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MHLW invites public comments on revision of tofu standards

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation
Oilseeds and Products

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Report Highlights:

Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) has issued a proposed revision of tofu specifications and standards, which would allow the packaging of tofu for storage at room temperature. MHLW invites public comments by March 15, 2018.

Keywords: JA8012, identity preservation (IP) soybeans, aseptic package, Food Safety Commission

General Information:

The current Tofu Specifications and Standards (MHW notice No.370) was established in 1974 and requires that all types of tofu be refrigerated. However, scientific innovation now allows the packaging of tofu for storage at room temperature, a product that has become popular outside Japan.

MHLW held a committee meeting in November 2016 and discussed the safety of aseptic packaging tofu to store without refrigeration and they confirmed and requested Food Safety Commission (FSC) for further scientific review on April 12, 2017. The FSC [concluded](#) that the storage of aseptic packaged tofu for storage at room temperature does not pose a greater health risk when compared to contemporary tofu that is refrigerated. The FSC then opened a [public comment period](#) from November 22 to December 21, 2017. There were no objections to the FSC's conclusion.

Accordingly, MHLW drafted a [revision](#) to the Tofu Specifications and Standards (enclosed, in Japanese only) that will allow the aseptic packaging of tofu for storage at room temperature. MHLW is accepting public comment on the revision until March 15, 2018.

Submitting comments: Comments should be in Japanese and can be submitted electronically at the [e-Gov](#) website:

<http://search.e-gov.go.jp/servlet/Public?CLASSNAME=PCMMSTDETAIL&id=495170370&Mode=0>

Comments may also be submitted by [mail or fax](#) to MHLW by March 15, 2018.

Mail comments to:

〒100-8916 1-2-2 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

To: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Pharmaceutical Safety and Environmental Health Bureau, Food Safety Standards and Evaluation Division, Specifications and Standards Desk

* Please explicitly write “with regard to the revision of tofu specifications and standards” on your envelope.

FAX comments to:

+81-(0)3-3501-4868

To: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Pharmaceutical Safety and Environmental Health Bureau, Food Safety Standards and Evaluation Division, Specifications and Standards Desk

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MHLW is planning to announce the revision in May 2018 for immediate effectuation.

(別紙)

「食品、添加物等の規格基準 (昭和34年厚生省告示第370号) の一部を改正する件 (案)」 (豆腐の規格基準の改正) について (概要)

1 . 改正の趣旨

豆腐の規格基準については、食品衛生法 (昭和22年法律第233号) 第11条第1項の規定に基づき、食品、添加物等の規格基準 (昭和34年厚生省告示第370号。以下「告示」という。) において規定されている。

現在、豆腐は、告示において「冷蔵しなければならない」と規定されているが、今般、無菌充填技術を用いた豆腐 (以下「無菌充填豆腐」という。) について、厚生労働省が微生物に関する試験検査を実施し、常温保存が可能であることを確認したことから、無菌充填豆腐の常温保存を認めるために、豆腐の規格基準の改正を行う。

2 . 改正の概要

①成分規格 (1 として新規追加)

常温で保存する豆腐について、発育し得る微生物が陰性でなくてはならない旨を規定する。

※微生物の試験法は、容器包装詰加圧加熱殺菌食品 (恒温・細菌試験) を想定。

②製造基準 (2 (5) の次に新規追加)

無菌充填豆腐を定義し、無菌充填豆腐の製造に必要な方法を規定する。

③保存基準 (記載内容に追加)

無菌充填豆腐については、移動販売に係る豆腐及び成型した後水さらしをしないで直ちに販売の用に供されることが通常である豆腐と同様に、冷蔵するか、又は十分に洗浄し、かつ、殺菌した水槽内において冷水 (食品製造用水に限る。) で絶えず換水をしなから保存しなければならないとする規定の対象外とする。

3 . 根拠法令

食品衛生法第11条第1項

4 . 適用日等

告示日 : 平成30年5月頃 (予定)

適用日 : 告示日