Safety of Food from Japan and Restoration of its Overseas Distribution

Japan's side event of the IAEA General Conference

26 September 2022

Export and International Affairs Bureau
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
(MAFF) JAPAN

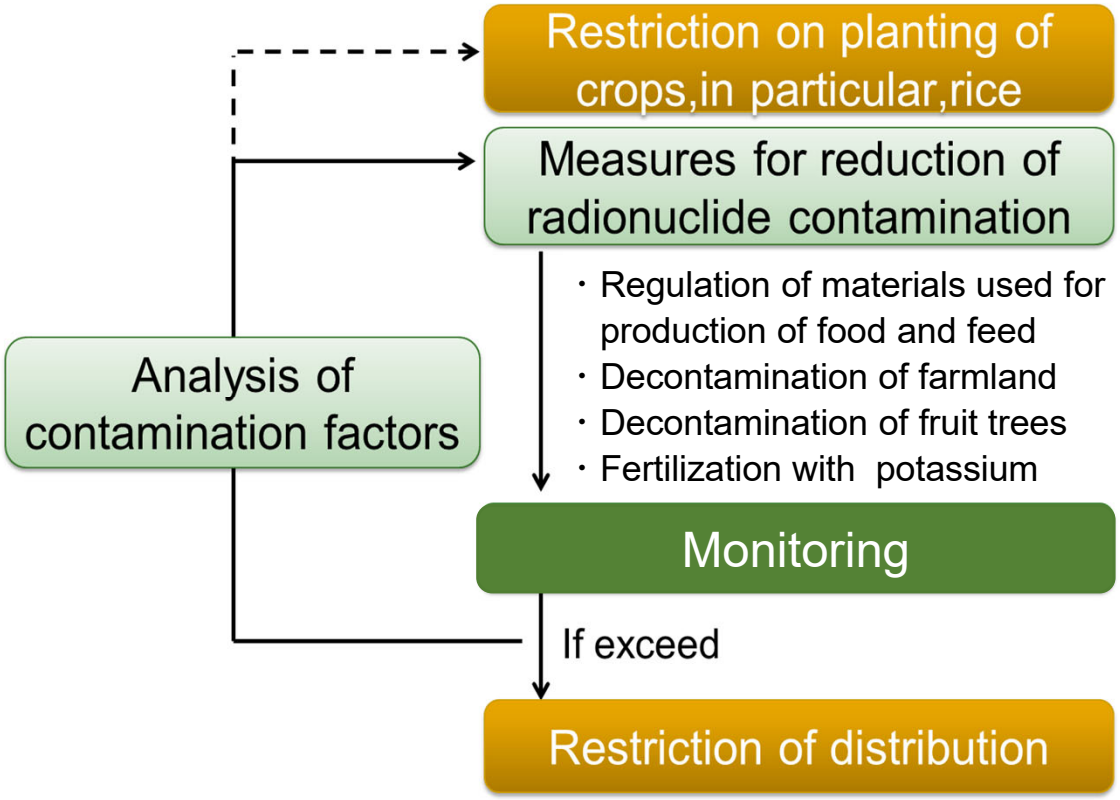
For more information please

CLICK! https://www.maff.go.jp/e/policies/market/reference/reference.html

農林水産省

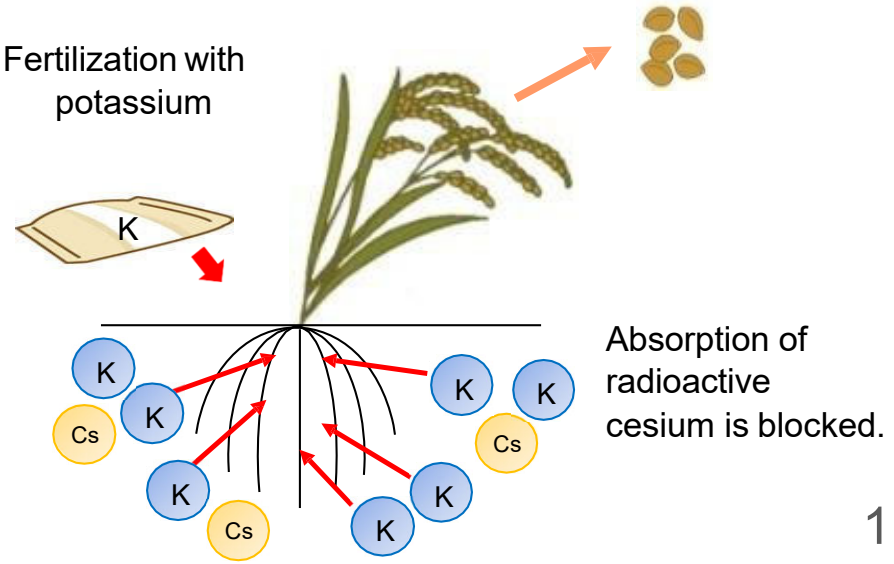
Control of radionuclides in food production

