

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Japan Provides Food Labeling Flexibility in Response to COVID-19

Country: Japan

Post: Tokyo

Report Category: Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

Japan's Consumer Affairs Agency will temporarily suspend the strict monitoring of non-critical food labeling information in response to COVID-19 related supply chain disruptions. For imported products, Japanese importers bear the sole responsibility for compliance with Japan's Food Labeling Act.

General Information

On April 10, 2020, Japan's Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA), jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), announced the temporary suspension of strict monitoring of non-critical food labeling information. According to CAA, the objective of the measure is to ensure the sufficient supply of food products to Japanese consumers in light of supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic. The Food Labeling Act requires food processors to ensure labels are up to date. Non-critical food labeling information includes the list of ingredients, ingredient country of origin, and nutrition. CAA requests processors notify non-critical label information changes at retail stores, through press releases, announcements on websites, and other methods as available. CAA will continue to monitor and enforce food labeling requirements for critical information related to consumer health, such as allergen labeling, expiration date, and heating requirements. CAA has not indicated how long this temporary measure will be in place.

In the announcement, CAA emphasized it will crack down on food processors taking advantage of this measure and violating food labeling requirements in order to deceive consumers. Detailed information in Japanese is on the CAA [webpage](#).

Japanese importers bear sole responsibility for development of food labels on imported food products that are compliant with the Food Labeling Act ([JA7078](#)). Japanese labeling requirements are detailed in Japan's food and agricultural import regulations and standards (FAIRS) report ([JA2019-0216](#)).

Attachments:

No Attachments.