Are your pet food products properly labeled with their COUNTRY OF ORIGIN?

The final pet food processing steps vary with the type of product, as shown below. In principle, the country of origin is where the final step took place.*

- Dry and semi-dry type: extrusion molding process (extruder)
- Wet type: retort sterilization process
- Kneaded type: heating process after products are kneaded into shape
- Baked goods / bread type: baking process
- Other types: any final process leading to a significant qualitative change

*In addition to the processes mentioned above, any other process that logically induces and which has been scientifically proven to induce a significant qualitative change is also considered to constitute a final processing step, with the exception of the following:

1. Labeling and adding marks, etc. to products
2. Packaging or placing products in containers
3. Packaging or combining various products into an assortment
4. Cutting a product into pieces
5. Drying, freezing and other treatments to facilitate transportation and storage of products
6. Supplementing with additional ingredients

Examples of confusing cases

- A food producer imported dried bonito from Country A and processed it into flakes or fine pieces as a furikake ingredient in Japan.
  → Country A is the country of origin (because the underlined process is considered to be simple cutting).

- A food producer imported chicken breast jerky from Country A and then washed it with water and trimmed and dried it in Japan.
  → Country A is the country of origin (because the underlined processes are considered to be simple cutting and drying for storage).

- A food producer obtained fresh chicken breast produced in Country A and dried it into jerky in Japan.
  → Japan is the country of origin (because the underlined process is considered to be a final process leading to a significant qualitative change).

- A food producer imported granular dry food from Country A and sprinkled it with flavoring ingredients.
  → Country A is the country of origin (because the underlined process is considered to be a supplemental addition of ingredients).

[Relevant information]

- “Implementation of the Pet Food Safety Act”
  The notification issued by the Director of the Food Safety and Consumer Affairs Bureau (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) and the Director of the Nature Conservation Bureau (Ministry of the Environment) on May 29, 2009 http://www.maff.go.jp/j/syouan/tikusuipetfood/p_law/08.html (in Japanese)

- For specific examples, please see the Q&A on the Pet Food Safety Act (in Japanese) at http://www.maff.go.jp/j/syouan/tikusuipetfood/

May 2014