Japan, soon after the accident, started decontamination such as of the farmland and fruit trees, control over materials used for production of food and feed and introduced a food monitoring scheme.



Removal of topsoil

Removal of bark



Administrative system for control of radionuclides in food

Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters

- Set and remove restriction on food distribution and intake
- Set the guidelines of monitoring plan

Instructions

Local (prefectural) governments

- Develop plans and implement monitoring for food
- Implement shipment and intake restrictions for foodstuff

Request / Support

Reports

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Set the maximum levels of radionuclides in food

- Disclose monitoring results

Support

Cooperation

Inquiries

Findings

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

- Regulate materials used for production of food and feed
- Support monitoring plans and provide the technical advice
- Provide technical advice for reduction of radionuclides at production sites

Food Safety Commission

- Evaluate health impact from radionuclides in food

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Radiation Council

Maximum levels of radio-cesium in food

		Codex	Japan
Annual radiation dose limit		1 mSv	1 mSv
Assumed ratio of contaminated food		10 %	50 %
Maximum levels of radio-cesium in food	Drinking water		10 Bq/kg
	Milk		50 Bq/kg
	Infant food	1,000 Bq/kg	50 Bq/kg
	Other than the above food	1,000 Bq/kg Food consumed in small quantities 10,000 Bq/kg	100 Bq/kg (General food)

Note: The Japanese maximum levels of radio-cesium in food are set also in consideration of other radionuclides released by the accident namely ^{90}Sr, ^{106}Ru, ^{238}Pu, ^{239}Pu, ^{240}Pu and ^{241}Pu.

Results of the monitoring on radio-cesium ($^{134}Cs+^{137}Cs$) in major items, JFY2021

The major items show that all are below the Codex guideline levels (GLs) considered as safe for human consumption as well as the Japanese maximum levels (JMLs).

(April 2021 – March 2022)

	Number of samples	Samples exceeding	
		Codex GLs	JMLs
Grain	1,929	0	0
Vegetables	3,441	0	0
Fruit	984	0	0
Seafood (major species)	8,510	0	0
Beef	8,613	0	0
Livestock products (except beef and milk)	457	0	0
Milk and infant food	985	0	0
Tea, drinking water and beverages	222	0	0
Cultivated mushrooms	2,521	0	0
Processed food (widely distributed)	1,773	0	0
Subtotal	29,435	0	0

Source: MHLW(https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/2011eq/index_food_radioactive.html), edited by MAFF

Results of the monitoring on radio-cesium in minor items with higher concentrations and the effective dose, JFY2021

