

Monday, 16 January 2012

Dear Valued Customers,

We appreciate the continuing need for reassurance regarding our Japanese imports since the earthquake and nuclear incident affecting northern Japan on March 11th, 2011. We have been monitoring developments closely and are pleased to assure you that we maintain full confidence in the safety of our products. This is based on:

1) Compliance with EU food safety legislation

- Radioactivity testing prior to export from Japan:

All products from the 11 prefectures identified to be at risk of contamination by the radioactive isotopes of caesium are tested prior to departing Japan. The radiation limits are set in line with food safety guidelines from international agencies such as the World Health Organization and Food and Agriculture Organization.

- Container screening and random checks upon arrival in the EU:

In addition to the fact that all at-risk food products exported into the EU from Japan have to be tested prior to export, EU port authorities screen all containers upon arrival for surface contamination to ensure it is within a level indicating safe contents.

Moreover, since the products we import from Japan are cleared in the Netherlands, the Dutch authorities carry out random controls on imports as mandated by the EU food safety directives.

**ALL TESTING CARRIED OUT ON OUR PRODUCTS SO FAR HAVE GIVEN NEGATIVE RESULTS**

2) Our own verification checks on receiving the goods

All the information we have received to date indicates that the radioactive risk of Japanese food imports is low. As an additional precaution, however, we have implemented our own radioactivity testing programme for the Japanese food items most at risk. We are using a German laboratory specializing in radioactivity testing to analyze all lots of: sea vegetables, tea, shiitake, and ume products. Since December 2011, the EU no longer requires testing for the presence of iodine-131, however, we are still including this in our programme as a supplementary precaution.

- 3) Sourcing from suppliers who are committed to food safety, above and beyond legislative requirements

The radioactivity levels in the above listed product groups considered to be most at risk are closely monitored even if they originate from areas well away from the nuclear reactor. In cases where food safety has been called into question, we have found alternative suppliers to ensure continued supply of products that meet our high safety and quality standards.

Some producers of items not considered to be at risk have taken the initiative to start conducting their own testing. We are very grateful for their cooperation and commitment to providing this extra assurance.

We hope the above addresses any concerns you may have. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best regards,



Maria Furugori  
Product Quality & Development Manager