

Kimchi Culture Festival in 2013

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The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA), in association with the Cultural Heritage Administration at the historic Gwanghwamun Square in Gyeongbok-gung Palace, held a kimchi culture festival on December 5. It was hosted by the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation, World Institute of Kimchi, and Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation. This event aims to establish Korea's position in the world as the birthplace of kimchi, with the registration of "Kimchi and Kimjang culture (making Kimchi)" with UNESCO as an intangible cultural asset of humanity, and promote the globalization of kimchi. This event also aims to disseminate Korean traditional kimjang culture with a heart of sharing at home and abroad and revitalize the consumption of domestic kimchi through dissemination of kimjang culture.

The Korean Kimchi and Kimjang culture have stirred keen interest at home and abroad. Many figures and organizations participated in the event, including Korean Prime Minister Jung Hong-won and Korea National Council of Consumer Organizations, and Korea National Council on Social Welfare, Korean Dietetic Association, and Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation, as well as foreign ambassadors in Korea (and their wives), and multicultural families.

Also, the Kimchi Festival is disseminating kimjang culture at home and abroad and that our ancestors made kimchi joyfully in *pumasi* (exchange of labor), which shows their wisdom, in preparation for the winter when vegetables are rare; and present various events for citizens to enjoy and experience together.

With a magnificent opening event *chitadae* (Korean instrumental orchestra) performance, "the ceremony of presenting kimchi from the eight provisions to the king and the queen" with the best kimchi brands selected at the Kimchi Show 2013 was held. After that, the "kimjang experience event" was held with around 30 figures including the Prime Minister, foreign ambassadors (their wives) and multicultural families, in an effort to promote the Korean kimjang culture as a new *hallyu* (Korean wave) representing Korea. To promote the kimchi culture festival as "a festival enjoyed and shared with global citizens," a special celebration event was also presented where foreign ambassadors (their wives) and multicultural families place a jar on the spot for their own country (continent) on the world map model, and turn on a lamp, to experience the spirit of unity and the beauty of sharing in kimjang culture.

There are growing concerns about the dwindling of the domestic kimchi industry due to decreasing kimchi consumption with the dissemination of Western eating habits, a decreasing number of families who do kimjang due to a busy daily life, and encroachment on the domestic kimchi market by imported kimchi. In such a challenging situation, the kimchi culture festival would be an opportunity to raise understanding of Korean kimchi and kimchi culture and remind us of the true meaning of Korean kimjang culture with a heart-warming sharing spirit. It is evaluated that the event could provide an opportunity to boost the globalization of kimchi, which is the Korean representative traditional food.

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