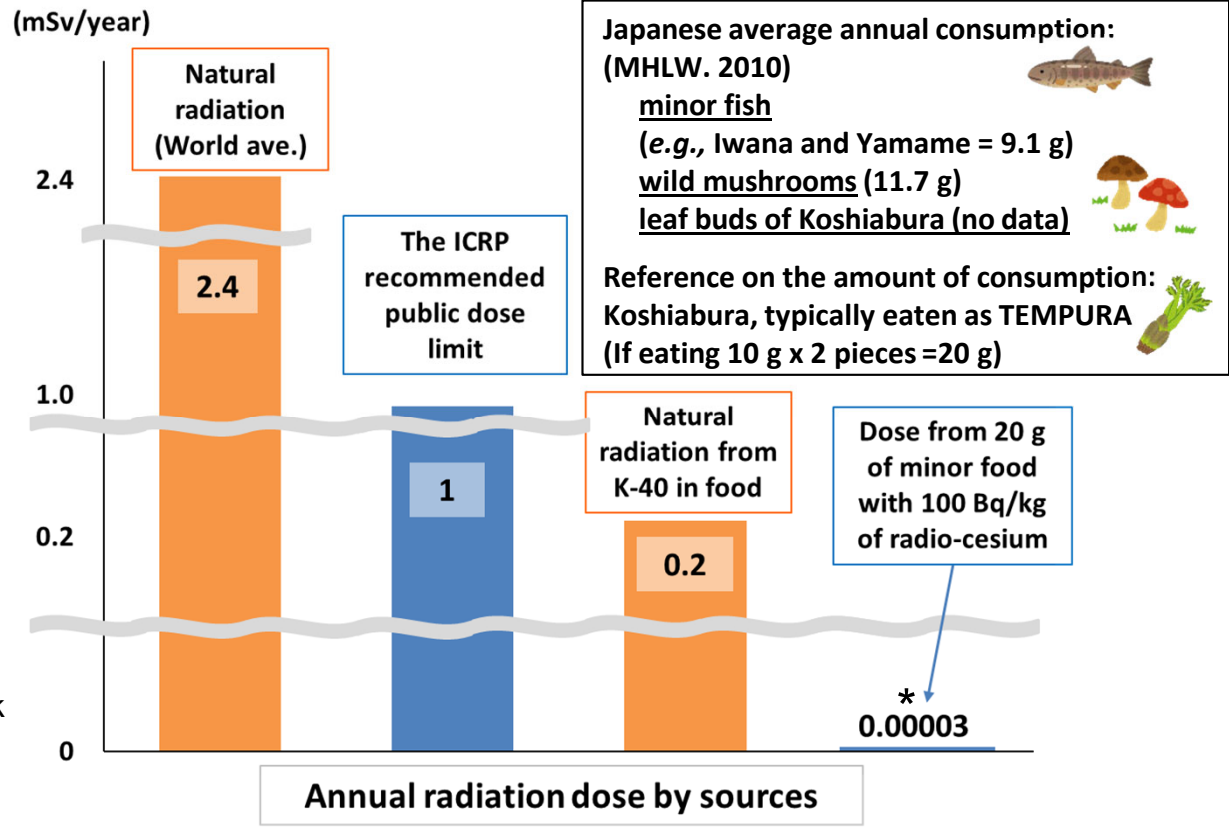
Specific wild harvests which tend to have higher concentration of radionuclides are local items consumed in small quantities, and not a commodity for export. All samples, including those from where the shipments are suspended, are below the Codex GLs considered as safe for human consumption. Recall cases based on the JMLs in marketed items are small and all are individually followed up and the shipments are suspended.

	Number of samples	Recall cases: Codex GLs[1)]	Recall cases: JMLs	Remarks[2)]
Seafood with minor catches	5,386	0	0	
Game meat	2,338	0	0	
Wild plants and wild mushrooms	3,922	0	44	Koshiabura (22) (110~260 Bq/kg); dried mushroom (5)(120~720 Bq/kg); mushrooms (17) (110~930 Bq/kg) [Shipments are suspended]
Processed food (local products)	280	0	4	Honey (4) (130~160 Bq/kg) [Shipments are suspended]
Subtotal	11,926			

Note: Apart from the recall cases, shipments had already been suspended for items that exceeded the JML, such as wild marine black rockfish.

1) A factor of 10 may be applied for food consumed in small quantities.
2) Item, (number of samples) (concentration of radio-cesium)

The radiation dose from minor items is negligible. The distribution is limited, and majority of the people have not purchased/consumed such wild harvests.



Annual radiation dose by sources

* Ratio of Cs-134 and Cs-137 is 4:96, which is calculated from the data of the samples that exceeded the JML in JFY2021. Dose coefficients used for calculation are 0.000019 mSv/Bq and 0.000013 mSv/Bq each.

Monitoring results of radio-cesium in food from Japan performed by importing countries

The monitoring results of food from Japan show that there has been no non-compliance, and all have been below JMLs for more than 9 years, not to mention the Codex GLs.
It is evident there is no need to maintain import measures on Japanese food.

