



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA**

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INFORMATION ON RECENT SITUATION OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL IN FOOD IN JAPAN

(Prepared by Japan)

We would like to briefly introduce recent situation of radioactive material in food in Japan, in response to the request raised by ICA on Monday.

Immediately after the accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant in March 2011, Japanese Government has taken comprehensive countermeasures including establishing provisional regulation values, monitoring of foods, restricting the foods exceeding provisional regulation values and disclosing monitoring results.

In April 2012, Japan established new limits for radionuclide in food, which is based on intervention exemption level of 1 mSv/year and monitoring results. The 1mSv/year is equivalent to the Codex Standard.

1. We are conducting monitoring of food mainly before shipment from Fukushima and neighboring prefectures.
2. All the articles produced in the same lot of positive samples are recalled and disposed.
3. Restrictions of distribution shall be instructed, judging from the spreading of places where radioactive materials above the limits are detected as a result of monitoring.
4. Restriction is lifted after confirming the monitoring results.

As of the end of the September, 2014, more than 900,000 sample results covering many different foodstuffs have been reported and violation rate has been clearly reduced year by year.

Japan continues to share information and to respond to this issue in close cooperation with relevant international organizations.

References:

- 1) For Japan's new Standard Limits for Radionuclides in Foods:

http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/2011eq/dl/new_standard.pdf

- 2) For monitoring result:

http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/2011eq/index_food_radioactive.html

Control of radioactive materials in food

■ Establishing Legal Limits on radioactive materials in food

The indicator values given by the Nuclear Safety Commission were set as the provisional regulation values.

(March 17, 2011 – March 30, 2012)

The present legal limits for radioactive materials in food have been enforced. (April 1, 2012 -)



■ Monitoring of radioactive materials in foods

• March 18, 2011 – March 31, 2012

137,037 of which 1,204 were detected as above the provisional regulation values. (violation rate: 0.88%)

• April 1, 2012 – March 31, 2013

278,275 of which 2,372 were detected as above the limits. (violation rate: 0.85%)

• April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014

335,860 of which 1,025 were detected as above the limits. (violation rate: 0.31%)

• April 1, 2014 – October 5, 2014

168,667 of which 272 were detected as above the limits. (violation rate: 0.16%)



■ Recall and dispose of food detected radioactive materials above the legal limits

All the articles produced in the same lot of positive samples are recalled/disposed.



■ Restrictions of distribution of foods [Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters]

Restrictions on distribution shall be instructed on the basis of prefectures or smaller area units in a prefecture, judging from the spreading of places where radioactive materials above the legal limits are detected as a result of inspections. (March 21, 2011-)



■ Requirements for lifting [Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters]

e.g. the results of inspections conducted in the last one month includes three locations which have all the values below the legal limits per one municipality.



Establishment of the limits for Radionuclide in Foods

1. Concept of Japanese limits (April 1, 2012-)

The limits are based on 1 mSv in a year as an intervention level for the following reasons;

- The Guideline Levels of Codex Alimentarius (CODEX STAN 193-1995) adopted 1 mSv in a year as an intervention exemption level.
- Monitoring surveys demonstrated that concentrations of radionuclide decreased in most foods as time goes by (ALARA principle, As Low As Reasonably Achievable).

2. Comparison between Japanese limits and the Codex guideline levels

○Japanese limits for radioactive cesium

Category	Limit
Drinking water	10
Milk	50
Infant Foods	50
General Foods	100

○Codex guideline levels for radioactive cesium

Category	Limit
Infant foods	1000
Other foods	1000

(Unit : Bq/kg)

- 1 The Codex guideline adopts 10% as the ratio of the amount of foodstuff imported from contaminated areas; on the other hand Japan established the limits on the assumption that 50% of the marketed foods are contaminated, based on Japan's food self-sufficiency.
- 2 Japanese limits for radioactive cesium take into account the contribution of radioactive strontium, plutonium etc.
- 3 Japanese limits are calculated taking age-category into consideration.

