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Korea reports a leap in Agri-Food products export by 7.6% accounting to $3.96 B in May 2024

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The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) announced that the cumulative value of exports of Korean agri-food products at the end of May this year reached $3.96 billion (tentative figures), up by 7.6% from a year earlier. This marks a continued upward trend in year-on-year export growth over the past three months. By export items, instant noodles, biscuits and confectionery, beverages, processed rice-based products, kimchi and other major export items continued to lead the growth trend.

Instant noodles were the most exported item, worth $486.2 million, at the end of May for this year. For last year, tobacco products were the most exported item, but instant noodles have risen to the top of the list thanks to a dramatic increase in their exports this year. The value of exports of instant noodles recorded in May alone surpassed a hundred million dollars to reach $107.3 million. In particular, exports of instant noodles to Chinaâ?? the largest importer of Korean instant noodlesâ??increased by 27.7% from a year earlier, as South Korean exporting companies expanded their online sales channels in China. Exports of Korean instant noodles to other countries were on the rise, too, with exports to the U.S., the ASEAN region, and Europe up by 71.4%, 24.8%, and 49.5%, respectively.

Exports of South Korean biscuits and confectionery reached $291.5 million, up by 12.6% from a year earlier, as South Korean bakery chains expanded their overseas sales outlets in the US and the exports of baking ingredients (doughs) to Japan recovered. In particular, exports to the U.S. increased by 38.3% as Korean biscuits and confectionery made their way to shelves at more stores in the U.S., ranging from mainstream retail chains (such as Costco) to discount store chains.

All in all, exports of Korean agri-food products increased to the U.S., the ASEAN region and the Europe. Importantly, exports to China turned around from a downward trend to an upward one in year-on-year growth, with an 2.9% increase from a year earlier, thanks to the picking-up of consumer spending in the country. In the U.S. and Europe, meanwhile, solid consumer

spending underpinned the export growth of 17.8% and 32.2%, respectively. To the contrary, exports to Japan went down by 5.8% due to a continued depreciation of the Japanese yen, high inflation, and a decline in real wages.

Deputy Minister Kwon Jae-han of the Agricultural Innovation Policy Office of the Ministry said: â??Thanks to the efforts of Korean exporting companies to produce various kinds of products to suit local preferences and diversify export markets, exports of Korean agri-food products have been showing a steady growth. To help achieve a record export growth this year, we will make the utmost effort to provide close support for Korean exporters. And at the same time, we will do our best to help them expand their business in the current and new overseas markets by resolving their difficulties through inter-ministerial cooperation.â?•