

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Japan to Establish Voluntary Government Standards for Vegetarian and Vegan Food

Country: Japan

Post: Tokyo

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Special Certification - Organic/Kosher/Halal

Prepared By: Daisuke Sasatani

Approved By: Mariya Rakhovskaya

Report Highlights:

Japan has initiated the process to develop Japan Agricultural Standards (JAS) for vegetarian and vegan processed foods and food service. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries plans to publish the draft JAS in November 2021 and finalize them by March 2022. Vegetarian and vegan certification requirements by foreign non-governmental entities will likely inform the development of new voluntary government standards in Japan.

General Information:

On November 17, 2020, [Japan Vegetarian Society](#) (JVS) requested that Japanese government develop Japan Agricultural Standards (JAS¹) for vegetarian and vegan food. In its request, JVS referenced existing vegetarian/vegan certification standards developed by non-governmental certifiers overseas.

On May 11, 2021, JVS convened the first meeting of a newly formed committee to develop the standards. The committee consists of representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Food and Agricultural Materials Inspection Center (FAMIC), Tokyo Metropolitan Government, restaurants, retailers and others. Members of the Bipartisan Parliamentary League for the Promotion of Vegetarian/Vegan-Related Policies participated in the kickoff meeting of the committee as observers.

The committee will hold three more meetings prior to finalizing vegan and vegetarian JAS. The second and third meetings, scheduled for July and September of 2021, will provide an opportunity for industry feedback. The fourth, planned for November of 2021, will focus on finalizing the text of the standards. After the last meeting, MAFF will publish the proposed standards and open them for public comment. MAFF plans to release the new JAS for vegetarian and vegan foods in March 2022.

The committee aims to develop four categories of vegetarian/vegan JAS:

1. Vegan – food products containing no animal-derived ingredients.
2. Lacto Vegetarian – food products containing no animal-derived ingredients, except for dairy, honey and lanolin.
3. Ovo Vegetarian – food products containing no animal-derived ingredients, except for eggs, honey and lanolin.
4. Lacto-Ovo Vegetarian – food products containing no animal-derived ingredients, with the exception of dairy products, eggs, honey and lanolin.

MAFF will classify the new vegetarian/vegan JAS as a specific JAS because it will focus on the production method and distinctive value-add characteristics, rather than product quality (see [JA8095](#) for a comparison of specific and general JAS types). The logo for a specific JAS (Figure 1) differs from the logo for general and organic JAS.

¹ The [Act on Japanese Agricultural Standards](#) designates the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) as the competent authority to enact JAS.

Figure 1. Possible Vegetarian and Vegan JAS Logos



The vegetarian/vegan JAS will be aimed at (i) suitable processed food products and (ii) food service systems.

According to Japanese media, vegetarian/vegan JAS would (i) facilitate food purchasing decisions by vegetarian and vegan foreign visitors and (ii) enhance the appeal of Japanese agricultural exports, especially to vegetarian/vegan foreign markets.

Attachments:

No Attachments.