Sanko Seika Expands Its U.S. Strategy with YUKI and PeaTos

SANKO SEIKA

Sanko Seika is expanding its U.S. presence with YUKI and PeaTos, combining Japanese expertise with evolving demand for distinctive snacks.

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Nestled in the corner of an American child's lunchbox are YUKI and PeaTos, alongside familiar snacks. Sanko Seika's ambition is for these brands to become a natural and familiar part of everyday American life. Sanko Seika's expanding presence in the United States marks an important moment for the rice cracker manufacturer, which established Sanko North America Foods in 2025 to develop products for American consumers. Eiichi Gocho, president and representative director, said that PeaTos pea and lentil snacks and YUKI rice crackers are important parts of the company's expansion into the U.S. mainstream market. "Rather than approaching North America simply as an export destination, we want to establish the capabilities necessary to understand the market, develop appropriate products and build the business locally," he said.

Interest in Japanese culture is growing through media and tourism, but Gocho recognizes that this positive image is only a foot in the door and not a guarantee of success. American consumers have their own established tastes, habits and expectations that foreign brands must recognize when entering the market. "We cannot assume a product will succeed in the United States simply because it has already been accepted in Japan," he said. It is knowledge and understanding that will determine success. Sanko Seika's YUKI rice cracker is designed to fit into American snacking habits.

It's a light, airy cracker that combines sweetness with gentle saltiness. YUKI's sweet-and-salty profile may be familiar to American consumers through snacks such as kettle corn and chocolate-covered pretzels. YUKI isn't intended to imitate American snacks and is distinguished by its light, airy and crisp texture and restrained sweetness. Yuki no Yado, the Japanese product on which YUKI is based, has been available in the United States through Asian retailers for some time. However, the company is rebranding it for mainstream American consumers, with Original Milk and Brown Sugar flavors scheduled to launch in November 2026. Beyond taste and texture, the company hopes YUKI can become part of American consumers' everyday routines, rather than being viewed simply as a novel foreign snack.

Another important part of the company's U.S. strategy is PeaTos. Made with peas and lentils, the snacks provide protein and fiber, are non-GMO, gluten-free and vegan and contain no artificial flavors or synthetic colors. It's the kind of snack that meets consumers' desire for healthier options that don't sacrifice taste or familiarity. Both products pair familiar snack appeal with ingredients that differ from those used in many conventional alternatives.

Sanko Seika's approach to the U.S. market is based on combining its rice-cracker manufacturing expertise with local consumer insights, rather than simply exporting the same products. Gocho is confident: "If we understand what American consumers want and combine that knowledge with what Sanko Seika does particularly well, we believe we can develop products that are genuinely relevant to the U.S. market."

https://www.sanko-seika.co.jp/





"Companies must understand what consumers want and create products that fit those needs."

Eiichi Gocho,
President and Representative Director, Sanko Seika Co., Ltd.





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