

## Japan Seminar Taps New Audience to Expand U.S. Potato Usage

Consumer outreach via a nutrition seminar for bloggers is helping Potatoes USA reach athletes with the message of how U.S. potatoes can play a role in their training. In April 2017, Potatoes USA utilized MAP funding to hold a nutrition seminar for 15 bloggers, comprising 11 registered dietitians and 4 nutritionists, to disseminate the Potato Performance message. The bloggers were carefully chosen as key nutrition influencers in the market. The agenda included potato nutrition 101, U.S. nutrition trends, athletic performance and potatoes and a tasting menu. Reiko Hashimoto, a certified sports nutritionist who is known for utilizing nutrition to help athletes and aspiring athletes become stronger and healthier, gave an in-depth presentation on potatoes and how they are not only a good source of energy but also an important part of a nutritional plan for athletes. Following the presentations three performance recipes were featured for tasting by participants: Apple Cider Smoothie, Soy Milk Potato Pudding and Potato Yakionigiri (Baked rice ball) with cheese and ham and with Sakura shrimp and edamame.

After the event, bloggers commented that the seminar shed new light on potatoes' possibilities. They commented that they were impressed not only by the nutrition of potatoes, but also that they are good for athletic performance. Since the event, all 15 of the bloggers posted articles on blogs and Social Network Services about the seminar and what they learned. As a result, Potatoes USA monitored approximately 39,000 page views, 25 blog articles, 11 Instagram posts, 5 Facebook posts, and 21 recipes posted using U.S. potato flakes. Potatoes USA was also able to strengthen the event's impact by posting nutrition information from this seminar on its popular Potato Airlines website; the MAP-funded site is a core communications tool by which Potatoes USA reaches consumers. The site enabled Potatoes USA to reach a wide number of consumers during MY 16/17, registering more than 72,000 visits and nearly 200,000 Page views during the past fiscal year. This kind of lifestyle message helps consumers see U.S. potatoes in a new way, and expands interest in U.S. potatoes for new uses.

