

JAPAN: The new third-party certification system for health foods

The Japan Health & Nutrition Food Association (JHNFA) recently announced the first list of 48 raw materials from 16 companies which are certified as conforming to the standards of the new third-party certification system: "In-House Safety Assessment of Health Foods". The list covers various different substances, including propolis extracts, chitosan powders and chlorella extracts.

As reported in June 2010 Newsflash, the Certification Management Council, the accreditation body which designates, supervises and gives guidance to certification bodies, authorized JHNFA as the first certification body. JHNFA's task is to verify whether applicants conduct adequate safety assessment for health foods including food supplements, such as scientific literature review (and if necessary, toxicological texts) and application of GMP requirements to the manufacturing process. JHNFA has been accepting applications since July 2010 and has received nearly 100 to date.

The certification list currently only includes raw materials, but consumer products are expected to be certified in coming months. When certified, consumer products can bear a logo mark on the package, and raw material products can bear a certified product code number as well as a logo mark.

The new system, cooperatively developed among industrial organizations in accordance with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's guideline and with support from the Ministry, is expected to ensure increased safety in health foods. The labelling logo mark should also help improve consumer confidence in consumer products, and the promotion of public awareness of the new system and logo mark is a priority.

JHNFA will periodically announce newly certified products on its website.

Source: JHNFA