

“Extruded” or “Hermetically Sealed” Pet Foods/Treats/Chews

Our understanding is that no animal health certification is required for fully processed cooked (finished, packaged, ready for retail sale, shelf-stable) pet food to be imported to Japan.

Fully processed cooked means materials must be:

- Cooked and dry (“crunchy”) (kibble type products produced through an extrusion process); or
- Semi-moist products produced through an extrusion process; or
- Hermetically sealed products.

[If materials do not meet the above criteria please see information below.]

Package labeling must indicate that product is for consumption by pets (this can be inferred as long as it is obvious to Japanese port authorities that product is not intended for feeding to livestock or use as fertilizer).

Exporters should still have their importers confirm prior to shipment with Japanese authorities at the port of entry that all required documentation is available.

Even though not required, a VS Form 16-4 may still be issued for shipments of these materials to Japan, as long as it has **no additional declarations added** and has otherwise been completed in compliance with all APHIS policies.

Pet Treats and Chews Made from only Bones or “External” Tissues such as Hide, Ears, Snouts, Pizzles, and Hooves

Materials that fall into this category include only those materials that are not produced through extrusion or retort-processing (hermetically sealed) but are:

- Derived from bovine, porcine, ovine, caprine, and equine animals; and
- Derived from tissues other than internal soft tissue organs and muscle meat; and
- Shipped packaged ready for retail for pet consumption; and
- NOT derived from bovine skulls or vertebral column other than caudal vertebrae (tails).

These materials must be exported accompanied by a VS Form 16-4 with ONLY the following additional declarations:

This office has on file a notarized affidavit from [insert company name] verifying the accuracy of the statements below.

The products described below are not likely to transmit infectious diseases of domestic animals.

The products described below contain only those animal origin ingredients (other than egg, dairy, or fish) derived from animals that passed ante-mortem government inspection at slaughter.

The products described below are packaged ready for retail sale for pet use.

The products described below do not contain bovine skulls or vertebral column other than caudal vertebrae (tails).

Chews derived from cervid animals are banned (unless they are produced through extrusion or retort-processing).

Special Information on Freeze Dried Products

Japan requires ALL "freeze dried" products (other than fish or dairy) to meet the same requirements as meat imported for human consumption. This means that these products must be certified by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

FSIS is currently evaluating whether or not their regulations permit endorsement of freeze dried products export for use as pet food. Exporters should contact the FSIS Technical Service Center for information on if their products are eligible for the required certification to export to Japan.

An alternative protocol is under negotiation. This website will be updated if there are any changes in these requirements.

Other Pet Food and Pet Treats/Chews

Pet foods and treats that do not meet any of the above criteria are believed NOT to be eligible for export to Japan at this time unless they contain no animal origin ingredients other than fish and/or dairy. The requirements are under negotiation, and this webpage will be updated when a protocol is agreed upon. **This includes all pet food and chews derived from poultry meat, except for those that are produced through extrusion or retort-processing (hermetically sealed products).**

Exception: Pet foods and treats that do not meet the above criteria (cooked and crunchy or hermetically sealed) but that contain no animal origin ingredients other than dairy and/or fish: Are believed to be eligible with a VS Form 16-4 with no additional declarations other than that the products contain no animal origin ingredients other than dairy and or fish. Additional statements may not be added to the VS Form 16-4. Exporters should have their importers confirm with the Japanese port authorities (at the port the product will enter Japan through) prior to export that the consignment will be permitted entry with the available VS Form 16-4.