



Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 12/28/1999

GAIN Report #JA9121

Japan

Agricultural Situation

Packaging Recycling Law

1999

Approved by:

Sarah D. Hanson

U.S. Embassy

Prepared by:

Tetsuo Hamamoto

Report Highlights: On April 1, 2000, the Government of Japan will begin full implementation of its Packaging Recycling Law with manufactures obliged to pay the associated collecting, sorting, transportation, and recycling costs for all paper and plastic packaging and containers. Supermarkets and retail shops using paper and plastic containers and packaging will be subject to the law as well. In the case of imported products, importers will be held responsible for paying recycling costs. If the imported products are private labeled, the corporation using the private labeling will be held responsible for recycling costs. Japanese industry is working to reduce overall packaging, to make packaging which is easily recycled, and to prepare for obligations under the law. As a notice to U.S. exporters, Japanese importers may take associated recycling charges into account when choosing goods to import.

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

Japan's Packaging Recycling Law

(Law for the Promotion of Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging)

On April 1, 1997 the Government of Japan began partial implementation of the Law for the Promotion of Sorted Collection and Recycling of Containers and Packaging (known as the Packaging Recycling Law) for steel and aluminum cans, paper cartons for milk and other beverages, glass bottles (colorless, brown and green), and polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles. Under this law the Government encourages business corporations to use packaging and containers which are reusable. If reusable packaging can not be used, the Government encourages use of materials which are "ready to recycle". For materials that are not readily recyclable, manufacturers are obliged to pay the associated collecting, sorting, transportation, and recycling costs. Containers mean all materials to contain goods, such as trays used in supermarkets and plastic bags. Packaging is the material to wrap goods such as stretchable film.

On April 1, 2000, the Government of Japan will begin full implementation of this law with industry being required to recycle all paper and plastic packaging. As is currently the case for manufacturers using paper cartons and PET materials, business enterprises manufacturing and/or utilizing paper and plastic packaging will be responsible for recycling costs. Supermarkets and retail shops using paper and/or plastic packaging will be subject to the law as well. All concerned corporations must track the amount of designated materials used for one year with the records to be kept for five years. Based on their recorded usage, corporations are obliged to calculate the amount of materials they are mandated to recycle with lower usage amounts resulting in lower obligatory payments. The law divides the designated containers/packaging materials into eight categories: glass bottles, PET bottles, plastic containers/packaging, paper containers/packaging, steel cans, aluminum cans, paper cartons for beverages, and cardboard boxes.

The charges to be used to calculate obligatory payments to the Japan Containers and Packaging Recycling Association, a designated quasi-governmental organization, are listed below. The charges are expressed in yen per metric ton for the total weight of materials claimed by users the previous fiscal year.

	Fiscal year 1999 (April 99 - March 00)	Fiscal year 2000 (April 00 - March 01)
Glass		
Colorless	2,549 yen/metric ton	4,151 yen/metric ton
Brown	4,407 yen/metric ton	7,682 yen/metric ton
Green	6,340 yen/metric ton	8,096 yen/metric ton
PET bottle	95,135 yen/metric ton	88,825 yen/metric ton
Other plastics	No charge for the fiscal year 1999	105,000 yen/metric ton
Other paper	No charge for the fiscal year 1999	58,636 yen/metric ton

For imported products, importers will be obliged to pay recycling costs in most cases. If the imported products are private labeled, the corporation using the private labeling will be held responsible for recycling costs. Japanese industry is working to reduce overall packaging, to make packaging which is easily recycled, and to prepare for obligations under the law. As a notice to U.S. exporters, Japanese importers may take associated recycling charges into account when choosing goods to import. The use of containers and packaging whose payment ratios are low may become an incentive for the importers when they choose goods. For example, the proposed payment charges for colorless and green glass bottles are approximately 2 yen and 4 yen per bottle (for a bottle with 0.5 kg weight), respectively.