



What legal requirements apply to food labeling?

The table below lists the principal laws applying to food product labeling, along with their scope of application and their purpose. Imported food is subject to the same legal requirements of the Food Sanitation Law and other provisions of law as foods made in Japan. Foods that do not bear required labeling not only cannot be sold in Japan, but also cannot be displayed for the purpose of sale or used for any other commercial purposes.

Table 20 Principal Laws Related to Food Labeling

Statute Name	Competent Agency	Scope of Application	Purpose
Food Sanitation Law (Labeling standards)	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	Processed foods in containers or packaging (including some fresh foods), chicken eggs, additives	To prevent sanitation related health harm from food and beverages
JAS Law (Quality labeling standards)	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	All fresh foods, all processed foods, unpolished rice, milled rice	To set appropriate standards for quality labeling to provide information Needed for product selection
Measurement Law	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry	Foods stipulated by Cabinet Order (specific foods)	To assure appropriate measurement quantities
Nutrition Improvement Law (Nutritional labeling standards)	Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare	Processed foods and chicken eggs, when they bear nutritional labeling	To provide appropriate information regarding food nutritional content
Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations	Fair Trade Commission of Japan	Prevent improper advertising and labeling on the product and containers or packaging	To assure fair competition and benefit to consumers

Additional labeling is required for alcohol content under the Liquor Tax Law, as well as labeling required by local government ordinance. Some foods are also subject to the Guidelines, and the Fair Competition Codes that, although voluntary, establish industry practices.

* Contacts:

Food Sanitation Law, Nutrition Improvement Law:

Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

JAS Law: Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)

Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarters, (TEL: 048-600-2371)

Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services <http://www.cfqlcs.go.jp>

Measurement Law:

Weight and Measures Office, Measurement and Intellectual Infrastructure Division,

Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau,

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (TEL: 03-3501-1511)

Prefectural Inspection Institute of Weights and Measures

Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations:

Consumer Related Division, Fair Trade Commission of Japan (TEL: 03-3581-5471)

Guidelines: Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)

Fair Competition Codes:

Fair Trade Commission of Japan (TEL: 03-3581-5471)

Fair Competition Councils (TEL: 03-3501-6047)

What kind of labeling is required for sale of foods under the Food Sanitation Law?

The foods listed in Table 21 and sealed in wrapping or containers have labeling standards set by the Food Sanitation Law. Labels must list the product name, date of minimum durability or best-before date, name and address of the importer, additives used, whether any allergenic substances are present (see Q74), and others. The Law sets forth specific labeling requirements for particular products in addition to these basic items of information.

For example, a food with health claims would be required under the Food Sanitation Law to include the following in its labeling.

- Product name, best-before date or date of minimum durability, name and address of importer, additives used, allergenic substances (if present), preservation method, usage method, statement that the product is a food with health claims

Note: Foods with health claims are also subject to labeling requirements under the JAS Law, the Measurement Law, and the Nutrition Improvement Law.

In addition, milk, dairy products and other products made principally from milk are subject to labeling requirements set forth in other Ministerial Ordinances.

Labeling must be in the Japanese language, and it must be accurate, legible, and readily visible without opening the packaging. However, foods in packaging with a total surface area of less than 30 cm² may omit labeling.

Table 21 Foods with Labeling Standards set by the Food Sanitation Law

1	Margarine	
2	Alcoholic beverages	
3	Soft drinks	Frozen fruit drinks, fruit juice for ingredient, mineral water, other soft drinks
4	Meat products	Dried meat products, non heat-treated meat products, specified heat-treated meat products, heat-treated meat products
5	Fish ham, fish sausage, whale meat bacon, and such other products	
6	Legumes containing cyanogens	
7	Frozen foods	Filleted fresh fish or shucked shellfish (except fresh oysters)
		Other frozen foods
8	Irradiated foods	
9	Packaged foods heat pasteurized under pressure	
10	Chicken eggs	Chicken egg in shells, liquid chicken egg
11	Foods sealed in wrapping or containers (other than above 1 to 9 listed)	(1) Meats, fresh oysters for raw consumption, fresh oysters (other than those for raw consumption), fish paste products, instant noodles, fresh noodles (including boiled noodles), lunch boxes, prepared bread, daily dishes, fresh confections, fresh fish and shellfishes for raw consumption, boiled crab
		(2) Boiled octopus Other processed foods
		(3) Citrus fruits, bananas
12	Foods and processed foods listed in Supplemental Table 5-3, Enforcement Regulations for the Food Sanitation Law	
13	Foods with health claims	
14	Food additives	

*Contacts: Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

What kind of labeling does the JAS Law require in order to sell imported processed foods?

The JAS Law establishes the “Processed Food Quality Labeling Standards” that apply to all processed foods (specifically those listed in Table 22) sold for consumer use. The following items of information must be listed all together in a readily visible location on the container or packaging.

- Product name
- List of ingredients
- Net contents
- Best-before date or date of minimum durability
- Preservation method
- Country of origin
- Importer’s name and address

Certain foods with particular characteristics are subject to their own separate quality labeling standards, and must include quality-related items of information other than those stipulated by the “Processed Food Quality Labeling Standards.” Please consult with the contact agencies listed below for more complete information.