Country/ region	Reference level (^{134}Cs + ^{137}Cs)	Monitoring period (Mar.2011~)	Number of test samples	Number of non-compliance	Source
Hong Kong	Codex guideline levels	Jul. 2022 (Ongoing)	more than 750,000	0	Centre for Food Safety(CFS): Daily situation update of food surveillance on food imported from Japan
Korea	Korean maximum levels (≈ JMLs)	Jul. 2022 (Ongoing)	353,702	0	Ministry of Food and Drug Safety: 일본산 수입식품 방사능검사 결과
Taiwan	Taiwanese maximum levels (= JMLs)	Jul. 2022 (Ongoing)	191,167	0	Taiwan Food and Drug Administration: 日本輸入食品每日輻射檢測結果

Note)
1. The last case which Hong Kong detected the JML was dried mushroom (167 Bq/kg) in August 2013.
2. Other countries and regions remaining import measures, such as China, EU and Russia, do not publish the monitoring results of Japanese food at their border. There has been no notification of non-compliance, except a case reported by EU just after the accident.

Scientific evaluation of the third parties

The third parties evaluate that the health risk of food produced in Japan is negligible.

The FAO/IAEA (14 July 2022)

“ measures to monitor and respond to issues regarding radionuclide contamination of food are appropriate, and that the food supply chain is controlled effectively by the relevant authorities and that the public food supply is safe.”

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore (25 May 2021)

”Singapore is **satisfied with the food safety surveillance results** and will be lifting the requirements.”

Food Standards Agency, UK (26 April 2022)

“ The outcome of the FSA’s risk assessment is that removing the enhanced controls would lead to **a negligible risk to UK consumers**. As a result, **food which is imported from Japan will be safe to eat and not represent a health risk to those consuming it**.”

Food and Drug Administration, USA (21 September 2021)

“… after **determining a very low risk to American consumers** from radioactive contaminated foods imported from Japan, FDA has decided that the **IA (import alert) is no longer necessary to protect public health and therefore should be deactivated**.”

List of countries which lifted the import measures

Total 55 countries and regions have introduced import measures on Japanese food, notably the import bans and requirements of test certificates, following the nuclear power station accident in 2011, and nearly 80%, 43 of them have totally lifted the measures.

Month, Year	Countries
Jun. 2011	Canada
〃	Myanmar
Jul. 2011	Serbia
Sep. 2011	Chile
Jan. 2012	Mexico
Apr. 2012	Peru
Jun. 2012	Guinea
Jul. 2012	New Zealand
Aug. 2012	Colombia
Mar. 2013	Malaysia
Apr. 2013	Ecuador
Sep. 2013	Vietnam
Jan. 2014	Iraq
〃	Australia
May 2015	Thailand*

Month, Year	Countries
Nov. 2015	Bolivia
Feb. 2016	India
May 2016	Kuwait
Aug. 2016	Nepal
Dec. 2016	Mauritius
〃	Iran
Apr. 2017	Qatar
〃	Ukraine
Oct. 2017	Pakistan
Nov. 2017	Saudi Arabia
Dec. 2017	Argentina
Feb. 2018	Turkey
Jul. 2018	New Caledonia
Aug. 2018	Brazil
Dec. 2018	Oman

Month, Year	Countries
Mar. 2019	Bahrain
Jun. 2019	Congo DR
Oct. 2019	Brunei
Jan. 2020	Philippines
Sep. 2020	Morocco
Nov. 2020	Egypt
Dec. 2020	Lebanon
〃	UAE*
Jan. 2021	Israel
May. 2021	Singapore
Sep. 2021	U.S.A.
Jun. 2022	UK**
July. 2022	Indonesia

（As of 26 July 2022）

* Excluding certain game meat which cannot be exported due to quarantine or other reasons.
** Excluding Northern Ireland.

Countries which maintain the import measures

Twelve countries and regions in Asia and Europe* maintain import measures on Japanese food. Japan calls on them to remove the measures.

* China, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau,
Russia, EU, EFTA (four countries) and French Polynesia

- Twelve countries and regions are not consistent with the international trade rules and maintain import measures without justifiable scientific evidence. They adopt all or some of the following measures, notably blanket import bans, requirements of testing/origin certificates, and retesting at their border and rejecting food with **a trace of** radio-cesium.
- Some admit the safety of Japanese food whereas indicate public concern as an excuse for maintaining the measures.
- Japan calls on them to communicate with their citizens on the risk assessment results based on science.

Conclusions

- Scientific evidence indicates that the health risk of food produced in Japan is negligible to both the people in Japan and foreign countries.
- Majority of the countries in the world have no relevant import control measures on food from Japan including those lifted them in the past decade.

Japan requests the audiences to communicate with the relevant authorities of twelve countries and regions to make a decision based on science.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs8U2cj3aMs

Lifting of import measures contributes to the recovery of life of the people in the disaster area !