

【Check Against Delivery】

**Greeting by Ambassador Mizuuchi for "Night of the European Soy"
World Museum, June 19, 2023**

Dear Director Fine,
Dear President Krön,
Dear Director Xia,
Dear Director Habertheuer,
Your Excellency Ambassador Stift,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be able to address all of you as part of tonight's "Night of European Soy" celebration here at the beautiful Weltmuseum - where the winning design of the Austrian pavilion for Expo 2025 in Osaka was presented just a short while ago.

The 2025 Osaka Expo is a great keyword because, as many of you may know, this year we are also celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Vienna World's Fair of 1873, in which Japan participated for the first time under its modern Meiji government. It was on this occasion that the Japanese delegation brought soybeans to Austria in larger quantities for the first time. While the German medical doctor Engelbert Kämpfer had described the soy plant during his stay in Japan in 1691/92 and a couple of French and Dutch botanical gardens had it in their collections at the beginning of the 18th century, it wasn't until its "Big Bang" at the Vienna World's Fair that the history of soy as an agricultural plant in Europe really started. The Austrian agronomist Friedrich Haberlandt received the hitherto little-known plant from the Japanese delegation and began the first plantings on the European continent on behalf of Emperor Franz-Joseph - you can still see some of those original beans here at the Weltmuseum even today!

Speaking of the soybean's history as an agricultural plant, you may know that in Japan, it has been known for thousands of years. Scientists differ on the plant's exact origins in East Asia, but it is certain that the oldest evidence of human use of the soybean in its wild form can be detected around 5,000 B.C. in Japan, while domesticated beans have been cultivated since at least 3050 B.C., in the so-called Jōmon period. During this time, the hunter-gatherers inhabiting Japan became sedentary and began farming, and the protein-rich soybean was an important part of

their diet, along with fish. Several millennia later, when Buddhism spread to Japan in the 6th century AD and killing four-legged animals became ostracized, soy became even more important as a source of protein.

In the early 20th century until the beginning of World War II, Japan supported the Manchurian people to build their own nation in their homeland in today's North-East China where the Manju folks and tribes had developed their indigenous civilization over centuries, after their Dynasty in mainland China collapsed in the wake of Chinese nationalism. With a view to developing a sustainable economy and introducing modern agriculture to that vast space of land for the Manchurian nation, settlers from Japan cultivated the wilderness and turned it into the world's largest producer and exporter of soybeans. In the 21st century, production expanded to the Americas, with the U.S. and Brazil surging to become global leaders in soybean production. By the way, Japan helped Brazil with its Official Development Assistance in soybean production.

With such a fascinating background of soybeans in mind, I am happy to be here today representing the mother country of agricultural soybean production, witnessing the 150th anniversary of the presentation of soybeans at the Vienna World's Fair of 1873.

In culinary culture, soy products are no longer the exotic representatives of Asian cuisines in the form of tofu, miso and various seasonings and sauces, but have been established on the menu of most European cuisines. Such examples are edamame in the originally Hawaiian poke bowls that are so popular with young people nowadays, our morning soy latte, as well as various meat substitutes at McDonald's or the like.

With diversity becoming a boom in nutrition as well, especially for people with lactose intolerance or vegetarians and vegans, soy has become more significant than ever before today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, I would like to thank the Donau Soja Association, the Austrian University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, and all co-organizers for their amazing effort for having held conferences like this already 11 times and bringing another one to Vienna this year commemorating the arrival of soybeans 150 years ago.

Last but not least, let me express my hope that soybeans will continue to enjoy popularity as a healthy, tasty and environmentally friendly source of protein in Austria and Europe, and that in

addition to soy sauce, miso soup, edamame and tofu, other soy-based specialties of Japanese cuisine such as *yuba crisps*, *kinako mochi* and maybe even *nattō* will also be on everyone's table on a daily basis. As Ambassador of Japan, I am also committed to expanding the culinary exchanges using soy products at my Residence and wish you all a successful soybean conference.

Thank you for your attention and have a wonderful evening!