*Contacts: Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

The World Trade Organization (WTO) went into operation in 1995 as part of increasing steps toward economic globalization. WTO provisions require signatory nations to base their domestic standards on international standards (internationally established rules) unless they have a rational cause for doing otherwise. Food product labeling needs to be harmonized under consistent international labeling standards in order to facilitate trade. Thus, in 1999 Japan amended the JAS Law in order to make Japanese standards conformant with internationally recognized food labeling standards (CODEX Standards).

Table 22 Foods Defined by the Processed Food Product Quality Labeling Standards

<p>1. Barley</p> <p>Polished barley</p> <p>2. Flour</p> <p>Rice flour, wheat flour, mixed cereal grain flour, soybean flour, potato flour, preparative cereal grain flour, other flour</p> <p>3. Starches</p> <p>Wheat starch, corn starch, cane sugar starch, potato starch, tapioca starch, sago starch, other starches</p> <p>4. Processed vegetable products</p>	
	<p>Canned or bottled vegetables, processed tomato products, processed mushroom products, salt-packed vegetables (excluding Japanese-style pickles), pickled vegetables, frozen vegetable products, dried vegetables, vegetables boiled in sweetened soy sauce, other processed vegetable products</p>
<p>5. Processed fruit products</p> <p>Canned or bottled fruit, jam, marmalade, fruit butter, pickled fruit, dried fruit, frozen fruit products, other processed fruit products</p> <p>6. Tea, coffee and cocoa preparations</p> <p>Tea, coffee products, cocoa products</p> <p>7. Spices</p> <p>Black pepper, white pepper, red pepper, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, saffron, laurel, paprika, allspice, Japanese pepper, curry powder, mustard powder, horseradish, ginger, other spices</p> <p>8. Noodles and breads</p> <p>Noodles, breads</p> <p>9. Processed cereal grain products</p> <p>Alphanized (pre-processed) grain, processed rice products, oatmeal, bread flour, <i>fu</i> (wheat-gluten bread), barley tea, other processed cereal grain products</p> <p>10. Confections</p> <p>Biscuits, baked confections, rice confections, fried confections, fresh Japanese-style confections, fresh Western-style confections, semi-fresh confections, Japanese-style dry confections, candies, chocolates, chewing gum, confections preserved in sugar, snack confections, frozen confections, other confections</p> <p>11. Processed bean products</p> <p>Bean jam, boiled beans, <i>tofu</i> (soybean curd), fried <i>tofu</i>, dried <i>tofu</i>, frozen <i>tofu</i>, <i>natto</i> (fermented soybeans), soybean flour, peanut products, roasted soybeans, other bean preparations</p> <p>12. Sugar and sweeteners</p> <p>Sugar, molasses, saccharide</p> <p>13. Other processed agricultural products</p> <p><i>Konnyaku</i> (paste made from the starch of the devil's-tongue), other processed agricultural products not separately classified under 1-12 above</p>	

14. Meat products	Processed meat products, canned or bottled fowl meat, frozen fowl meat products, other meat products
15. Dairy products	Milk, processed milk, lactic beverages, condensed milk, concentrated milk, powdered milk, fermented milk and lactic Bacillus beverages, butter, cheese, ice cream, other dairy products
16. Processed egg products	Processed chicken egg products, other processed egg products
17. Other processed livestock products	Honey, other processed livestock products not separately classified under 14-16 above
18. Processed fishery products	Dried fishery products, salting-dried fishery products, boiled fishery products, salt-packed fishery products, canned fishery products, fish paste, other processed fishery products
19. Processed seaweed	Tangle, processed tangle products, dried laver, processed laver, dried <i>wakame</i> seaweed, dried <i>hijiki</i> seaweed, dried <i>arame</i> seaweed, agar-agar, other processed seaweed products
20. Other processed fishery products	Other processed fishery products not separately classified under 18 or 19 above
21. Flavorings and soups	Table salt, <i>miso</i> (soybean paste), soy sauce, other sauces, vinegar, tasting flavorings, flavoring related products, soups, other flavorings and soup products
22. Cooking oils and fats	Vegetable-based cooking oils and fats, animal-based cooking oils and fats, processed cooking oils and fats
23. Cooked foods	Pre-cooked frozen foods, chilled foods, retort pouch foods, boxed lunches, daily dishes, other cooked foods
24. Beverages	Drinking water, soft drinks, ice, other beverages
25. Other processed foods and beverages	Yeasts and leavenings, powdered juices, other processed foods and beverages not separately classified under 21-24 above.

What kind of labeling does the JAS Law require in order to sell imported fresh foods?

The JAS Law provides for the “Fresh Food Product Quality Labeling Standards” that apply to agricultural products, livestock and fishery products and other fresh foods sold to consumers

(definition of fresh food: food or beverage other than processed foods as listed in Table 23). It is required to place labeling of the following two items.

- 1) Product name
- 2) Country of origin

In addition, fishery products are subject to the “Fishery Product Quality Labeling Standards,” under which the following items of information are required.

