

Revamped Lawson Onigiri Offers Fluffier, Airier Texture

市場を広げ続けるコンビニやおにぎり専門店の手巻きおにぎり。最近では、圧力をかけずにふんわりと握ったタイプが人気だそう。そんな中、ローソンが夏の行楽シーズンに合わせて、13年ぶりに製法を大きく変えました。あなたはどんなおにぎりの具が好きですか？これからもっとおにぎりは人気になると思いますか？講師と話してみましょう。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Lawson released **revamped** temaki-style onigiri riceballs with a fluffier texture on July 15, **just in time for** Japan's summer leisure season. This marks the first update to the production method of its onigiri in 13 years, since 2012. Lawson's temaki-style onigiri refers to a rice ball product where the seaweed is kept separate from the rice until just before eating to maintain its crispiness.

Fluffier Onigiri

As part of the renewal, Lawson has upgraded its production equipment to achieve a soft, fluffy texture that mimics the lightness of rice gently scooped with a rice paddle. By adopting a new technique that spreads the rice into layers without applying strong pressure, the volume of each rice ball has increased by about 30%, even with the same amount of rice. This results in a fluffier texture with more distinct grains.

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Source : Revamped Lawson Onigiri Offers Fluffier, Airier Texture
JAPAN Forward

1. Article

Six **staple** onigiri varieties will be updated, including Tuna Mayonnaise (¥181) and Grilled Salmon Flakes (¥221). Additionally, Lawson will launch a new temaki-style rice ball, Red Perilla with Pickled Plums (¥192). It features rice mixed with Mishima Foods' popular Yukari furikake **seasoning** and filled with plum-marinated shibazuke pickles.

Growing Popularity

According to Japan's agriculture ministry, consumer spending on rice balls in 2024 has increased by about 30% compared to 2020, showing **notable** market growth. The number of rice ball specialty shops has also grown by around 70% since 2020, with lightly-pressed, fluffy rice balls becoming especially popular.

Emi Uchida, Senior Merchandiser of Lawson's delicatessen and kitchen division, stated, "About 60% of onigiri purchases are made at convenience stores, according to surveys. This remains a category with plenty of potential." With the renewal, Lawson is targeting a 20% year-on-year sales increase for July.



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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **revamp** 改良する、作り直す

The store has a **revamped** interior after the renovation.

2. **just in time for** ～にちょうど間に合って

We got to the station **just in time for** the train.

3. **staple** 主要な、定番の；主要産物、重要商品、基本食料品；（ホッチキスの）針

Soy sauce is a **staple** item in Japanese kitchens.

4. **seasoning** 調味料；調味、味つけ

I added some **seasoning** to the soup.

5. **notable** 注目に値する、目立つ、著しい

There was a **notable** increase in visitors.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. Why is the seaweed kept separate from the rice in temaki-style onigiri?

2. What makes the new onigiri fluffier than before?

3. Which new temaki-style onigiri did Lawson introduce?

4. How much did consumer spending on rice balls increase between 2020 and 2024?

5. Do you think onigiri will become more popular in the future? Why?

4. ふんわり食感に ローソン、13年ぶりに手巻きおにぎりリニューアル

ローソンは10日、ふんわりとした食感にリニューアルした手巻きおにぎりを、夏の行楽シーズンに合わせて15日に発売すると発表した。手巻きおにぎりの製法を変更するのは2012年以来13年ぶり。

今回のリニューアルでは、しゃもじですくったようなふんわりとした食感にするために製造機械を刷新。ご飯に強い圧力をかけずにシート状に広げる「新・ふんわり製法」を採用することで、同じご飯の量でも体積が約3割アップし、コメの粒立ちが良いふんわり食感を実現したという。

リニューアルするのは、「シーチキンマヨネーズ」（181円）や「炙り熟成紅鮭」（221円）など定番商品6品。三島食品の人気のふりかけ「ゆかり」を混ぜ込んだご飯でしば漬けの梅肉あえを包んだ「ゆかりごはん（しば漬け）」（192円）も新製法で新発売する。

農林水産省によると、24年のおにぎりの消費支出金額は20年比で約3割増と市場は拡大。おにぎり専門店も20年比で約7割増えており、圧力をかけずにふんわりと握ったものが人気になっているという。

デリカ・厨房部シニアマーチャンダイザーの内田恵美さんは「おにぎりは約6割の人がコンビニで購入しているという調査結果も出ていて、まだまだチャンスがあるカテゴリー」として、リニューアルにより7月は前年対比2割増を目指すという。