

**Title** Fresh-cut market potential and challenges in far-east Asia  
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### **Abstract**

In Japan and Korea, the fresh-cut produce market reached approximately US \$2.6 in 2005 and 1.1 billion in 2006, respectively. Fresh-cut consumption has increased steadily from the late 1980s in Japan. The fresh-cut industry in Korea has been growing rapidly since the late 1990s, and the yearly growth rate based on sales has been greater than 10% since 2000. The food service industry for school meals and restaurants remains the main user of fresh-cut products, but consumption has recently expanded to retail markets. Fresh-cut vegetables for cooking are the largest segment of the fresh-cut produce industry. Fresh-cut salads are another major category as consumers perceive them as being healthy. Fresh-cut fruit is growing very fast and makes up about 11 and 5% of total sales in Japan and Korea, respectively. However, with increasing fresh-cut consumption at the retail level, the fresh-cut industry in Japan and Korea is facing challenges to extend shelf-life and enhance food safety. The industry is not only concerned with searching for more effective sanitizers, but also more environmentally-friendly washing methods. The fresh-cut market is projected to increase steadily and rapidly in both Japan and Korea in the next 5 years. The Korean fresh-cut retail market has much potential to grow if consumers believe fresh-cut produce is safe and of high quality with sufficient shelf-life. The industry is considering a certification program that gives recognition to high quality and safe fresh-cut produce. Thus, further practical research on fresh-cut processing techniques for food safety will be required to develop the fresh-cut industry in both Japan and Korea, as well as other Asian countries.