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Japan

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Japan Planning to Withdraw Approval for 42 Food Additives

2006

Approved by:

Rachel Nelson
U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Rachel Nelson

Report Highlights:

Japan announced its intention to withdraw 42 substances from the List of Existing Food Additives, based on the grounds that they are no longer being used. Comments are being accepted until March 2007. Implementation is expected in September 2007.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

Japan announced its intention to withdraw 42 substances from the List of Existing Food Additives, based on the grounds that they are no longer being used. The removal of these additives has nothing to do with food safety, so this is a strange step, considering the fact that there are many other substances that are being used around the world and are recognized as safe but are waiting for approval in Japan.

If you have comments you should send them to the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare at:

Standards and Evaluation Division, Department of Food Safety
Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
1-2-2- Chiyod-ku, Kasumigaseki
Tokyo
100-8916
Tel. (011-813) 5253-1111
Fax. (011-813) 3501-4868
Mr. E. Uchiyama (uchiyama-eiji@mhlw.go.jp)
Mr. K. Ura (ura-katsuaki@mhlw.go.jp)

You may also send them to agtokyo@usda.gov, well in advance of the March 2007 deadline, if you would like them to be considered for inclusion into official U.S. Government comments.

Details:

Withdrawal of Food Additives from the List of Existing Food Additives

Purpose

This activity is to withdraw some food additives from the List of Existing Food Additives.* The activity targets ,food additives that are determined to be no longer marketed.

Note: "Existing food additives" refer to non-synthetic food additives that were marketed or used on the date of the amendment of the Food Sanitation Law (May 24, 1995) and that appear in the List of Existing Food Additives.

Background

In August 2003, Article 2-3 was newly added to the Supplementary Provisions (1995, Law No. 101) of the Food Sanitation Law. Article 2-3 authorizes the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare to withdraw food additives from the List of Existing Food-the Ministry of Health and Welfare Announcement, No. 120, 1996 April 16-if the Minister determines that these food additives, or preparations or foods containing them are no longer marketed, judging from the situation of the sale, manufacturing, import, processing, use, storage, and display of the substances. Prior to the withdrawal, the Minister must prepare and publish a list of food additives that are expected to be withdrawn, in order to seek public comments.

Once food additives are withdrawn from the List of Existing Food Additives, any person will be prohibited from selling these food additives; and preparations and foods containing those food additives.

Procedure

The Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare has prepared a list containing 42 food additives, which are expected be withdrawn based on surveys (see Attachment 4).

The surveys include those in the health and labor sciences research program and those targeting businesses concerning the production volume and manufacturing and distribution status of food additives. In September 2006 the MHLW published the list to seek public comments. The MHLW will proceed with the formalities required to withdraw these 42 substances.

Future work

The MHLW will revise the List of Existing Food Additives by June 2007 through a six-month comment period. The revised list will take effect three months after the revision (Consult the time line below).

Timeline

September 2006: Publish a list of 42 substances

[Six-month comment period including the 90-days period the WTO specifies- Anyone may file a request for modification of the list]

March 2007: Deadline of the comment period

June 2007: Revise the List of Existing Food Additives

September 2007: Implement the revised list

List of Food Additives to Be Withdrawn:

Hollyhock flower extract
Aspergillus terreus extract
Azotobacter vinelandii gum
Almond gum
Polyfructan (inulin type)
Udo extract
Shrimp Color
Elastase
Opopanax resin
Kawaratake extract
Guayule
Curculin
Mulberry bark extract
Enzymatically modified soybean saponin
Copaiba balsam
Shikon color
Sappan color
Superoxide dismutase
Sesamolin
Sesamol
Dropwort extract
Soybean ash extract
Water pepper extract
Tempeh extract
Copper
Cholesterol
Corn color
Tomato glucolipid

Triacanthos gum
Rape seed oil extract
Soybean extract
Olibanum
Fructosyl transferase-treated stevia
Blueberry leaf extract
Powdered pulp
Hego-ginko leaf extract
Benzoin gum
Myrrh
Muramidase
Melaleuca oil
Rice hull extract
Gentian root extract