

About JHNFA



Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation

Message from the Director General

The Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association (JHNFA) disseminates appropriate information and supports the application and notification for Foods with Health Claims (i.e., Foods for Specified Health Uses, Foods with Nutrient Function Claims, and Foods with Function Claims), which are considered beneficial for maintaining and promoting health, and Foods for Special Dietary Uses that address specific nutritional or medical needs. In addition, the Association operates the certification program for the Japan Health Food Authorization (JHFA) Mark, aimed at enhancing public confidence in health foods.

This program establishes category-specific standards for a variety of health foods. Once an application is submitted, the Association evaluates the product through a third-party committee composed of experts in medicine, pharmacology, and nutrition. Products that meet the established criteria are granted certification to display the JHFA Mark.

Since 2005, we have implemented the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certification program to ensure proper production and quality control of health foods. In 2010, we launched an In-house Safety Assessment Certification program, under which an expert third-party committee evaluates the safety assessments voluntarily conducted by food business operators. Through these initiatives, we have been working to ensure the quality and safety of health food products.

Furthermore, we regularly hold training courses to cultivate Health Food Advisors who are specialists equipped to offer appropriate guidance on health foods to consumers.

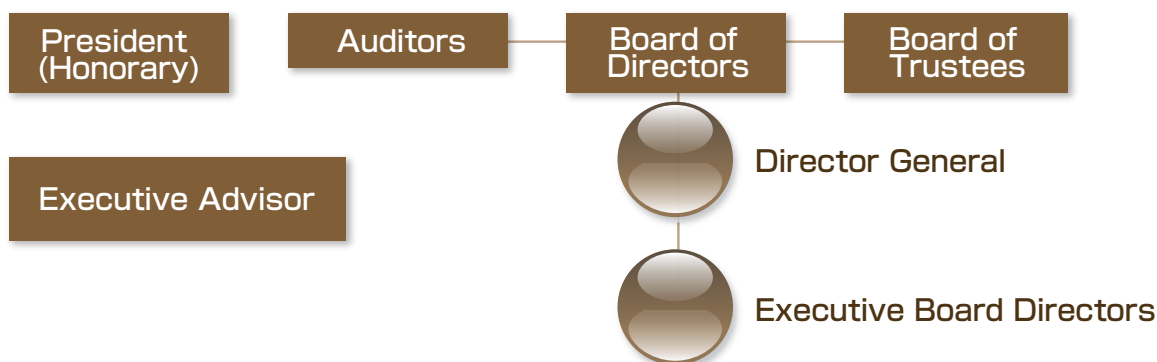
On July 1, 2011, JHNFA was officially recognized as a Public Interest Incorporated Foundation by the Cabinet Office. In light of this designation, we are now more keenly aware of our mission and remain fully committed to addressing the diverse needs and expectations of both the public and relevant stakeholders. We sincerely ask for your continued support and cooperation in the years ahead.

Director General
YAJIMA Tetsuya, M.D., Ph.D.