- 1) Products that were previously frozen and subsequently thawed must use the word “thawed”
- 2) Products that were deliberately cultivated must use the word “cultivated”

The Law requires non-retail vendors to include labeling on the container or packaging in a readily visible location, and on the bill of parcels or statement of delivery. The Law requires retailers to place labeling on the container or packaging in a readily visible location, or to display it in a readily visible location adjacent to the applicable fresh food item.

*Contacts: Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

Table 23 Foods Defined by the Fresh Food Product Quality Labeling Standards

- | |
|--|
| <p>1. Agricultural food products</p> <p>(products that are prepared, sorted, or washed after harvesting, including those that are merely cut)</p> <p>(1) Rice (including mixtures with polished barley or other grains) Unpolished rice (brown rice), polished rice</p> <p>(2) Other grains</p> <p>Corn, millet, barn millet, buckwheat, broomcorn millet, Indian millet, pearl barley, other grains</p> <p>(3) Beans (not including unripened beans)</p> <p>Soybeans, adzuki beans, kidney beans, peas, string beans, broad beans, green beans, peanuts, other beans</p> <p>(4) Vegetables (including those merely cut)</p> <p>Tuberous vegetables, leaf vegetables, fruit vegetables, spice vegetables, picking vegetables, mushrooms, edible wild plant, fruit pulp vegetables, other vegetables</p> <p>(5) Fruits (including those merely cut or frozen)</p> |
|--|

<p>Citrus fruits, nucleolus fruits, kernel fruits, berries, shell fruits, tropical and subtropical fruits, other fruits</p>
<p>2. Livestock food products</p> <p>(1) Meats (including chilled, frozen, sliced, and cut meats)</p> <p>Beef, pork, wild boar meat, horse meat, mutton, goat meat, rabbit meat, poultry meat, other fresh meats</p> <p>(2) Edible fowl eggs (fresh eggs in shells)</p> <p>Chicken eggs, duck eggs, quail eggs, other edible eggs</p>
<p>3. Fishery food products</p> <p>(including round, semi-dressed, dressed, filleted, cut, <i>sashimi</i> (fresh slices of raw fish; not including combinations), stripped, frozen, thawed and live fishery products)</p> <p>(1) Fish</p> <p>Fresh-water fish, salmon and trout, sardines and herring, bonito, tuna and mackerel, horse mackerel, yellowtail and common dolphin, cod and sole, flatfish and flounder, sea bream and red snapper, other fish</p> <p>(2) Shellfish</p> <p>Corbicula and pond snails, oysters, ark shells, alaga shells, clams, short-necked clams, hen clams, abalone, top shells, other shellfish</p> <p>(3) Fishery animals</p> <p>Squid, octopus, shrimp, lobster, prawns and crayfish, crabs, other crustaceans, sea urchins, sea slugs, turtles, other fishery animals</p>
<p>(4) Marine mammals</p> <p>Whales, dolphins, other marine mammals</p> <p>(5) Seaweed</p> <p>Tangle, <i>wakame</i>, laver, sea lettuce, agar-agar, other seaweed</p>

Who is responsible for attaching the required labeling?

As discussed in Q65, the Food Sanitation Law, the JAS Law (Law Concerning Standardization and Proper Labeling of Agricultural and Forestry Products), the Measurement Law and the Nutrition Improvement Law all have mandatory provisions related to labeling.

1. Food Sanitation Law

The Food Sanitation Law defines that “any food for which a labeling standard is defined must bear labeling that conforms to the standard, or else it may not be sold, displayed for the purpose of supplying it for sale, or for any other commercial purpose.”

In the case of imported products as well, the person who intends to sell the product to the general public is responsible for attaching the labeling required by the Law.

2. JAS Law

The Law was amended in 1999 to require product quality labeling for all food products sold to ordinary consumers (see Q67, Q68). In the case of imported foods, the labeling obligation under the product quality labeling standard falls upon the importer.

3. Measurement Law

The Measurement Law obligates any entity importing and selling foods packed in airtight container- packages to accurately measure and provide that accurate measurement of the net content volume on the label. The Law also stipulates a permissible tolerance for how much the actual volume may vary from the stated volume. Products that exceed this tolerance may not be sold in Japan.

* Contacts:

Food Sanitation Law:

Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

JAS Law:

Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371) <http://www.cfqlcs.go.jp>

Measurement Law:

Weight and Measures Office, Measurement and Intellectual Infrastructure Division,
Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau,
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (TEL: 03-3501-1511)
Prefectural Inspection Institute of Weights and Measures

Does it suffice to translate foreign language labeling on imported products into Japanese?

As stated in Q66, labeling must be in Japanese, and must use easy-to-read and readily understandable in accordance with the law. If you simply translate the labeling that appears on the product in the exporting country, you take the risk that the labeling may be inadequate in some way,

because the required labeling items differ from the country of origin, because different units of measure are used, or some other reason.

Take the case of food additives, for example. A food additive with the same name may be produced according to different standards in Japan and other countries. Also, some substance that is listed as an ingredient in the exporting country labeling may have to be listed as a food additive in Japan (such as vitamins added as a nutritional supplement).

