

Country report (summary)
November 2022
Japan

Japan continues to improve its plant protection systems in conformity with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the WTO-SPS Agreement and relevant international standards on phytosanitary measures since the 31st session of the APPPC. In Asian region, Japan also contributes to capacity development activities in phytosanitary area through some projects and programs.

Legislation/regulations/rules

In 2022, Japan amended the Plant Protection Act to harmonize the phytosanitary measures with the IPPC and International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs). The Amendment introduced provisions that:

- allow items such as agricultural machinery to be made subject to import/export quarantine;
- strengthen the authority of plant protection officers to inspect passengers' personal belongings and the penalties for violations related to import and export quarantine;
- allow an entity registered by the MAFF to conduct part of the export inspection on behalf of plant protection officers if the importing country requires the plant or other item being exported from Japan to have phytosanitary certification from the exporting country;
- stipulate national surveillance projects for detection of targeting pests and a reporting obligation for those who find a designated pest;
- allow to promptly implement emergency pest control measures in response to pest outbreak;
- establish a system to facilitate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) through developing national basic guidelines and local(prefectural) plans for pest control emphasizing preventative measures

The Ordinance for Enforcement of the Plant Protection Act has already been revised according to some of the new provisions above. Further revisions will be issued for the rest of the new provisions. The Amendment to the Plant Protection Act and the 1st revision to the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Plant Protection Act pertaining to the Amendment will come into force on the 1st of April 2023. In addition, MAFF continues to review the import regulations including update of quarantine pest list based on PRAs using most recent scientific evidence and relevant ISPMs.

Infrastructure

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is responsible for plant quarantine service and plant protection to prevent the introduction of pests of plants and plant products and control them. The International Affairs Office in the Plant Protection Division (PPD) deals with international issues including bilateral negotiations and multilateral activities such as implementation of IPPC/ISPM and international cooperation such as FAO trust funds and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) projects. The plant protection office in PPD handles domestic issues including preventing establishment or spread of pests and pest control. PPD also monitors and analyzes pest reports overseas collected from various sources. The Plant Protection Station (PPS) of MAFF consists of 5 head offices, 16 sub stations, 35 branches and more than 900 plant protection officers (as of October 2022) who are authorized by the Plant Protection Act to implement appropriate inspection/certification. In addition, detector dogs are deployed to help detect regulated articles imported.

Pest surveillance and pest outbreaks

MAFF conducts phytosanitary actions in response to pest outbreak according to the Plant Protection Act and relevant ISPMs. MAFF is working closely with prefectural governments and other stakeholders to conduct surveillance and take emergency control measures, where necessary. As of October 2022, emergency control measures based on the Act are being implemented for *Heterodera*

schachtii (beet cyst nematode) in Nagano prefecture and *Globodera pallida* (pale cyst nematode) in Hokkaido. These measures include prohibition of cultivation of host plants, soil fumigation in the infested fields, and movement restriction of underground parts of host plants and plants with soil attached.

Cooperation projects in plant protection

Regarding cooperation projects related to phytosanitary issues, Japan contributes to capacity development on phytosanitary activities in Asian region through the following projects:

- (1) Improving Capacities of Phytosanitary Inspection and Integrated Measures for International Movement of Seeds (GCP/RAS/297/JPN) (2016-2020)
 - This project focused on Thailand and Viet Nam where seed production and trade were increasing in recent years. It aimed at facilitating safe trade and promoting capacity development on advanced techniques of diagnosis and identification of seed-transmitted pests in the focused countries, in addition to developing/demonstrating quarantine guidelines. This project was implemented by the FAORAP. The MAFF provided a staff member as a secondment for this project.
- (2) Capacity Development of protection against introduction and spread of transboundary plant pests in the Asia and Pacific Region (GCP/RAS/381/JPN-F, GCP/RAS/382/JPN) (2020-2025)
 - This project aims at preventing introduction and spread of transboundary pests and strengthening the capacity in the Asia and Pacific region. The activities include holding webinars and workshops, sharing information of plant protection on occurrence, prevention measures and pest control techniques and developing materials in support of capacity development. This project is implemented by the FAORAP. The MAFF provides a staff member as a secondment for this project.
- (3) Cooperation for development of the ePhyto solution and implementation of the Convention and International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (GCP/GLO/827/JPN) (2017-2020)
 - This project aimed to improve the capacity of countries to implement standards on import and export certification using an ePhyto solution and to enhance their ability for pest exclusion. Support was provided to the activities of the IPPC Secretariat in order to help contracting parties to implement the Convention, ISPMs and CPM recommendations. This project was implemented by the IPPC Secretariat and the MAFF provided a staff member as a secondment.
- (4) Support for Implementation and Capacity Development Activities of the IPPC Secretariat (GCPT/GLO/102/JPN) (2020-2024)
 - This project provides a staff member as secondment to the IPPC Secretariat to support the implementation and capacity development activities for the IPPC community.
- (5) Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) training program: Thermal Treatment for Disinfestation of Fruit Flies
 - The training course of JICA on Thermal Treatment for Disinfestation of Fruit Flies has been implemented since 1988 with trainees invited from countries which are affected by fruit flies. The number of participants for this program has reached about 170 trainees from 42 countries in total.
 - This program conducts training for four months at Naha Plant Protection Station in Okinawa Prefecture with the aim of improving techniques and skills on thermal treatment for disinfestation of fruit flies.

Pest management

For pest management, MAFF conducts pest forecasting program, which is stipulated by Plant Protection Law, with the cooperation of local governments, and facilitates pests control using Integrated Pest Management (IPM). MAFF has established the "IPM Practice Guidelines" in 2005, which aims at making Japanese agriculture more sustainable one through mitigating and/or minimizing risks to human health and burden on the environment based on due consideration of all available options of control techniques and their economic efficiency. MAFF supports financially national institutes, local governments and farmers' organizations for research, development and demonstration of IPM technologies in controlling pests and diseases to encourage farmers to use newly developed technologies for IPM.

Japan formulated a medium- to long-term strategy of the Measures for the achievement of Decarbonization and Resilience with Innovation (MeaDRI) in May 2021 to realize both increase in productivity and sustainability in the food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries through innovation. Currently the Japanese government and stakeholders are strongly implementing the related activities in the MeaDRI including IPM that does not rely solely on chemical pesticides, that is expected to pave the way towards the development of resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems, more specifically, increasing productivity of food and agricultural production while reducing the environmental load by promoting innovation.

Pesticide management

With regard to pesticide management, MAFF is responsible for the registration and regulation of agricultural chemicals in Japan. The entire process of manufacture, import, sell and use of agricultural chemicals is strictly regulated in accordance with the Agricultural Chemicals Regulation Act, to ensure safe use of pesticides.

Japan is still a non-member country of APPPC because the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region has the article prescribing measures to exclude "South American Leaf Blight of Hevea" from the region, which prevents Japan from signing the agreement. This article was deleted in the 1999 Amendment of the Plant Protection Agreement for the Asia and Pacific Region, however the 1999 Amendment of the agreement has not yet become effective.

Japan has an intention to become a member of APPPC in order to make further contribution to APPPC and the region.