



EU-Japan EPA

Seventh meeting of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures

3 December 2025

On December 3, 2025, the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures, established under the provisions of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), held its seventh meeting co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and DG Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) of the European Commission with the attendance from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan (MHLW), the Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA) and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan (METI) from the Japanese side and DG TRADE and the EU Delegation to Japan from the EU side.

Both sides reiterated the importance of SPS commitments under the EPA, and outlined in the 2025 Japan-EU Summit joint statement, confirming their continued compliance, efforts, and cooperation on issues raised by the respective parties and welcomed the progress made in this area so far.

In its general remarks, Japan expressed concerns on possible unilateral application of EU health and environmental standards to the imports of agricultural and agri-food products and requested that the EU consider the differentiated environmental and climate conditions among countries when introducing such standards and requested sufficient prior consultation with the reliable trading partners, including Japan. The EU took note and recalled that its measures were in full compliance with its international commitments.

The EU expressed their expectations for accelerated progress in simplifying procedures for market access applications, particularly through the elimination of duplications and the recognition of the EU as a single entity. Japan responded that it has already been working to simplify and expedite consultations, such as avoiding duplication in risk assessments regarding common rules within the EU and noted the importance of prompt cooperation from the EU side for accelerating market access consultations. Japan also stated that it intends to continue discussions with both the European Commission and the EU Member States.

Japan expressed its concerns regarding the EU's approach to setting Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) to achieve EU's environmental purposes, and on EU packaging regulations (e.g., EU 2022/1616 and EU 2025/40) affecting trade between Japan and the EU. The EU explained that it ensures transparency in its process and provides several opportunities for information and consultation with third countries, including Japan.

At the EU's request, the Committee reviewed updates on various ongoing meat market access applications from EU Member States. Japan explained that considerable work has already been undertaken on each application, and the process is advancing without undue delay. It was also concurred that the EU would respond to Japan's repeated requests since 2020 to lift the temporary

suspension of poultry products imports to the EU market, considering Japan's self-declaration of the recovery of freedom from infection with High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza viruses (HPAI) submitted to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).

The Committee received reports from two technical meetings held prior to the Committee meeting. On plants, the meeting conducted between MAFF and the EU side on December 1 reviewed the state of the exercise of the grouping pilot project on apple. The EU elaborated on the research it had conducted before responding to Japan's comments on the EU pest list for apple grouping pilot project. In response, it was decided that Japan would provide their assessment and feedback on the information shared by EU. The Animal Health Technical Working Group (AHTWG), technical group inspired by the Agreement, held on 2 December 2025, reviewed the state of play of the mutual recognition project for HPAI, and to be followed-up with African Swine Fever (ASF)/Classical Swine Fever (CSF). The AHTWG acknowledged good progress on the mutual recognition project for HPAI, and clarified the procedural pathway to finalise the project. On the mutual recognition on ASF regionalisation, both sides concurred to have a technical online workshop on EU regionalisation system of ASF in early 2026. Japan committed to share its proposed way forward on the mutual recognition project for ASF/CSF and to maintain Member State -by -Member State application due to current ASF occurrence in EU. EU promised to provide response to Japan's inquiry on exports of Japanese Dairy Products.

In conclusion, the EU and Japan jointly expressed gratitude for the constructive discussions. It was concurred that the EU will propose a date for the next SPS Committee meeting.



AGENDA

7th meeting of Japan - EU Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

Tokyo, 3 December 2025

12:30 – 15:00 (JST)

1. Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

- Japan remarks
- EU remarks
- Adoption of the agenda

2. Presentation and discussion of the issues arising from the application of SPS measures indicated in the EPA

- Japan's general concerns
- EU's general concerns
- Specific SPS trade issues:
 - A. Japan's issues
 - B. EU's issues

3. Information: Animal Health Technical Working Group

- State of play, next steps

4. Information: Plant Health Technical Working Group

- State of play, next steps

5. Closing remarks, date and venue of the next meeting

6. Joint minutes drafting