

UK opens door to Japan's £1.4 billion organic market

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Strengthened UK-Japan trade arrangement slashes red tape for British organic exporters, cutting costs and bureaucracy

British organic food producers will see red tape slashed and the doors opened to one of Asia's fastest-growing organic markets, Food Security Minister Dame Angela Eagle has announced.

Coming into effect today (Wednesday 1 April), the UK and Japan have formally recognised the equivalency of each other's organic livestock standards. This will create significant market access for British exporters to meet growing consumer demand for organic products in Japan, from organic bacon and sausages to cheese and butter.

This means British businesses will need only a single UK organic certification to sell their organic livestock products in both countries, cutting costs and bureaucracy and breaking down a major trade barrier.

The government has identified removal of this trade barrier as one of its market access priorities, with the potential to boost British export sales and generate millions in additional trade each year according to industry estimates.

Food Security Minister Dame Angela Eagle said:

From Welsh organic cheese to world-class organic British beef, our farmers and producers set the gold standard for quality.

This arrangement tears down barriers and gives them access to Japanese consumers who are increasingly seeking out the very best organic products the world has to offer.

Among those eyeing the opportunity is a Welsh organic dairy producer that has been growing its exports of organic cheese across Asian markets and is now looking to establish a foothold in Japan.

Stuart McNally, Business Development and Sales Manager for Calon Wen, said:

This is a very welcome breakthrough for Calon Wen, a farmer-owned organic dairy co-operative, and for the wider UK organic sector.

This equivalency with Japan allows us to pursue opportunities previously out of reach. This includes organic business tenders worth substantial trade annually. It's a positive step that supports our family farms and strengthens the reputation of Welsh organic dairy in premium export markets such as Japan."

Japan is the second largest organic market in Asia, valued at an estimated £1.4 billion in 2023, and expanding rapidly, driven by Japanese government initiatives to promote organic consumption domestically.

The UK-Japan organics market already enjoys a thriving trade partnership, where British organic produce including tea, fruit and vegetable juices, cereals, sauces, and syrups are already winning over Japanese consumers, who in return export popular staples like organic soy sauce, noodles, and green tea enjoyed by British consumers.

The UK's organic sector continues its impressive growth trajectory, expanding 4.2% in 2025 to reach £3.9bn retail value - a trend sustained since 2012. The EU, Switzerland, US, and Republic of Korea stand among the other key export destinations for British organic products.

This arrangement builds on many recent wins for the livestock sector such as the recent beef tariff rate quota, worth up to £70 million a year if fully utilised, and genetics market access in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Notes to editors

- Japan is the second largest organic market in Asia after China, with an estimated value of approximately £1.4 billion in 2023.
- The new arrangement expands the UK's existing organic equivalency arrangement for mutual recognition of organic standards between the UK and Japan to cover organic livestock products for the first time and will come into effect on 1 April 2026.
- This builds on an earlier agreement that was reached between the UK and Japan in September 2025, boosting new trade in organic alcoholic drinks.
- The scope of the products covered by the arrangement includes all types of UK organic certified meat and dairy products, including beef, lamb, pork and chicken, processed meat products such as bacon, sausages, hams and cured meats, dairy products such as butter, cheese, yoghurt, milk powders and processed eggs, and other processed food products containing animal ingredients, for example pet food.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-opens-door-to-japans-14-billion-organic-market>