

Honda Motor plans to shift all production of U.S.-bound Fit compacts from Japan to Mexico in 2014.

The company exported 67,000 of them in fiscal 2011, more than any other model, with 40,000 going to the U.S. Starting with the next version of the car, Honda will move production for the U.S. to a new factory in Mexico, a party to the North American Free Trade Agreement. It will also expand local production of the Fit in Europe and Asia.

Honda recently ended Japanese production of its Civic sedan and stopped making U.S.-bound Accord sedans at its Sayama plant in Saitama Prefecture.

Back in fiscal 2007, Honda exported 690,000 vehicles, the equivalent of 54% of domestic output. By fiscal 2011, it had reduced exports to 250,000 units, or less than 30% of Japanese output. It aims to go even further, down to fewer than 200,000 units, while boosting production of popular minicars to keep domestic output at 1 million units.

Source: The Nikkei News. 03-10-12.