



**Japan-EU EPA**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**  
7-9 December 2021

From 7 to 9 December 2021, the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, established under the provisions of the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement, held its third meeting (by videoconference), co-chaired by MOFA- Japan, and DG SANTE- European Commission, with attendance from MAFF, MHLW, DG TRADE, the EU Delegation to Japan, the Japanese Mission in Brussels and Representatives from the Slovenian and French Presidency of the EU.

Both sides presented comments and the lessons learned from the second SPS Committee hosted by the EU in December 2020, recalling the need for recording better outcomes in the future.

With regard to competent authorities and competences, Japan stated that MAFF's organisational structure had changed and explained new structures of the Export and International Affairs Bureau and the Bilateral Affairs Division.

Under the agenda item "general concerns" of SPS measures, the EU indicated the expectation of further simplification of Japan's approval procedures in light of the EU harmonised legislation, and also indicated the importance of utilizing remote audit. The EU proposed the technical meeting between the experts on the issues. Japan explained its efforts to expedite and simplify the procedures. Japan would continue to do so to the extent possible, as long as scientifically warranted. Both sides recognised the importance of having further technical discussion on such a topic. The EU would send the questions and comments in writing and clarify which items and segments the EU would like to discuss further in a meeting.

Both sides recognised the need to respect both international standards and the WTO SPS agreement.

With reference to the food additive annex 6 of the EPA, both sides decided to continue technical discussion on cooperation on food additives.

Japan raised the question on the export legal framework between individual Member States and the EU Commission. Following the discussion Japan will send written questions on the single entity to which the EU will reply.

Under the agenda item "specific SPS trade issues", the EU requested the further progress on the items listed in the SPS table. EU also indicated the insufficient progress in the SPS issues not listed in the SPS table.

Both sides decided to further exchange on these issues including progress in each step of whole procedure.

The EU requested progress on the grouping for fruit applications, i.e., for apples and pears. Both sides underlined the importance to hold technical discussion on this issue.

Japan requested the lifting of EU's import measures on Japanese food products following the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power station. Both sides decided to continue dialogues regarding the EU's import measures on Japanese food products.

Japan requested smooth administration of the new legislation on composite products including border control and Japan committed to send a letter on the request for the exemption of miso with small amount of fish soup stock. Japan also made a request to export composite products containing honey originated from third countries. The EU replied that the procedure would be finalised soon.

Japan expressed its concerns about the EU's new regulation on veterinary medical products. The EU informed about the state of play and committed to continue keeping Japan informed about the next steps. The EU also took note of Japanese request for transition period.

Regarding the Implementation Regulation on EU's plant quarantine measures ((EU) 2019/2072), the EU confirmed that the proposed amendment gained positive votes at the PAFF Committee, and made clarification about the timeline toward application of the provisions of the new Implementing Regulation.

Japan sought update on EU's process for recognising Japan's recovery of free status of HPAI. The EU explained that a risk assessment in accordance with the established procedure is in progress. Japan requested progress in Japan's applications for re-classification of poultry and porcine meat products regardless of the disease occurrences. The EU explained that completing mutual recognition project is of even higher priority for stable trade in livestock products. Both sides decided to continue technical discussion between the relevant expert agencies.

Japan provided information on the progress made so far and the state of play of the Mutual Recognition project. While appreciating the progress, the EU noted the importance of concluding this project, and raised some technical issues. Japan reiterated the ongoing close consultation between relevant experts is important for addressing technical issues. The EU also requested to set a deadline to conclude the AI project by the end of 2022. Japan explained the difficulty to set a timeframe due to the independent third party panels and its continuous effort to expedite the process within its established procedures. Both sides decided to continue cooperating actively with each other to move forward and complete this project.

The EU explained the Farm to Fork Strategy and proposed the establishment of dedicated working group on sustainable food system as well as holding a seminar in Japan. Japan suggested using existing frameworks to avoid the overlap. The EU committed to send proposals in writing taking into account ongoing exchanges.

EU raised two AoB points, one on animal welfare cooperation and the other on the planned second AHTWG by early 2022.

Both sides confirmed that they would hold the next Committee meeting in Brussels or online, in one year or not later than 1st February 2023.

Both sides confirmed that the outcome of the Committee meeting should be reported to the next EPA Joint Committee and concluded their discussions.