

FamilyMart

FAMIMA!! FAMILYMART AND THE SALE OF WHALE MEAT IN JAPAN



Famima!!, FamilyMart and the Sale of Whale Meat in Japan

FamilyMart plays a major role in sustaining the Government of Japan's refusal to abide by the moratorium on commercial hunting of whales.

FamilyMart sells canned whale meat in 25% of stores surveyed, and is potentially a major distributor and seller of canned whale meat. Since Famima!! was launched in the US in 2005, the Government of Japan has authorised a massive expansion of whaling in the Southern Ocean sanctuary, more than doubling the number of minke whales targeted and adding endangered fin and humpback whales to the quotas.

As the third largest convenience store in Japan, FamilyMart helps to sustain the whale hunting industry and the slaughter of protected whale species.

Famima!! is a subsidiary of the FamilyMart Group, with its CEO sitting on the Board of FamilyMart. The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is calling on Famima!! to use its influence with the FamilyMart group to permanently end the sale of all whale products in FamilyMart stores.

THE FAMILYMART GROUP

The FamilyMart group is a global convenience store chain operator that started in Japan in 1981. FamilyMart operates more than 15,000 stores worldwide, with 7,512 in Japan.¹

FamilyMart is aggressively expanding its operations overseas, aiming to build a global network of 20,000 stores. As of July 10, 2009, there were 2,366 stores in Taiwan, 4,348 in South Korea, 542 in Thailand, 14 in the USA and 220 in China.²

In Japan, FamilyMart is the third largest convenience store operator, with a 15% share of the eight trillion yen (almost US\$88 billion) industry. The largest convenience store operator, Seven-Eleven Japan, which holds a 34.3% share, stopped selling all whale products in 2004.³

Sales at all stores in the FamilyMart chain broke the one trillion yen mark in fiscal year 2005 (almost US\$11 billion). Food products account for around 70% of total sales. With its 7,512 stores, FamilyMart now has a presence in all 47 prefectures of Japan.⁴

FamilyMart operates stores overseas through joint ventures established with local businesses. According to FamilyMart, the relationship goes 'beyond mere licensing arrangements, strong bonds are forged with each venture, promoting the development of the entire chain in each region'.⁵ Franchisees are responsible for store management,

ordering inventories, arrangement of product displays and the training of staff. FamilyMart supplies not only the brand name and logo, but also full store management support services, including shared use of data management and logistics systems. FamilyMart receives royalty income from each franchisee.⁶

FAMIMA!!

Described as the American subsidiary of FamilyMart, Famima Corporation was established in California in 2004 with its head office in Torrance, California. The first Famima!! Store was opened in West Hollywood, California in July 2005. Famima!! currently operates 9 stores in California; in Arcadia, Culver City, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica.⁷

Famima's President and CEO Goichi Itokazu is also a Managing Executive Officer of FamilyMart.⁸ Shareholders of Famima Corporation are listed on the Famima!! website as FamilyMart Co., Ltd (Japan), Itochu International Inc (US), Bokwang FamilyMart Co., Ltd (Korea), Itochu Corporation (Japan), Okinawa FamilyMart Co., Ltd (Japan) and Minami Kyushu FamilyMart Co., Ltd (Japan).⁹ Famima initially planned to open 250 stores by 2009, however US operations have yet to make a profit and only 9 stores have been opened to date.¹⁰ According to Shiro Inoue, FamilyMart Chairman, they are looking for business partners to help expansion in the US.¹¹

FAMILYMART SALES OF WHALE PRODUCTS IN JAPAN

EIA first telephone-surveyed FamilyMart stores in Miyagi prefecture in 2006. At that time, 16 of the 20 stores stores telephoned were selling Nippon Suisan branded canned whale yamatoni (stew).

The same stores were re-surveyed in September 2007, by which time Nippon Suisan had ceased producing canned whale meat. At this time, seven stores were selling Kyokuyo brand canned whale yamatoni while the rest of the stores replied that they did not sell whale products. An onsite visit to 13 FamilyMart stores in the Kyushu area in November 2007 found canned Kyokuyo whale meat on sale in 5 stores. That same year, Kyokuyo ended its production of whale products.

