

Revision of Specifications for Sterilized or Filter Sterilized Mineral Waters

The government of Japan will establish specifications for perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) in sterilized or filter sterilized mineral waters.

Background

Japan prohibits, under Article 13, paragraph (2) of the Food Sanitation Act (Act No. 233 of 1947; “the Act”), the sale etc. of foods and food additives for which specifications or standards are stipulated in the Specifications and Standards for Foods, Food Additives, Etc. (Public Notice of the Ministry of Health and Welfare No. 370, 1959; “the Public Notice”) pursuant to paragraph (1) of the same article of the Act, when the foods or the food additives do not meet the specifications or the standards.

Specifications and standards for mineral waters stipulated in the Public Notice have been successively reviewed based on the assessment of the health effects of food by the risk assessment body, the Food Safety Commission of Japan under the Cabinet Office (“the FSCJ”), considering consistency with the water quality standards stipulated in Japan’s Water Supply Act and international standards such as Codex. This time, the FSCJ has published the assessment of health effects of synthetic organofluorine chemical compounds (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances: PFAS) in food. Under the Water Supply Act, water-quality standards for tap water for two substances out of PFAS, perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), will be established (scheduled to be enforced in April 2026). Considering above, Japan will establish the specifications for PFOS and PFOA in sterilized or filter sterilized mineral waters as below.

Outline of specification

Compositional specifications for mineral waters (sterilized or filter sterilized)

(mg/l)

Substance name	Maximum level (current)	Maximum level (draft)
✓ Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS)	Not established	<u>0.00005 as total</u>
✓ Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)		

Note: The underlined part is the newly established level (draft).