

**Questions and Answers about exportation and importation under organic
equivalency recognition between Canada and Japan
(Provisional Translation)**

September 17, 2014, Canada and Japan agreed an organic equivalency recognition which was enforced January 1, 2015. The outline of this mutual recognition is shown as following.

Q1. Canada has a “mutual equivalence recognition” with Japan. What does this mean?

A1. This means that as long as the terms of the recognition are met, Canadian and Japanese organic products certified to the Canadian organic standards or Japanese Agricultural Standards (JAS) may be sold, labeled, and represented as organic in both countries. As long as the product is certified by a CFIA-accredited or Japan-accredited certifying agent, this recognition facilitates access to each country’s organic market.

Q2. Does Japan accept the Canada’s organic logo? Does Canada accept Japan’s organic logo?

A2. Yes. As a result of the equivalency recognition, either organic logo may be used on products traded under the recognition. Products traded under the recognition must meet the labeling requirements in the destination country. Labeling requirements of Canada is shown in following:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/labelling/food-labelling-for-industry/organic-claims/eng/1389725994094/1389726052482>

Q3 .Can products sold in both Canada and Japan be attached both “Canada organic logo” and “organic JAS logo” ?

A3. The equivalency recognition was determined subject to trading between Canada and Japan for promoting trading between two countries.

Therefore, attaching the organic logos of organic equivalent country to products which aren’t exported to the organic equivalent country is contrary to the aim of the equivalency recognition. Furthermore, there is a risk of misleading the consumers etc. as if the products were certified to both Japanese organic standard and Canadian organic standard. So please don’t attach the logos of organic equivalent country to products which aren’t exported to the organic equivalent country.

Q4. Which products can be traded under the equivalency recognition?

A4. The recognition includes organic plant, including fungi, and plant-based processed products (Food and beverage only. The same shall apply hereafter.) (1) that are produced within Canada or Japan or (2) whose final processing or packaging occurs within Canada or Japan. Case (2) includes Organic JAS/Canadian Organic certified products which are produced in third country and whose packaging or labeling occurs within Canada or Japan.

Reference:

http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/diagram_of_organic_trade.pdf

Q5. What happens if an organic operation or certifying agent violates the terms of the recognition?

A5. Significant non-compliances will be reported to both countries and appropriate enforcement actions may be pursued under the respective country's regulations.

Shipping Canadian organic products from Canada to Japan

Q6. What is required to ship Canadian organic products to Japan?

A6. Products must be certified to the Canadian organic standards, and must be imported by JAS certified importer. Furthermore, products must meet all Japanese organic labeling requirements (including compliant use of the JAS organic logo).

Q7. Which products may carry the JAS organic logo?

A7. All organic plants, including fungi, and plant-based processed products must be labeled with the JAS organic logo under this recognition if they are sold as organic in Japan. Products which don't have JAS organic standard (e.g. alcoholic beverage, honey) or products other than organic plants or plant-based processed products which have JAS organic standard (e.g. meat, dairy product) can't be labeled with the JAS organic logo under this recognition.

Q8. How can a Canadian operation apply the JAS organic logo to their products?

A8. Under the Canada Organic Regime, the use of the Canada organic logo is not mandatory. On the other hand, any plants, including fungi, and plant-based processed products sold or labeled as organic in Japan must be labeled with the JAS organic logo. These products must be imported by a JAS-certified importer. Under equivalency recognition, the JAS organic logo may be applied using one of two methods:

Method 1. If a Canadian-based farm or business wishes to apply the JAS organic logo to their products in Canada, they must contract with a JAS-certified importer. Then, the Canada-based farm or business can apply the JAS organic logo in Canada and export it to JAS-certified importer.

Method 2. If Canada-based farm or business doesn't wished to apply the JAS organic logo, a JAS-certified importer must apply the logo to the product once it arrives in Japan.

For a list of JAS-certified importers (only publish permiters are listed), see <http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/organic.html> (List of certified importers)

Q 9. What documentation is required for products traded under the recognition?

