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**A REPORT FOR
THE CALIFORNIA
CHERRY BOARD**

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SPECIFIC ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

UK Updates List of Import Duty Suspensions

- On December 8, the United Kingdom's (UK) HM Revenue & Customs and HM Treasury [published](#) Suspension of Import Duty Rates, version 2.2., dated 5th December 2023. The document lists all the goods for which a tariff suspension applies, the applied tariff, and the expiry date of the tariff suspension.
- The UK opened the application period for UK duty suspensions in June and opened an objection window for duty suspensions being considered in September (*BCI Monitors 9-26-23, 6-20-23*). UK businesses could apply for a duty suspension to remove import duties on certain goods normally used in domestic production that are not currently being produced in sufficient quantities domestically. Suspensions apply to imported goods from all origins and can be used by any UK business while in force.
- Cherries (HS 0809.29) were not included in the list of products receiving duty suspension.
- [Additional information](#) regarding UK duty suspensions is provided by HM Revenue & Customs and HM Treasury.

GENERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE CCB:

South Korea Extends Validity Periods for Facility and Importer Registrations

- On December 1, Korea published Prime Minister's [Decree No. 1918](#) and Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) [Notice No. 2023-568](#) regarding the procedure for extension of validity periods for overseas manufacturing facilities and excellent importing establishments (links in Korean).
- The revised procedure for extending the validity of registration of overseas manufacturing facilities enters into force on December 14, 2023. The revised procedure for extending the validity of registration of excellent importing establishments entered into force upon publication on December 1, 2023. Registration can be extended by submitting an application to MFDS.

South Korea Notifies Proposed Changes to Annual Import Plan Applications

- Korea's Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (MFDS) [notified the WTO](#) on December 1 of a [proposed revision](#) (in Korean) to the *Special Act on Imported Food Safety*. The proposed revision pertains to requirements for importers who may apply for an annual import plan approved by MFDS. Imports approved through this process may be exempt from documentation and on-site inspection requirements when filing an import declaration. For further analysis, a translation must be commissioned.
- The dates of adoption and publication of the proposed revision are yet to be determined. The change to the Act would enter into force 6 months after publication. Comments can be sent to the U.S. SPS Inquiry Point at us.spsenquiry@fas.usda.gov. The WTO comment deadline is January 30, 2024.

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South Korea Adopts Amendments to Country of Origin Labeling

- On December 8, South Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) adopted [amendments](#) to its [Enforcement Rules of the Country of Origin Labeling of Agricultural and Fishery Products](#) (both in Korean), aligning font size of imported food's country-of-origin labeling (COOL) with the font size required for country-of-origin labeling of domestic products (*BCI Monitor* 5-23-23).
- Based on machine translation, the regulation grants an exemption from the revised design requirements for products with a display area that is too small for a country-of-origin label in a 10-point or larger font size.
- The amendment entered into force on the date of promulgation. A transitional period for imported foods is in place until September 30, 2024.

Japan Amends Specifications for Food Packaging

- On November 30, Japan's Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare published [Notification No. 324](#) (in Japanese), amending food packaging provisions in the *Specifications and Standards for Foods, Additives, etc.* The *Specifications and Standards* contain Japan's evolving positive list for approved substances in food contact materials, which was adopted in 2020 and is undergoing finalization during a five-year transition period (*BCI Monitors* 4-4-23, 6-27-23).
- The Notification amends Article 3, Paragraph 8 on the general specifications for equipment, containers, and packaging or their raw materials. According to machine translation, the amendment:
 - Approves for use with no restrictions the raw materials for synthetic resins that are listed in the "Substance Name" column of Table 1 (Base Material), which is part of the [Appended Table 1](#) of the *Specifications and Standards*).
 - Clarifies that the substances listed in the "Substance Name" column of Table 2 (Additives) of [Appended Table 1](#) are the same as those listed in "Substance Name" column of Table 1 (Base Material), unless otherwise specified in the "Notes" column of Table 2. Substances may not be used as a raw material for utensils, containers, or packaging in an amount exceeding the amount listed in the "Usage Restrictions by Material Category" column in Table 2.
- This amendment will enter into force simultaneously with Japan's larger positive list system for approved substances in food contact materials, on June 1, 2025.
- Japan also launched [a new webpage](#) for all regulations and guidance relevant to the new Positive List System for Food Packaging.
- Until the end of the transition period on May 31, 2025, the [current system](#) remains in force.