Consequently, the requirement is that it conform to Japanese labeling standards, and that the items of information on the label be stated accurately.

Figure 14 Labeling Example: Canned or Bottled Pineapples

Product name	Pineapples • in syrup (heavy)	The word “pineapples” must be followed by a raised dot (•) and the name of the type of liquid in which it is packed.
Shape	Sliced	Described as whole, halved, quartered, sliced, chunks, vertical slices, sticks, crushed, or pieces
Number of contents	8 pieces	(1) Halved or sliced must indicate the number of separate items. (2) If it is difficult to include all the labeling items together in the same location, the content number column may be used as a reference to where the label items are given. (3) If the manufacturer is unable to determine the number of separate items in the container for technical reasons related to the manufacturing process, the foregoing does not apply.
List of ingredients	Pineapples, sugar, fructose, molasses, acidulant	Contents must be listed in order according to their proportion of the weight of the product.
Drained weight	270 g	Grams (g), kilograms (kg)
Net contents	425 g	Grams (g), kilograms (kg).
Best-before date	Listed on can top	April 2003 2003.4 03.4 0304 April 1, 2003 2003.4.1 03.4.1 030401
Preservation methods	Keep out of direct sunlight, and store at a room temperature.	Include the phrases “keep out of direct sunlight, and store at a room temperature” or “store at a room temperature,” etc. However, the indication to store at a room temperature may be omitted if that

is the only stipulation.

Country of origin U.S.A
Importer name XXX Company, Ltd.
and address 1-2-3 XXX, Chuo-ku, Tokyo

What is the right way to describe food additives in labeling?

In principle, all additives used in food products are subject to labeling requirements. Normally, an additive shall be declared by both substance name and category name when used for one of the following eight purposes.

- Sweetener
- Coloring agent
- Preservative
- Thickening agent, stabilizer, gelling agent
- Antioxidant
- Color fixative
- Bleaching agent
- Anti-mold agent

Designated additives must be listed in accordance with the names in Supplemental Table 2 of the Enforcement Regulations for the Food Sanitation Law (including alternate names) (example: L-ascorbic acid (Vitamin C)). Existing additives must be listed according to the names that appear in the registry of existing additives (example: caffeine).

Sometimes confections imported from Europe contain alphanumeric symbols or codes in their list of ingredient labeling, such as “E123.” This labeling indicates a food additive.

Normally Japan requires that food additives appear by name in the product labeling. However, because there are so many different languages used within the European Union, the EU has adopted this three-digit code labeling system. Food additives on which the Food Science Committee has completed safety evaluations composed of EU member nations and approved for use within the EU has the letter “E” appended as a prefix to the additive code. In this case, “E123” is the code for “Food Red No. 2.” To find out the official Japanese translations for these E-codes, consult the Food Additives Manual, published by the Japan Food Additives Association (TEL: 03-3667-8311).

Could you explain about the date labeling requirements?

International food standards (CODEX standards) employ the date marking concept, as do many foreign countries. In Japan, by amendment of the law in 1997, the date marking program was introduced in order to make Japanese labeling standards conformant with international practices. There are two types of date marking:

1. Use-by Date

Foods that undergo rapid degradation in product quality (in general, those that retain their quality for five days or less, from the date of manufacture) provide a “use-by date.” This means “eat-before date,” the date which signifies the end of the estimated period under any stated storage conditions, after which the food probably will not have the quality attributes normally expected by consumers. After this date, the food should not be regarded as marketable. Use-by date must of the day, the month and the year.

2. Best-before Date (Date of Minimum Durability)

Foods that undergo comparatively moderate degradation in product quality (in general, those that retain their quality for more than five days, from the date of manufacture) provide a “best-before date.” This indicates to the date before which they can eat the food and still have it retain its quality, although beyond the date the food may still be perfectly satisfactory. Food that retain their full quality for more than three months shall consist at least of the month and the year (year-month-day format is also acceptable).

Dates are set in relation to the properties of foods, based on results of scientifically and rationally performed microbe experiments, physicochemical experiments, and functional testing. Furthermore, date of minimum durability (best-before date) take into consideration the interval during which there is no risk of health or sanitation related harm due to decay or other degradation in food quality, when the food has been preserved by some definite method after manufacture. The date is set so as to provide a fully adequate buffer prior to the end of this interval of time.

Figure 15 Distinction between Use-by Date and Best-before Date (Date of Minimum Durability)

Use-by date (generally, within five days)		Best-before date (longer than five days)	
Year-month-day label	Year-month-day label	Year-month label (Year-month-day label also acceptable)	
Date of Manufacture	5 days	3 months	Product quality retention period

The term “date of minimum durability” is defined by the Food Sanitation Law as “the date indicating the last time when a food or food additive can adequately retain its complete product quality.” On the other hand, the JAS Law defines the term “best-before date” as “the last date when a food in an unopened container or packaging and preserved according to an indicated preservation method can adequately retain its complete expected product quality characteristics.” The two terms are interpreted as semantically identical for administrative purposes. Nevertheless, there have been complaints that the non-uniformity of definition in these terms make them difficult for both consumers and providers to understand. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries have agreed to look into unifying the definition of these terms.

