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This table summarises the general requirements and standards for food and agricultural imports into Japan.

Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
General Information	<p>The general import procedure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Import notification form should indicate additives, preservatives, coloring, spices or flavorings, as well as description of ingredients and processing outline, to be submitted to the Quarantine Station of MHLW2. The Quarantine Station will examine the product to determine if it conforms to the Japanese Food Sanitation law3. Products that require examination will be inspected on the spot where samples will be taken and forwarded for laboratory analysis <p>Details of food importing procedure may be viewed on the MHLW website at http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/importedfoods/1.html</p>
Labeling	
a)Standard Declaration based on mandatory Food Hygiene Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product name,• country of origin,• name of importer,• ingredients other than additives in descending order,• food additives in descending order of weight on a separate line from other ingredients,• net weight in metric units,• "best before date" or "expiry of consumption" on products whose quality changes rapidly;• method of use, storage instruction or preparation if any
b) Requirement to be labeled for certain products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GMO where the genetically modified content of labeled ingredient exceed 5% (limited to foods made from corn, soybeans, rapeseed and cottonseeds) <p>Please refer to Ministry of Health and Labour Welfare site, http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/qa/gm-food/index.html or http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/e_label/index.htm</p>

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Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foods containing wheat, buckwheat, egg, milk, peanuts, prawn and crab Required by Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare on food containing any of the five ingredients known to cause significant allergic reactions• Also recommended for those containing abalone, squid, salmon roe, orange, kiwi, beef, walnuts, salmon, mackerel, soybean, chicken, pork, Matsutake mushrooms, peach, yam, apple, banana and gelatin.
	For more info, please refer to http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/qa/allergies/index.html
c) Nutrition	Although voluntary, it has to follow the MHLW nutritional labeling guidelines, must be in Japanese. The major entities have to be displayed includes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• calories (kcal),• protein (g),• fat (g),• sugar/ carbohydrate (g) and• sodium (mg or g if >1g) if even one part of the nutrition info (e.g. vitamin content)to be displayed
d) Processed foods labeling	Under JAS law, the followings have to be declared: name of product, ingredients, net amount of contents, best-before date, name of manufacturer/ importer and method of preservation. However, there are additional Individual Quality Labeling Standards available from the website http://www.maff.go.jp/soshiki/syokuhin/hinshitu/e_label/index.htm
Other Information	
Major laws pertaining to food safety and standards	Food Safety Basic Law Food Sanitation Law and Japan Agricultural Standards Law http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/market/regulations/ (organic products labeling or Individual Quality labeling)

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Food Additives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For both artificial and natural that do not appear on MHLW's positive list of approved additives cannot be used in the product. While CODEX standards are considered in MHLW's safety assessment, only additives that has been approved by MHLW may be used in foods and beverages sold in Japan. <p>Please refer to FFCR website: http://www.ffcr.or.jp/zaidan/FFCRHOME.nsf/pages/e-lists-test For details on the specifications and standards for food, food additives, etc under Food Sanitation Law, please refer to http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/market/regulations/pdf/foodadd2007mar-e.pdf</p>
Japan Agricultural Standard	<p>The JAS logo is a voluntary marking scheme, administered by MAFF for products in general including food products. Food such as cured meat products like ham or chicken/ egg origin products can be certified on moisture content or oxidation in oil, against general JAS or on the aging period against specific JAS.</p> <p>The JAS logo is also available for organic food products. Certification bodies have to be registered and accredited by MAFF. Overseas products are able to attach JAS logo for organic products without certification as long as the organic law of the country has been certified to be equivalent to that of Japan.</p> <p>Two types :</p> <p>General JAS – where products are certified against JAS based on product requirements in ingredients and final state Specific JAS – where products are certified against JAS based on manufacturing process</p> <p>Guide to the JAS system for Agricultural and Forest Products can be viewed from http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/market/regulations/index.html</p>

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Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
	To expedite custom clearance, following information should be provided at the time of import: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• chemical names and contents in ppm• names of all natural food additives• artificial colors identified by their chemical name and international color index number. Natural color descriptions must also be provided to determine acceptability for specific product exported• artificial flavours identified by their chemical name as they appear on the Japanese approved additive list for the specific product exported
Packaging and Container Regulations	To prevent the use of harmful containers or packaging material, MHLW may establish standards for methods for manufacturing them. MHLW established specifications for synthetic resins, metal cans, and containers/ packages made of glass, ceramic, enamel or rubber can be through the following: http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/market/regulations/pdf/foodadd2007mar-e.pdf
Pesticide and other contaminants	Positive list system which includes the actual MRLs can be found on MHLW's webpage in English at: http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/foodsafety/positivelist060228/index.html
Other contaminants	Some foods have naturally occurring substances which may be considered harmful to the human body or which may be contaminated with harmful substances or germs during their manufacturing. Inspection officials look for the following items; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aflatoxin levels in peanuts and peanut products• Poisonous fish, Shellfish poisons• Cyanogen (in butter beans, white beans, etc)• Methanl in distilled liquors and wines• Gossypol in cottonseeds other than for oil extraction• Salmonella in meat meant to be consumed raw• Listeria in some natural cheeses• Trichina in game birds, etc• Radioactive substances usually in foods of European origin• Decomposed or deteriorated foods of all kind

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Certification/ Requirements	Remarks
Foods or beverages or their ingredients that may contain materials produced through recombinant DNA techniques	Must be approved by the Government of Japan. More information is available on the MHLW website (http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/food/index.html and http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/qa/gm-food/index.html)

Reference: USDA FAS GAIN Report
Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

DISCLAIMER:

This document has been prepared by SPRING Singapore with the intention of assisting Singapore based exporters of food products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this document, the information may not be completely accurate as policies may have changed or clear and consistent information on these policies were not available. They cannot be taken as the official interpretation of the regulations. It is highly recommended that Singapore based exporters verify the full set of certification and import requirements with the relevant authorities in importing country. **Please note that final import approval of any product is subject to the importing country's rules and regulations as interpreted by custom officials at the point of entry.**