

September, 26 2025

Ms. Erin Morris
Administrator,
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dr. Julie Callahan
Assistant U.S. Trade Representative
Agricultural Affairs and Commodity Policy
Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and National Tax Agency (NTA) in Japan have concluded that the system for organic alcohol beverages in the United States is equivalent to the system under the Act on Japanese Agricultural Standards.

Based on the review conducted by MAFF and NTA, in order to ensure our recognition of the equivalence of the organic system of the United States and maintain the public confidence in organic products, attached please find conditions of recognition of equivalence set forth in the Appendix of this letter, which will take effect on October 1, 2025.

Recognition of the equivalence of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) certified organic plants, organic livestock products, and organic processed foods continues to be covered under the MAFF letters of September 20, 2013, and July 14, 2020.

We are pleased to be able to expand the scope of the current U.S.-Japan Organic Equivalence Arrangement to include organic alcohol beverages. MAFF and NTA are committed to working with the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service and Foreign Agricultural Service and the United States Trade Representative as described in this letter and the attached Appendix and continuing our cooperation with the United States in our joint Organics Working Group.

Sincerely,

KAWAMINAMI Ken
Director-General for New Business and Food Industry
Minister's Secretariat
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

河内 健

TAHARA Yoshiyuki
Senior Deputy Commissioner
National Tax Agency

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Appendix: U.S. Alcohol Beverages

A. The U.S. organic alcohol beverages may be sold, labeled, and represented as “organic” in Japan if they are:

1. Certified to the USDA organic regulations and either produced in the United States or a product for which final processing and packaging has occurred in the United States.
2. USDA-NOP certified “organic” alcohol beverages (except for grape wines):
 - a. Display the JAS seal and may use USDA seal;
 - b. Are not processed with added sulfites or other non-organic ingredients not allowed under 7 CFR 205.605;
 - c. Meet all other USDA-NOP requirements for “organic” alcohol beverages; and
 - d. May include products labeled 100% organic – provided that products meet all USDA-NOP requirements for 100% labeling.
3. USDA-NOP certified “organic” grape wines that are labeled as “organic”:
 - a. Display the JAS seal and may use USDA organic seal;
 - b. Are produced and processed with 100% organic grapes;
 - c. Are not processed with added sulfites or other non-organic ingredients not allowed under 7 CFR 205.605;
 - d. Meet all other NOP requirements for “organic” wine; and
 - e. May include wine labeled 100% organic provided that products meet all USDA-NOP requirements for 100% labeling.
4. USDA-NOP certified grape wines processed with added sulfites (listed under 7 CFR 205.605) that are labeled as “organic” for export only to Japan:
 - a. Display the JAS seal and may not use the USDA organic seal;
 - b. Are produced and processed with 100% organic grapes;
 - c. May be produced and processed with added sulfites as listed under 7 CFR 205.605;
 - d. Meet all other USDA-NOP requirements for wine “made with organic” grapes;
 - e. Are produced only with food additives listed in the appendix B of the Japanese Organic Processed Food Standards (JAS1606); and
 - f. May not be labeled as “organic” in the United States.

B. Those U.S. organic alcohol beverages covered under Paragraph A above and imported into Japan by a JAS-certified importer:

1. Are accompanied by a completed USDA export certificate, Form TM-11;
2. May display the USDA organic seal if they are compliant with USDA organic labeling requirements for “100% organic” or “organic” claims;

3. Are labeled according to JAS organic labeling requirements; and
 4. Have the JAS seal applied to them by the JAS-certified importer.
- C. The U.S. organic alcohol beverages covered under Paragraph A above and imported into Japan, and produced or handled by a USDA-NOP certified organic operator that has a JAS-labeling contract with a JAS-certified importer, and certified by a USDA-NOP accredited certifier:
1. Are accompanied by a completed USDA export certificate, Form TM-11;
 2. Display the JAS seal, which may be applied by the USDA-NOP certified operator;
 3. May display the USDA organic seal if they are compliant with USDA organic labeling requirements; and
 4. Are imported into Japan by a JAS-certified importer.
- D. The USDA intends to notify MAFF and NTA (through MAFF) in writing in a timely manner of any instances of the following:
1. Changes with respect to the accreditation status of NOP-accredited certification bodies;
 2. Proposed U.S. regulations that may modify any of the USDA organic regulations referred to in this Appendix; and
 3. Notifications of non-compliances that may affect the organic status of the U.S. alcohol beverages covered under Paragraph A above.
- E. In accordance with the advance written notice from MAFF and NTA, USDA intends to permit MAFF officials and NTA officials to conduct on-site evaluations in the United States to verify that the relevant regulatory authorities and certification bodies of the USDA National Organic Program are carrying out the requirements of this program. USDA intends to cooperate and assist MAFF and NTA, to the extent permitted, in carrying out these on-site evaluations, which may include visits to offices of relevant regulatory authorities and certification bodies, production facilities, and farms certified by the USDA-accredited certification bodies in the United States. The USDA intends to provide a written response promptly to the findings identified by MAFF and NTA in their on-site evaluation report that MAFF and NTA submit to the USDA, including any findings that may affect this Appendix.
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- F. USDA intends to provide MAFF with the following documents by 31 March of each calendar year:
1. A report that contains information regarding the types and quantities of U.S. alcohol beverages exported under this Appendix over the prior calendar year;

2. A report that contains the types of non-compliances identified by USDA during any oversight reviews or audits, and steps taken by USDA to ensure that non-compliances were corrected; and
3. A list of certification bodies accredited and supervised by USDA within the scope of the USDA NOP.