

Amendment to the Specifications and Standards for Foods, Food Additives, Etc.

The government of Japan will revise manufacturing standards for non-alcoholic beverages.

Background

Under Article 13, paragraph (1) of the Food Sanitation Act (Act No. 233 of 1947; “the Act”), the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare can establish manufacturing standards or compositional specifications for food or food additives for sale after hearing opinion of the Pharmaceutical Affairs and Food Sanitation Council.

When specifications or standards for foods or food additives are established and stipulated in the Specifications and Standards for Foods, Food Additives, Etc. (Public Notice of the Ministry of Health and Welfare No. 370, 1959; “the Public Notice”), Japan prohibits the sale of foods and food additives if the foods or the food additives do not meet the specifications or the standards under paragraph (2) of the same article of the Act,.

The specifications and standards for non-alcoholic beverages are established in the Public Notice. Japan does not approve the manufacturing of non-alcoholic beverages excluding mineral waters, frozen fruit beverages, and fruit juice used as ingredients (“other non-alcoholic beverages”) by the following method: by mixing non-sterilized or non-filter sterilized ingredients into other non-alcoholic beverages that are already sterilized or filter sterilized.

This time, it has been confirmed that even if other non-alcoholic beverages are manufactured by mixing lactic bacteria, yeasts, fermented milks, or lactic-acid-bacteria beverages into other non-alcoholic beverages that are already sterilized or filter sterilized, the obtained products do not have food hygiene problems when the manufacturing process following the sterilization or filter-sterilization is controlled by an appropriate method that can prevent the process from being contaminated with

pathogenic microorganisms. Japan has decided to revise the manufacturing standards for non-alcoholic beverages, because the draft revision has been approved by the Food Specification Committee under the Pharmaceutical Affairs and Food Sanitation Council and the risk assessment body, the Food Safety Commission of Japan under the Cabinet Office.

Outline of revision

Japan will revise the manufacturing standards for non-alcoholic beverages and newly add the following standards for other non-alcoholic beverages to the Public Notice.

When other non-alcoholic beverages are manufactured by mixing lactic bacteria, yeasts, fermented milks, or lactic-acid-bacteria beverages into other non-alcoholic beverages that are sterilized or filter sterilized by the method specified in the Public Notice, the manufacturing process after the mixing shall be controlled by an appropriate method* that can prevent the process from being contaminated with pathogenic microorganisms and the obtained product shall be automatically filled in containers and stoppered or sealed tightly.

* To individually confirm that the process after the mixing of lactic bacteria, yeasts, fermented milks, or lactic-acid-bacteria beverages is controlled by an appropriate method, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare requires the manufacturers of non-alcoholic beverages to submit documents to demonstrate that the product safety is ensured by hygiene control based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).