA	In China, matsutake mushrooms are known as Song Rong mushrooms. They have earned a protected status in China for future sustainability of the industry. Japan is China's largest export market for the mushroom, and Chinese-produced mushrooms are 5-10 times cheaper than Japanese ones. Matsutake are a delicacy in China and the perceived natural anti-cancer and nutrition benefits are widely-regarded among consumers. They are often given as gifts to wish people a long, healthy life.
HONG KONG	In China/Hong Kong, matsutake mushrooms are known as Song Rong mushrooms, and are found within the Yunan province of mainland China. The mushrooms are a rare delicacy and the perceived natural anti-cancer and nutrition benefits are widely-regarded among Chinese consumers. They are also prized for their pungent, spicy aroma and are most often used as a flavour enhancer in Chinese cuisine. They are often purchased and given as a gift to wish people a long and healthy life.
INDIA	The researchers did not specify any opportunities for matsutake mushrooms in India.
INDONESIA	The researchers did not specify any opportunities for matsutake mushrooms in Indonesia.
JAPAN	In Japan, matsutake mushrooms are prized for their rarity, taste and nutrition. They grow on Japan's forest floor under red pine trees and can only be harvested in the wild. Japanese consumers have strong loyalty to local produce, so local mushrooms are much more valuable in the Japanese market.
MALAYSIA	The researchers did not specify any opportunities for matsutake mushrooms in Malaysia.
SINGAPORE	The researchers did not specify any opportunities for matsutake mushrooms in Singapore.
SOUTH KOREA	In Korea, matsutake mushrooms are grown in the acidic soils of mountainous area, mainly on the east coast of the country. They do not grow in the same spot twice. Korean pine mushrooms have low water content, giving them a richer flavour and aroma, and they are highly sought after in Japan and China, where they can retail for up to USD2,200 per kilogram.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Matsutake mushrooms are not currently produced in Australia, however on a small scale, a producer is growing Japanese red pines with the hope of producing matsutake in the future (Forest Fungi). The viability of producing matsutake in South Australia is unclear and further technical research is needed into the potential cultivation opportunities. If feasible, there is likely to be a significant demand in Japan for Australian matsutake, as Japanese consumers have significant concerns over the safety and quality of products from China, which is currently the largest supplier to Japan. Production of matsutake in Australia would involve the planting of suitable trees to act as hosts.

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