

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Import Requirements for US Chipping Potatoes Destined for Japan

Country: Japan

Post: Tokyo

Report Category: Trade Policy Monitoring, Potatoes and Potato Products, Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

Prepared By: Tomohiro Kurai

Approved By: Mariya Rakhovskaya

Report Highlights:

In light of Japan's recent removal of two import restrictions on U.S. chipping potatoes, this report summarizes Japan's current import requirements, which still effectively limit opportunities for U.S. potato exports to Japan.

General Information

On February 1, 2006, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) issued the Ministerial Notification #114 (available [here](#) in Japanese only), which established import requirements for U.S. fresh chipping potatoes. Two protocols in the annex to the Ministerial Notification #114 provide further details on the import requirements. The “Regulatory Details for Plant Quarantine of U.S. Raw Potato Tubers from the United States” protocol (hereafter “[Import Protocol](#),” available only in Japanese) stipulates the phytosanitary requirements for U.S. potato exports. The “Requirements for designated facility to process (with heat) U.S. fresh potatoes” protocol (hereafter “[Chipping Protocol](#),” available only in Japanese) describes the requirements for the processing of imported potatoes. Despite a recent revision of the Import Protocol (see the 2020 “[US Chipping Potatoes Gain Year-Around Access to Japan](#)” report), many restrictions remain and significantly limit market opportunities for U.S. fresh potato exports to Japan. Japan’s current regulatory requirements include:

1. Pre-shipment Quarantine Conditions
 - a. U.S. potato must come from fields free of cyst nematodes (Ministerial Notification).
 - b. Mandatory safeguards (detailed in the Import Protocol):
 - i. seed certification requirements
 - ii. pre-identification of fields designated for export to Japan
 - iii. field inspections and registration
 - iv. laboratory-based soil testing for nematodes
 - v. phytosanitary inspections
 - vi. packing in plastic-knit tote bags and closed containers
 - vii. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) seals on shipping containers with a tag/sticker indicating completion of plant quarantine and Japan as destination
2. Authorized processing facilities for U.S. chipping potatoes must be located within an approved port. Hiroshima and Shibushi are currently the only two approved ports to accept U.S. chipping potato exports.
3. Authorized processing facilities for imported, but not domestically produced, potatoes must be equipped with an incinerator (or its equivalent) for the complete combustion of residues (i.e. potato skins) and a wastewater treatment system (Ministerial Notification #114, Import Protocol and Chipping Protocol).
4. The use of U.S. chipping potatoes is limited to potato chips due to the processing requirement of slicing and deep frying for at least 2 minutes at above 130 degrees Celsius (Ministerial Notification #114, Import Protocol and Chipping Protocol). Imported potatoes cannot be used for other products, such as potato salad.

5. Overland transportation of imported U.S. potatoes is approved only when a “port facility, where the processing facility is located, is not well established enough to accept foreign vessels with fresh potato tubers” (Import Protocol). Furthermore, during overland transportation, importers must seal vents, drains and other openings, if any, of importing containers. MAFF places no restrictions on overland transportation of domestic potatoes.

Attachments:

No Attachments.