Could you explain about country of origin labeling?

The country of origin of a food represents an important piece of information for consumers when choosing a product. Country of origin labeling is subject to the following requirements under provisions of the JAS Law and the Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations.

1. Regulations under the JAS Law

Product quality labeling standards based on the JAS Law require country of origin labeling for all processed foods and fresh foods sold to consumers.

In the case of agricultural products, the name of a commonly known geographic place may be used instead of the name of the country of origin. In the case of fishery products, the name of the sea area where they was caught may be shown along with the country of origin. (see Q67 and Q68)

2. Regulations under the Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations

All products, including food products, must include labeling that indicates the country of origin in a way that does not mislead general consumers. Labeling that fails to do so is prohibited as a

form of misleading representation. Imported foods that do not clearly indicate the actual country of origin in the instances described below are judged to have engaged in “misleading representations.”

- 1) When the label gives a country name or a place name in a country, or shows a national flag or crest of a country other than the country of origin of the product.
- 2) The label gives a manufacturer name, brand name or trademark of a business in a country other than the country of origin of the product.
- 3) The literal description used in the entire labeling or in the main portion of the labeling is Japanese.

For example, a confectionery made by a Japanese company at a plant in China puts a Japanese-language label on the product and sells it under a Japanese brand label. If the country of origin labeling does not say “Made in China,” it constitutes a form of misleading representation.

The Fair Trade Commission of Japan defines the country of origin as “a country in which a treatment or process effecting substantial change to the substance of the goods made.” Examples of an action that produces substantial change would be baking or frying in the case of a rice cracker; manufacturing processes applied to unrefined tea to make black tea; and diluting an a stock solution or fruit juice concentrate to make a soft drink. If pasta is imported in bulk from Italy and packaged for retail sale in Japan, the country of origin is still Italy.

* Contacts:

JAS Law: Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

Act Against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations:

Consumer Related Division, Fair Trade Commission of Japan (TEL: 03-3581-5471)

Could you explain about labeling for foods containing allergens?

An increasing number of people suffer from food allergies, which cause rashes or a drop in blood pressure when food is ingested. In some cases the allergic reaction can cause potentially fatal breathing problems. Therefore, it is important to provide consumers with information about allergenic substances present in foods. Internationally, the CODEX Commission agreed in 1999 to include any of eight kinds of foods containing ingredients known to be allergens in labeling for foods.

Following this measure, in April of 2001 the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare instituted its Labeling Program for Foods Containing Allergens, based on provisions of the Food Sanitation Law. Allergenic labeling is required for five items designated as “specified ingredients,” substances with a great need for such labeling given the number of allergenic reactions and the risk to health they pose. Labeling is recommended for another 19 items designated as “items corresponding to specified ingredients.”

<Foods Subject to Ingredient Labeling Requirements>

Processed foods and food additives containing the following foods must state in the labeling that this food is present (additives may use the phrase “made from XX” or “derived from XX”).

Allergenic reactions can occur even from extremely small quantities of allergenic substances. Accordingly, labeling is required regardless of how little is present.

Table 24 Foods Subject to Ingredient Labeling Requirement as Allergens

<p>[Specified ingredients] Labeling mandatory (5 items)</p>	<p>Wheat, buckwheat, eggs, milk, peanuts</p>
<p>[Items corresponding to specified ingredients] Labeling recommended (19 items)</p>	<p>Abalone, squid, salmon, salmon roe (<i>ikura</i>), mackerel, crabs, shrimp/prawn, beef, pork, chicken, oranges, peach, kiwi fruit, apples, walnut, soybeans, yams, gelatin, <i>matsutake</i> mushroom</p>

<Scope of Labeling Requirement>

The requirement applies to processed foods and food additives sealed in wrapping or containers for sale. The requirement applies to food ingredients not regulated under the JAS Law and not sold directly to consumers, so it also applies to foods during the distribution stage.

* Contacts: Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

Could you explain about labeling for organic agricultural products and organic agricultural product processed foods?

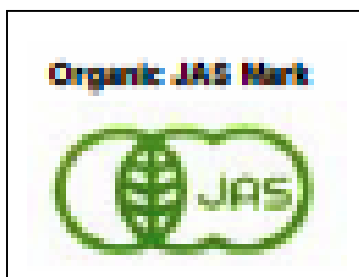
The JAS Law instituted the Specific JAS standards (standards for specific production and manufacturing methods and unique ingredients) applying to organic agricultural products and organic agricultural product processed foods. These standards clarified definitions and set standards for production methods and labeling.

Only those food products that comply with the standards are allowed to display the Organic JAS Mark and include in their labeling the phrase “organic.”

The term “organic agricultural product” normally refers to a product cultivated in a field to which no agricultural chemicals or chemical fertilizers have been applied for three years prior to harvest, and have not been grown from seeds, shoots or crops that have been produced using recombinant DNA techniques.

