

# MAFF

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

July 9, 2020

Christian Hofer  
Director General  
Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG)  
Schwarzenburgstrasse 165  
3003 Bern

Dear Mr. Hofer,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 2nd July 2020 setting the terms and conditions for the recognition of equivalence of the respective systems of organic production for livestock products and organic processed foods of animal origin between Japan and Switzerland and which reads as follows:

*"Dear Mr. Shiokawa,*

*I appreciate that the Government of Japan and the Government of Switzerland have been able to have fruitful and positive exchanges between our offices regarding the equivalence of the system of organic production for livestock products and organic processed foods of animal origin. Switzerland and Japan have recognized the equivalence of their respective systems of production for organic plants and organic processed foods of plant origin in April 2013.*

*I am pleased to propose the following terms and conditions for the recognition of equivalence of the respective systems of organic production for livestock products and organic processed foods of animal origin, which were discussed and agreed by both the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) and the Federal Office for Agriculture of Switzerland (FOAG):*

- (1) With respect to the products listed in Appendix 1 and based on the document review of the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming, the MAFF recognises that the system of organic production (organic livestock products and organic processed foods of animal origin) in Switzerland is equivalent to the organic certification system under the Act on Japanese Agricultural Standards (JAS).*
- (2) With respect to the products listed in Appendix 2 and based on the document review of the Japanese Agricultural Standards (JAS) for Organic Livestock and for Organic Processed Foods of Animal Origin, the FOAG recognises that the system of organic production (organic livestock products and organic processed foods of animal origin) of Japan is equivalent to the organic certification system under the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming.*
- (3) The present mutual recognition arrangement is subject to the following conditions:*

- a. *The MAFF and the FOAG may notify, at any time, to the other party their decision to terminate this arrangement. The termination shall take effect 90 days after the date of receipt of the notification by the other party.*
- b. *The MAFF will conduct its on-site assessment in Switzerland as soon as the Covid-19 crisis allows it to formally complete its equivalency determination.*

*If the proposed terms and conditions as set out above are acceptable to the MAFF, I have the honour to suggest that this letter, together with the MAFF's reply and its Appendices as integral part thereof, shall constitute an agreement between Switzerland and Japan. The arrangement together with its Appendices shall enter into force on the date of receipt of the reply of the MAFF by Switzerland, at the earliest on July 16, 2020.*

*Switzerland is open to discuss with Japan in the future the restrictions on the scope of origin of organic ingredients.*

*The successful exchange of letters between the Government of Japan and the Government of Switzerland regarding this organic equivalence arrangement will help to further develop the trade of organic food products between our two countries, for the benefit of our consumers and in the interest of Japanese and Swiss companies engaged in producing and trading organic products and foodstuffs.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Christian Hofer*

*Director General*

*Appendix 1: Swiss Livestock Products*

*Appendix 2: Japan Livestock Products*

**Appendix 1**  
**Swiss Livestock Products**

- A. A Swiss livestock product or processed food containing ingredients of animal origin may be sold, labeled, and represented as organic in Japan if it is:
1. Certified as organic under the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming, and limited to the specified scope of the livestock by Organic JAS; and
  2. Grown, produced or processed in Switzerland.
- B. A Swiss organic livestock product covered in Paragraph A above and imported into Japan:
1. Must be accompanied by an export certificate that is stipulated in the Act on Japanese Agricultural Standards (Act No.175 of 1950) art.12 section 1; and
  2. Must be imported into Japan by a JAS-certified importer.
- C. The Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) will notify the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) in a timely manner of any instances of the following:
1. Changes with respect to Swiss competent authority, Swiss accreditation service (SAS) and accredited certification bodies;
  2. Proposed and final regulations and guidelines in Switzerland that may affect this Appendix; and,
  3. Notifications of non-compliances that may affect the organic status of Swiss livestock products covered in Paragraph A above.
- D. Following advance notice from the MAFF, the FOAG will permit MAFF officials to conduct on-site evaluations in Switzerland to verify how the Swiss organic control system, including the monitoring supervisory activities carried out by the competent authorities works and how the certification bodies carry out the requirements of the Swiss organic ordinances. The FOAG will cooperate and assist the MAFF, to the extent permitted under domestic law, in carrying out these on-site evaluations.
- E. The FOAG will provide to the MAFF the following documents in each calendar year by 31 March:
1. A report that contains information regarding the types and quantities of Swiss livestock products exported under this Appendix over the prior calendar year;
  2. A report that contains the types of non-compliances identified by the FOAG during any supervision, and steps taken by the FOAG to ensure that non-compliances were corrected; and
  3. A list of certification bodies accredited and supervised by the FOAG within the scope of the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming.
  4. A list of the certified operators exporting livestock products or processed foods containing ingredients of animal origin to Japan according to the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming.

**Appendix 2**  
**Japan Livestock Products**

- A. A Japanese livestock product or processed food containing ingredients of animal origin may be sold, labeled, and represented as organic in Switzerland if it is:
1. Certified as organic under the Japanese Agricultural Standard (JAS) for Organic Livestock and the Japanese Agricultural Standard for Organic Processed Foods, and limited to the scope of livestock specified by the Swiss Ordinances on Organic Farming; and
  2. Grown, produced or processed in Japan with organic ingredients that have been grown/produced in Japan or that have been imported into Japan from Switzerland or from a third country for which Japan has recognised that the products have been produced and controlled in that third country in accordance with the rules equivalent to those laid down under Japanese legislation.
- B. A Japanese organic livestock product covered in Paragraph A above and imported into Switzerland:
1. Must be accompanied by an import certificate as stipulated in the annex 9 of the Swiss EAER Ordinance on Organic Farming; and
  2. Must be imported into Switzerland by a Swiss certified importer.
- C. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) will notify the Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG) in a timely manner of any instances of the following:
1. Changes with respect to the Japanese competent authority, the Japanese accreditation body and accredited certification bodies;
  2. Proposed and final regulations and guidelines in Japan that may affect this Appendix; and
  3. Notifications of non-compliances that may affect the organic status of Japanese livestock products covered in Paragraph A above.
- D. Following advance notice from the FOAG, the MAFF will permit the FOAG officials to conduct on-site evaluations in Japan to verify how the Japanese organic control system, including the monitoring supervisory activities carried out by the competent authorities works and how certification bodies carry out the requirements of the Japanese organic standard. The MAFF will cooperate and assist the FOAG, to the extent permitted under domestic law, in carrying out these on-site evaluations.
- E. The MAFF will provide to the FOAG the following documents in each calendar year by 31 March:
1. A report that contains information regarding the types and quantities of Japanese livestock products exported under this Appendix over the prior calendar year;
  2. A report that contains the types of non-compliances identified by the MAFF during any supervision, and steps taken by the MAFF to ensure that non-compliances were corrected;
  3. A list of certification bodies accredited and supervised by the MAFF within the scope of the Japanese organic standard; and
  4. A list of the certified operators exporting livestock products or processed foods containing ingredients of animal origin to Switzerland according to JAS organic standard.”

I have the honour to confirm that the above-mentioned proposal is acceptable to Japan and that your letter together with its Appendices and this reply shall constitute an arrangement between Japan and Switzerland, which shall enter into force on the date of receipt by Switzerland of this reply, at the earliest on July 16, 2020.

I am very pleased about the conclusion of this organic equivalence arrangement with Switzerland. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is committed to working with the Federal Office for Agriculture and continuing our cooperation in our joint Organics Working Group.

Yours sincerely,



SHIOKAWA Shirara

Director-General

Food Industry Bureau

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries