

Standards for slaughter of cattle and processing of beef and beef offal eligible for export to Japan

Export Verification Program

This Export Verification Program (EVP) provides the specified products processing requirements and requirements for facilities for export beef and beef offal to Japan from Italy. This EVP comes in addition to the Italian and EU regulations but might include some relevant domestic requirements. The following requirements consist in the EVP under the responsibility of the General Directorate for the Hygiene, the Food Safety and the Nutrition (DGHFSN), and its services, Ministry in charge of Health of Italy.

1. Purpose

This EVP describes the standards that slaughterhouses and processing facilities shall meet in producing beef and beef offal for export to Japan in order to meet the following objectives:

- Ensure removal from cattle carcasses of all tissues ineligible for export to Japan;
- Prevent cross contamination of eligible beef and beef offal for export to Japan from ineligible tissues during slaughter and/or processing;
- Ensure that only cattle from 30 months of age or less are prepared and certified for export to Japan;
- Enable verification of compliance with Japan import condition relating to Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), in addition to Italian and EU domestic requirements.

2. Scope

This EVP applies to Italian facilities producing beef and beef offal for export to Japan from Italy. The facilities shall meet the specified products processing requirements and requirements for facilities for beef and beef offal for export to Japan from Italy. These facilities shall be designated and listed by the DGHFSN in accordance with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW).

3. Identification and traceability records

- 3.1 Live cattle shall be domesticated bovine animals (*Bos taurus* or *Bos indicus*) born and raised in Italy or imported to Italy from countries eligible for export beef and beef offal to Japan.
- 3.2 Live cattle shall be individually identified.
- 3.3 Live cattle shall be sent to slaughterhouse with individual document recording the exact date of birth and identification information of each animal.
- 3.4 All carcasses complying with point 4.1 shall be clearly identified with a label reporting the acronym "EJ", meaning it eligible for export to Japan.
- 3.5 An identification mark allowing the verification that the beef and beef offal for export to Japan complies with point 4.1 is applied on the product at each level of processing.
- 3.6 Records and identification information through the process shall be sufficient to trace:
 - 3.6.1 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan to carcasses;
 - 3.6.2 Individual carcasses to individual animal;
 - 3.6.3 Individual animal to farm records.

4. Specified Products Requirements

- 4.1 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall be derived from cattle that is 30 months of age or less at the time of slaughter.
- 4.2 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall be exclusively meat, offal and their products, which the MHLW and DGHFSN recognize as eligible for export to Japan.
- 4.3 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall not include any Specified Risk Material (SRM) as defined by the enforced Japanese regulation, that is to say beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall not include any of the following tissues:
 - 4.3.1 Tonsils from all cattle;
 - 4.3.2 Distal ileum (two meters from connection to caecum) from all cattle;
 - 4.3.3 Spinal cord from cattle over 30 months of age;
 - 4.3.4 Head (except for hygienically removed tongues, cheek meat and hide) from cattle over 30 months of age;
 - 4.3.5 Vertebral column (excluding vertebrae of the tail, the spinous and transverse processes of the cervical, lumbar and thoracic vertebrae, the median sacral crest and wings of the sacrum) from cattle over 30 months of age.

4.4 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan, and the carcasses and cattle from which they are derived should be traceable to production records.

5. Processing requirements

5.1 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall be processed using procedures ensuring the compliance of point 4 and integrated into the facility HACCP/SSOP.

5.2 Verification activities for age requirements as described above in point 4.1 must be conducted at the slaughter and processing levels.

5.3 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall be processed in a manner to ensure the hygienic removal of the SRM as described above in point 4.3 and to prevent any cross contamination by these SRM.

5.4 The facility HACCP/SSOP shall include internal verification activities that allow to control the specified requirements of this EVP are effectively implemented and met.

6. Designated facilities for export to Japan

6.1 The designated facilities for export beef and beef offal to Japan from Italy shall be facilities (slaughterhouses, cutting plants, processing plants, and cold stores) approved by the DGHFSN following an on-site inspection. The approval of the designated facilities is under the responsibility of the DGHFSN in accordance with the MHLW.

6.2 The designated facilities shall meet the specified products and processing requirements for beef and beef offal for export to Japan from Italy.

6.3 The designated facilities for export to Japan shall be listed by the DGHFSN. The DGHFSN shall provide annually to the MHLW an official listing of the designated facilities for export beef and beef offal to Japan. The DGHFSN will keep the MHLW informed of any amendments as regard additions, delisting and address or activity change at the listed facilities.

6.4 The designated facilities for export beef and beef offal to Japan from Italy are responsible for the compliance with all requirements outlined in this procedure and the Italian and EU regulations.

6.5 All necessary information to verify the enforcement of the EVP by the designated facilities shall be available to the DGHFSN for review.

7. Export certificate

7.1 Beef and beef offal for export to Japan shall be accompanied by an export certificate issued by the Italian competent Authorities: the Local Health Units (ASL; Aziende Sanitarie Locali), when exported to Japan.

7.2 The export certificate shall include the information as required by the Food Sanitation Act of Japan.

7.3 The export certificate shall mention the following statement “The beef and beef offal meet the EVP requirements”.

8. Audit and import inspection of the MHLW

8.1 The MHLW may conduct on-side audits of the Italian inspection system including visit of the DGHFSN, designated facilities that export beef and beef offal to Japan and relevant facilities.

8.2 If non-compliance with these standards is found as a result of the audit or the import inspection of the MHLW, the DGHFSN shall take appropriate measures including corrective and/or preventive actions.

These requirements for beef and beef offal for export to Japan from Italy will go into effect on May 2nd, 2016.