The term “organic agricultural product processed food” normally refers to a product for which 95% of the total weight other than salt and water in the product consists of an organic agricultural product or organic processed agricultural product. And it must be made using a physical or biological (fermentation, smoking, etc.) processing method that keeps the use of food additives to a required minimum.

Among the future issued to be examined include how standards for “organic livestock,” “organic fishery product” and processed foods made from these products should be framed in light of the actual conditions of production, distribution and consumption.



Organic JAS Mark

* Contacts:

Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

What needs to be done to display the Organic JAS Mark on imported foods?

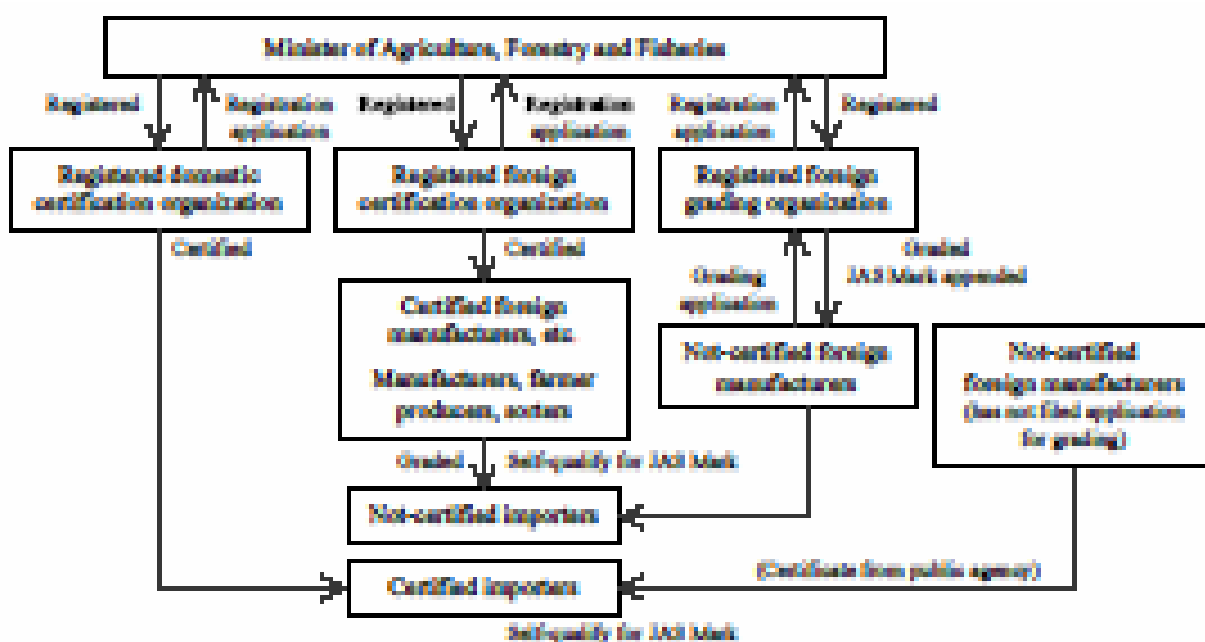
Organic agricultural products and organic agricultural product processed foods produced abroad must be certified through one of the following methods to display the Organic JAS Mark and to use the term “organic” to describe the product.

- (1) Product is qualified by a foreign grading organization registered with Japan’s Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and is imported with the Organic JAS Mark attached.

(2) Foreign manufacturers, production process supervisors (farmer producers) and sorters shall be authorized to self-qualify with the approval of a registered foreign certification organization, and to export the product with the Organic JAS Mark attached.

(3) Importers may obtain approval to qualify from a registered certification organization in Japan, and they may sell the imported product, in which accompanied a certificate (or copy) issued by a public agency abroad, with the Organic JAS mark attached.

Figure 16 Inspection and Certification System for Imported Organic Agricultural Products and Organic Agricultural Product Processed Foods



Some countries have programs equivalent to the JAS system under which products are graded or certified by registered foreign grading organizations or certification organizations. As of August of 2002, the following countries had programs that Japan recognizes as equivalent to the JAS system. Ireland, United States, Italy, Australia, Austria, Netherlands, Greece, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Belgium, Portugal, Luxembourg, United Kingdom

* Contacts:

Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
 Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
 Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

Could you explain about labeling requirements for genetically modified foods?

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has adopted a labeling requirement for genetically modified foods recognized as safe (see Table 25), based on provisions of the Food Sanitation Law and the JAS Law. The purpose of the requirement is to provide appropriate information about whether or not genetically modified or recombinant DNA techniques has been used with the product.

<Labeling Method>

There are three labeling methods, based on similar provisions of the Food Sanitation Law and the JAS Law. Products that violate the requirement are subject to legal measures and penalties based on either or both Laws and their regulations. Please be aware of this fact.

- (1) Foods produced from a genetically modified agricultural product and it is confirmed that it has been treated under a identity preserved handling (see Note):
 - Compulsory labeling of “soybeans (genetically modified),” etc.
- (2) Foods produced or distributed without segregation between GM agricultural products and non-GM agricultural products:
 - Compulsory labeling of “soybeans (GM not segregated),” or “soybeans (GM mixed)”
- (3) Foods produced from a non-GM agricultural product and it is confirmed that it has been treated under a identity preserved handling:
 - Voluntary labeling of “soybeans (not genetically modified),” etc.

