

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Japanese Government

(Provisional Translation)

Mr. A.J. Yates  
Administrator  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

February 6, 2001

Dear Mr. Yates,

I appreciate your cooperation in examining equivalency of organic products grading system in the U.S. to that in Japan.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Japan (hereinafter referred to as "MAFF") recognizes that the grading system of organic agricultural products and organic agricultural products processed food (hereinafter referred to as "organic products") in the U.S., which is stipulated in *National Organic Program*, is equivalent to the grading system of organic products under the Japanese Agricultural Standard stipulated in Articles 15-7 and 19-6-4 of the Law Concerning Standardization and Proper Labeling of Agricultural and Forestry Products.

In order to maintain equivalency and ensure consumers' confidence in organic products sold in Japan, the MAFF would like to confirm that the competent authorities of the U.S. Government have the following intentions:

- 1 In case the U.S. side amends the above-mentioned Program, to notify the Japanese side of the contents of the amendment in advance;
- 2 To provide the Japanese side, upon request, with as much information as practicable including that related to whether the inspection and certification system on organic products is properly implemented in the U.S.;
- 3 In case the Japanese side notifies in advance the U.S. side of its inspection plan on the Registered Foreign Certification Organizations in the U.S., to cooperate in such inspection, as much as practicable; and

4 To take necessary action to prevent the use of the following substances in organic products which will be exported to Japan.

- (1) Alkali Extracted Humic Acid
- (2) Lignin Sulfonate
- (3) Potassium bicarbonate

Sincerely,

Kyuzo SAITO  
Director-General of General Food Policy Bureau,  
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries  
Tokyo, Japan