A 9. All organic plants, including fungi, and plant-based processed products exported from Canada to Japan must be accompanied by a Japanese Import certificate. It is used to document the production location, identify the certification body, certify that the terms of the partnership were met, and allow traded products to be tracked. View the Japanese Import certificate: http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/certificate_canadaorganic.pdf

(Instructions for Completing an Certificate)

http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/instructions_for_certificate.pdf

Japanese Import certificates aren't required for products not regulated by the JAS law, such as meat, dairy products, honey, or alcoholic beverages. However, alcoholic beverages labeled with the word "organic" in the Japanese language must be accompanied by an export certificate that includes the name of the certified alcoholic beverage, the name and the address of the certified farm or brewery, the number and date of certification, the address and name of the operator, the country of origin, and the address and name of the certifying body.

Q10. How do Canadian operations obtain an import certificate?

A10. CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency) will be responsible to share with the CFIA accredited Certification bodies copy of the MAFF import certificate.

Shipping JAS organic products to Canada

Q11. What kind of products can be exported to Canada? In that case, what is required to ship JAS-eligible organic products to Canada?

A11. All JAS certified organic plants, including fungi, and plant-based processed products that were produced within Japan or products whose final processing or packaging occurs within Japan can be exported under this recognition. (All JAS certified ingredients can be used no matter where its country of origin is.) Also, organic products which are imported by the certified importer from the third country whose organic system is regarded as equivalent as the Organic JAS System and are re-packed by certified re-packer can be exported under this recognition. Furthermore, the product must meet all Canadian organic labeling requirements (including compliant use of the Canadian organic logo) and be accompanied with organic certificate signed by JAS Registered Certifying Body.

Q12. Can products not regulated by the JAS law be sold as organic in Canada?

A12. Products that aren't plants, including fungi, or plant-based processed products must be certified to the Canadian Organic Standard by a CFIA accredited certifier. Such products include dairy products, meat, and alcoholic beverages.

Q13. Can plants and plant-based processed products produced in Japan in conversion to organic be traded under this recognition?

A13. Canada doesn't have a "transition to organic" labeling category like Japan does. Therefore plants and plant-based processed products in conversion to organic can't be exported to Canada under the terms of this recognition.

Q14. Can organic products produced outside of Japan be exported to Canada under this recognition?

A14. In order to be exported to Canada under this recognition, Japanese organic products must be produced within Japan or have their final processing or packaging occur within Japan.

Q15. How do JAS operators obtain an organic certificate needed to export organic products to Canada?

A15. To start, JAS operations should inform their certifying agent that they wish to ship products to Canada. Certifying agents will ask the operator: "whether organic plants or organic processed food of plant origin is certified in Organic JAS System", "whether these products are produced or packaged in Japan", "whether the products' labeling meets the all Canadian organic labeling requirements" etc. Then, certifying agents will issue the certificate. All of

organic JAS Registered Certifying Bodies can issue organic certificates needed to export organic products to Canada.

http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/list_organic.pdf

At this time, Canadian Import Certificate is not available. So that, before the official Canadian Import Certificate is established, the JAS Registered Certifying Bodies have to use following temporary export certificate. Please find the Temporary Export Certificate from following address.

http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/export_certificate.pdf

(Instructions for Completing an Certificate)

http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jas/specific/pdf/instructions_for_certificate.pdf

Q16. Can Japanese operators use JAS certified ingredients in organic products certified to the Canadian organic standard by CFIA accredited Certification Bodies, such as organic alcoholic drinks, organic processed foods or the products which are labeled as “made with organic”?

A16. All JAS certified organic plants, including fungi, and plant-based processed products that were produced within Japan or products whose final processing or packaging occurs within Japan can be used as ingredients for organic products certified to the Canadian Organic Standard by CFIA accredited Certification Bodies.

About the effective date of Organic Equivalency

Q17. What effective date, January 1, 2015, mean? Can products which are produced before January 1, 2015, be exported/imported under this recognition?

A17. Under the Japan - Canada equivalency recognition, import certificates could only be issued on or after January 1, 2015 when the recognition was enforced. Organic products produced before the recognition effective date can be exported under the equivalency recognition on or after the effective date of the equivalency recognition as long as they are accompanied by valid import certificates. During the first two months of the recognition import certificates under the equivalency recognition could be issued to products exported before the effective date but arriving in Japan or Canada on or after the recognition effective date.

Q18. From when can COR certified operators in Japan use JAS certified ingredient as the ingredient for Canadian organic product?

A18. From January 1, 2015.