(Note)“Identity preserved handling” refers to management method in which segregation between genetically modified agricultural products and non-GM agricultural product is accomplished, under the care of good manager at each stage of production, distribution and processing. Further, it must be verified by using documents clearly indicating that segregation has been made.

Labeling may be omitted in the following cases:

- When the genetically modified agricultural product is not one of the main ingredients (not among the top three ingredients by weight, and less than 5% of all ingredients by weight)
- When the recombinant DNA or proteins generated from them are dissolved or removed from the product (soy sauce, oils and fats)

* Contacts:

Food Sanitation Law:

Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
 Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

JAS Law:

Standards and Labeling Division, General Food Policy Bureau,
 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (TEL: 03-3502-8111)
 Standard and Labeling Department, Headquarter,
 Center for Food Quality, Labeling and Consumer Services (TEL: 048-600-2371)

Table 25 Foods Subject to Labeling Requirements for Genetically Modified Foods

Agricultural Products (5 items)	Soybean (including green soybeans and soybean sprouts), corn, potato, rapeseed, cottonseed	
Processed Foods (30 groups)	Items subject to labeling	Ingredient subject to labeling
	1 <i>Tofu</i> (soybean curd) and fried <i>tofu</i> 2 Dried soybean curd, soybean refuse, <i>yuba</i> (dried soybean curd) 3 <i>Natto</i> (fermented soybeans) 4 Soy milk 5 <i>Miso</i> (soybean paste) 6 Cooked soybean 7 Canned or bottled soybean 8 <i>Kinako</i> (roasted soybean flour) 9 Roasted soybean 10 Item containing food of items 1 to 9 as a main ingredient 11 Item containing soybeans (for cooking) as a main ingredient 12 Item containing soybeans flour as a main ingredient 13 Item containing soybeans protein as a main ingredient Soybean	
	14 Item containing green soybeans as a main ingredient Green soybeans	
	15 Item containing soybeans sprouts as a main ingredient Soybean sprouts	

	16 Corn snacks 17 Corn starch 18 Popcorn 19 Frozen corn 20 Canned or bottled corn 21 Item containing corn flour as a main ingredient 22 Item containing corn grits as a main ingredient (except corn flakes) 23 Item containing corn (for cooking) as a main ingredient 24 Item containing food items 16 to 20 as a main ingredient	Corn
	25 Frozen potato 26 Dried potato 27 Potato starch 28 Potato snacks 29 Item containing food items 25 to 28 as a main ingredient 30 Item containing potatoes (for cooking) as a main ingredient	Potato

(Note) In addition to the above, labeling is also required for “high oleic acid soybeans” and processed foods made from the same in the Product Quality Labeling Standards under the JAS Law, only when the safety of which has been confirmed by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

Safety review of genetically modified foods have been mandatory in Japan since April of 2001. The Food Sanitation Law prohibits the importation and sale of products that have not yet undergone this review, even if they have been approved for use in other countries. The Enforcement Regulations for the Food Sanitation Law have been amended to require reporting of genetically modified foods and processed foods thereof, as part of the notification system for imported foods. Sometimes verifying documentation is required of identity preserved handling, while the requirement may not be mentioned on the import notification form. Accordingly, it is important to thoroughly investigate requirements and consult with the Imported Foods Inspection Section at the Quarantine Station ahead of time.

Could you describe labeling standards for nutritional ingredients and calories?

Some countries have already mandated nutritional content labeling, but Japan does not yet have such a requirement. However, if Japanese-language nutritional ingredient or calorie content labeling does appear on processed foods sold to consumers, that labeling must conform to the nutritional content labeling standards program of the Nutrition Improvement Law.

<Targeted Foods>

Processed foods for sale (including chicken eggs)

<Overview of Nutritional Content Labeling Standards>

1) When listing the main nutritional ingredients, the calorie content, and the volume of listed ingredients:

Labeling must list calories, protein, fat, carbohydrates, sodium, and other nutritional content in order by volume.

2) When using highlighted or emphatic labeling for nutritional ingredients with high content (calcium, vitamin A, etc.) or low content (low-calorie, non-fat, etc.):

Labeling must list only eligible nutritional ingredients, and the volume level must conform to standard values.

<Label Location>

Product must be labeled in readily visible location without opening the container or packaging.

< Example Label>

<p style="text-align: center;">Cream-Filled Biscuit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">One biscuit contains the same Vitamin C as 10 strawberries!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strawberry flavor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Per pastry xx g)</p> <p>Calories 54 kcal</p> <p>Protein 0.4 g</p> <p>Fat 2.9 g</p> <p>Carbohydrate 6.5 g</p> <p>Sodium 56 mg</p> <p>Vitamin C 120 mg</p>
--

* Contacts:

Office of Health Policy on Newly Developed Foods, Policy Planning Division,
Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

Could you explain about labeling requirements for foods with health claims?

