



### An introduction to the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement

#### Food safety and animal and plant health ('SPS')

---

##### **How does the agreement uphold food safety standards in the EU?**

Like the EU, Japan has some of the highest food safety standards in the world. For example, Japan does not allow the use of growth hormones in its beef production, and regulations controlling GMOs are of great importance to Japanese consumers.

Like other EU trade deals, the EU-Japan trade agreement will not in any way affect European levels of protection for food safety or animal and plant health.



This means all products imported from Japan need to comply with EU standards. This includes the EU's ban on hormone-treated beef or its rules on the use of antibiotics.

Furthermore, all imports of animal products to the EU from Japan must still be accompanied by a veterinary certificate, as is the case today.

Only a competent authority in Japan, which the Commission has formally recognised as being able to certify compliance with the EU's import requirements, can issue such a certificate.

The agreement is also fully in line with existing food safety regulations and other legislation in which the precautionary principle is also enshrined.

The principle allows the EU to take preventative action in the case of possible risks to people or the environment, where the evidence is uncertain.

##### **The agreement refers to 'Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS)' measures? What are they and why do they matter?**

These are measures (e.g. laws, regulations, standards) that aim to ensure food safety and animal and plant health.

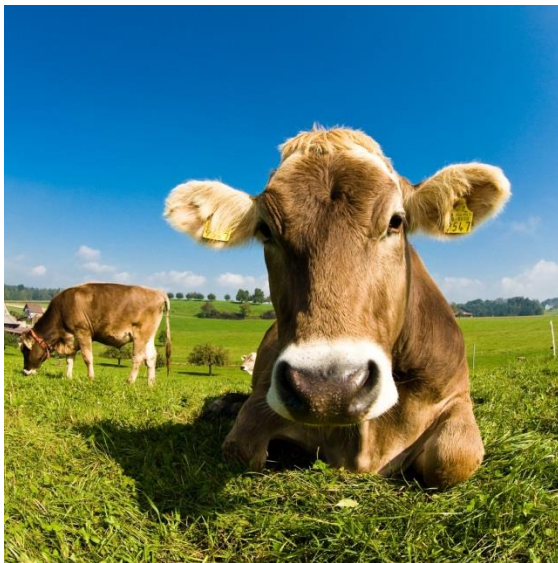
They ensure that food products placed on the market, including imports from outside the, are safe for consumers.



## What does the agreement do in relation to SPS measures?

The SPS chapter aims to help exporters of one party access the market of the other party by committing both sides to:

- improving transparency about their respective SPS provisions
- exchanging information on laws and regulations related to SPS and which affect trade.



In the chapter, both sides agree to:

- reaffirm their rights and obligations under the World Trade Organization's (WTO) SPS agreement

- recognise each other's concepts in line with international standards for controlling animal disease and identifying the health status of animals and plants.
- recognise regionalisation as a basis for determining whether to allow imports from disease-free areas; regionalisation is a tool used to control diseases and/or maintain safe trade by restricting trade from areas affected by disease, whilst avoiding trade disruptions in goods from unaffected areas.

These commitments benefit European agri-food exporters by helping to ensure that their products are not hindered from entering the Japanese market by unjustified SPS trade barriers.

The chapter also includes mechanisms for streamlining procedures for approving food imports from the EU into Japan. This should shorten the time it takes Japan to give such approvals.

And Japan and the EU have agreed to establish a joint committee as well as other channels of communication, in order to deal with SPS issues promptly.