In 2009 a more comprehensive survey of 377 stores across 11 prefectures was undertaken (covering Miyagi, Nagasaki, Hyogo, Hokkaido, Saga, Shizuoka, Fukuoka, Ibaragi, Osaka, Saitama and Tokyo).

Just over 25% of the stores (96 stores) were selling canned whale yamatoni. The vast majority of these stores (98%) were selling Marusui branded canned whale meat. Two stores were selling Kyokuyo or Nissui cans, presumably reaching the end of old stock.



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Marusui (left) and Kyokuyo (right) cans on sale in FamilyMart stores.

In July 2009, EIA researchers visited thirteen FamilyMart stores in Tokyo (3), Saitama (1), Ibaraki (1), Hyogo (1), Kanagawa (1) and Osaka (6). Eight of the stores were selling Marusui canned whale meat yamatoni, containing minke or Bryde's whale.

If 25% of all FamilyMart stores are selling canned whale meat (the proportion found in EIA's telephone survey of 377 stores), this would mean that almost 1,900 FamilyMart stores across the country are selling whale meat.

JAPAN'S WHALE HUNTING

Since the 1986 global ban on commercial whaling, Japan has continued to hunt whales and sell whale meat commercially, using special permits for 'scientific research'. Japan issues annual quotas for 985 whales in the Antarctic (minke and fin whales) and 380 whales in the North Pacific (minke, sperm, Bryde's and sei whales) including in coastal areas.

The species taken are all protected by the 1986 International Whaling Commission (IWC) moratorium on commercial whaling and by the Convention on International Trade in Flora and Fauna (CITES) which lists all the species in Appendix I, banning international trade. Listing on CITES Appendix I describes "species threatened with extinction which are or may be affected by trade. Trade in specimens of these species must be subject to particularly strict regulation in order not to endanger further their survival and must only be authorized in exceptional circumstances". Antarctic whales are further protected by the IWC Southern Ocean Sanctuary which was adopted in

1994. Japan has been formally criticized by the IWC on countless occasions, most recently in a 2007 Resolution which called on Japan to suspend indefinitely the Southern Ocean special permit hunt.¹²

The 2007/08 Antarctic whaling season was destined to be the first humpback whale hunt for more than four decades, resulting in unprecedented international attention to the plight of Antarctic whales. Sustained international diplomatic pressure has delayed the start of this hunt to date, with the Government of Japan using the humpback whale as a pawn in negotiations to lift the ban on whaling at the IWC.



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EIA is calling on Famima!! to persuade FamilyMart to permanently end the sale of whale products in all their stores.

Since 1986, the Government of Japan has pursued a relentless campaign to overturn the international moratorium on commercial whaling, spending billions of dollars of taxpayers' money. Despite the failure of this campaign, Japan has continued to hunt whales and sell whales for commercial profit, expanding both the species targeted and the number of whales hunted almost year on year.

Japan's retailers including FamilyMart are responsible for the sale and distribution of large amounts of whale meat. Many leading retailers, such as AEON, Ito-Yokado, 7-Eleven and Seiyu have already stopped selling all whale, dolphin and porpoise products.

EIA is appealing to Famima!! to use its influence with FamilyMart to permanently end the sale of all whale products in FamilyMart stores across Japan.



FAMIMA!! STORES

Culver Center

10704 Venice Blvd.
Suite B
Culver City, CA 90232
(310) 836-5600

California Plaza

350 South Grand Avenue,
Suite R-2B
Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 628-4000

City National Plaza

505 South Flower St.,
B-level, Ste. 520
Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 623-3236

Downtown 700 Wilshire

700 Wilshire Blvd.,
Suite A
Los Angeles,
CA 90017
(213) 622-2006

Downtown Roosevelt

727 W. 7th St.,
Suite G-735
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 627-7334

Hollywood Plaza

6759 Hollywood Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
(323) 836-0200

Pacific Center

525 West 6th St
Los Angeles, CA 90014
(213) 629-5100

Santa Anita Mall

400 South Baldwin Ave.
Arcadia, CA 91007
(626) 445-7226

Santa Monica

1348 3rd Street
Promenade
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 393-2486

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