Foods that meet stipulated regulatory and labeling standards established under the Food Sanitation Law may be sold using the phrase “food with health claims.” The category of food with health claims is divided into two types, “foods for specified health uses” and “foods with nutrient function claims,” based on differences in purpose and function.

Foods for specific health uses have been approved after review by the Japanese government for effectiveness and safety of their special physiological and health-promoting properties. These products may display the mark of foods for specified health (based on the Nutrition Improvement Law) in their labeling.

In contrast, foods with nutrient function claims contain specific nutritional ingredients in conformance with the specifications and standards, and labeling includes stipulated items of information. There is no need to apply for approval or file any type of notifications with the government. Foods with nutrient function claims may be freely manufactured and sold in Japan.

< Classification of Foods with Health Claims >

	----- Foods with health claims -----		
Pharmaceuticals (including quasi-drugs)	Foods for specified health uses (Individual approval type)	Foods with nutrient function claims (Specifications and standards type)	General foods (including so-called “health foods”)

< Required Labeling Items >

In addition to the labeling requirements under the Food Sanitation Law, foods with health claims are also subject to the following labeling items.

Foods for specified health uses	Foods with nutrient function claims
1. Statement that this product is a food with health claims (food for specified health use)	1. Statement that this product is a food with health claims (food with nutrient function claims)
2. Nutritional ingredients (including ingredients to be functional for specified health uses)	2. Nutritional ingredients (including nutritional ingredients to be functional)
3. Specified health uses (approved labeling)	3. Nutritional function
4. Recommended daily dosage of the food	4. Recommended daily dosage of the food
5. Method of intake	5. Method of intake
6. Ratio to required daily nutritional dose (only when required nutritional dose has been established)	6. Ratio to required daily nutritional dose

7. Warnings associated with taking the food	7. Warnings associated with taking the food 8. Statement that this product has not received separate examination by the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare as a food for specified health uses
---	--

The following nutrients may include mention of nutritional function in labeling:

Minerals: calcium, iron

Vitamins: niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, vitamin A, vitamin B1, vitamin B2, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, vitamin C, vitamin D, vitamin E, folic acid

* Contacts:

Office of Health Policy on Newly Developed Foods, Policy Planning Division,
Department of Food Safety, Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau,
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (TEL: 03-5253-1111)

Could you explain about the recycling mark shown in food containers and packaging?

The Law for Promotion of Effective Utilization of Resources requires identifier labeling designed to promote recycling of containers and packaging. Covered types of containers and packaging include steel cans or aluminum cans used for soft drinks and alcoholic beverages, PET bottles used for soft drinks, alcoholic beverages and soy sauce, plastic containers and packaging, and paper containers and packaging. (see Fig. 17)

In the case of imported foods, importers bear the responsibility, in principle, of making sure the recycling mark appears. There is no legal requirement to put recycling marks on paper packs (non-aluminum) used for soft drinks and alcoholic beverages, or on cardboard packaging. However, the industries involved have voluntarily adopted their own recycling mark used on labeling. (see Fig. 18)

Figure 17 Legally Required Recycling Mark for Food Products

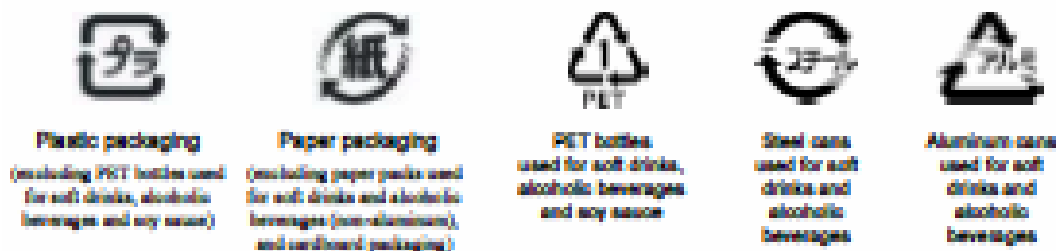


Figure 18 Voluntary Recycling Marks



* Contacts:

Recycling Promotion Division, Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau,

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (TEL: 03-3501-4978) <http://www.meti.go.jp>

The Japan Containers and Packaging Recycling Association (TEL: 03-5532-8591) <http://www.jcpra.or.jp>

Japan Steel Can Recycling Association (TEL: 03-5550-9431) <http://www.rits.or.jp/steelcan/>

Japan Aluminum Can Recycling Association (TEL: 03-3582-9755) <http://www.alumi-can.or.jp/>

The Council for PET Bottle Recycling (TEL: 03-3662-7591) <http://www.petbottle-rec.gr.jp/>

Paper Packaging Recycling Council (TEL: 03-3501-6191) <http://www.kami-suisinkyo.org/>

Plastic Packaging Recycling Council (TEL: 03-3501-5893) <http://www.pprc.gr.jp/>

Beverage Paper Carton Recycling Council (TEL: 03-3264-3903) <http://www.kami-suisinkyo.org/>

Cardboard Recycling Council (TEL: 03-3248-4851)