

Taiwan's Health Ministry Declares New Food Import Rules

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Starting May 15, Taiwan's Ministry of Health (MHW) has set new regulations for Japanese food imports. The MHW announcement emphasized that imported Japanese food products must carry documents and radiation residue results issued by the Japanese government, agencies approved by the Japanese governments or documents authorized by Taiwan's Food and Drug Administration. The origin documents must clearly state the name of the city or prefecture of origin in order to be accepted by Taiwan.

The five prefectures affected by the recent Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster still face restrictions on import to Taiwan. Those prefectures are Fukushima, Gumma, Tochigi, Ibaraki and Chiba.

Fruit produce from Miyage, Iwate, Tokyo, and Ehime; tea products from Tokyo, Shizuoka, Aichi, and Osaka; dairy products, sweets, crackers and grain products from Miyage, Saitama, and Tokyo will be regulated and must bear the proper radiation residue test results by the authorized agencies.

The Japanese products that are to undergo these new regulations were chosen based on radiation residue test results issued by customs officials over the past four years. The MHW has stated that the new rules are crafted to guarantee food safety for infants and children. The aforementioned Japanese food imports will continue to be strictly regulated and tested, and the FDA will publish new regulations on its current official website. It advises importers to familiarize themselves with them.

Meanwhile, Japanese authorities remain puzzled about Taiwan's strict rules on its food imports, and have reportedly asked Taiwan whether it has scientific evidence to justify its new onerous regulations.

Komatsu Michihiko, head of the Tokyo-based Interchange Association, Japan pointed out that 3 million tourists from Taiwan visit Japan every year to enjoy attractions and food, yet Taiwan implements regulations on Japanese food imports. Komatsu commented that Taiwan's policies are unbelievable.

Source: Stephanie Chao, The China Post

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