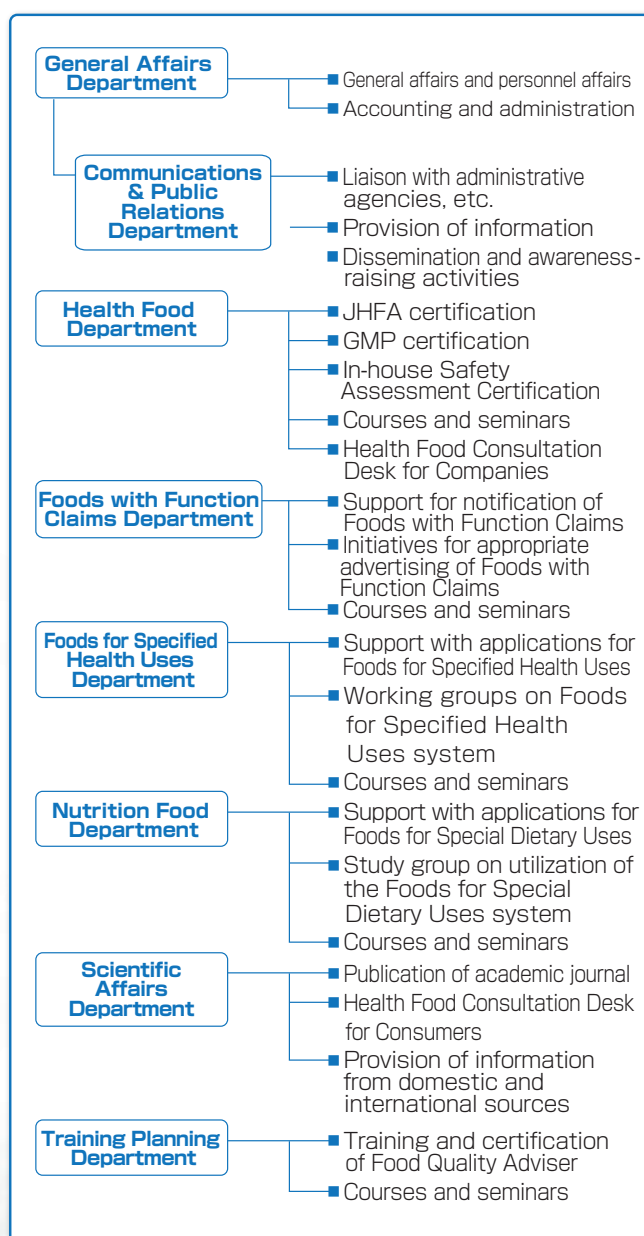
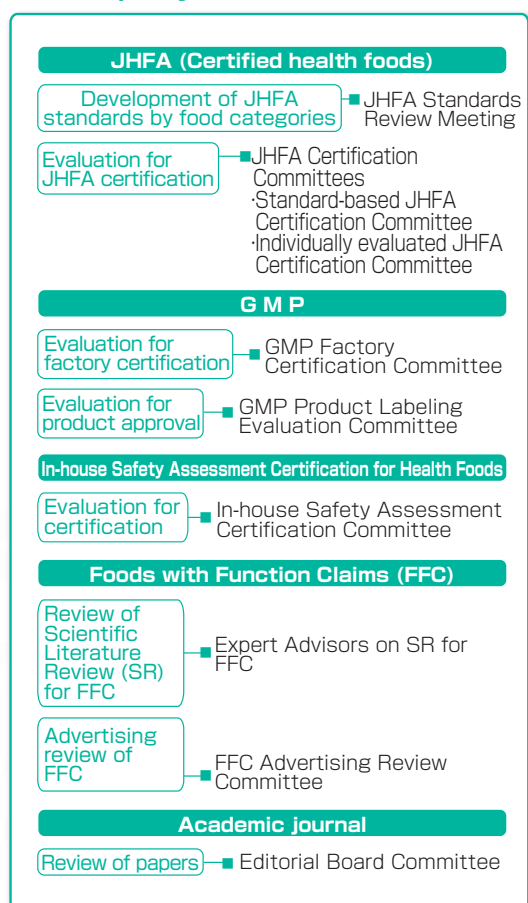
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Organization



Third-party evaluation committees Secretariat



Health Food Department

Main activities

Evaluation and management of JHFA certification / Development of JHFA standards
 Evaluation and management of GMP certification for factories/products
 Evaluation and management of In-house Safety Assessment Certification
 Courses and seminars
 Dissemination and awareness-raising for JHFA-certified health foods

JHFA (Certified Health Food) Certification Programs

JHFA stands for “Japan Health Food Authorization.” It is pronounced “jafa.”

With the aim of ensuring product quality and safety, the “JHFA Mark,” which has been in operation since 1986, is a safety and security mark for health foods that have passed strict evaluations of product quality, safety and effectiveness.

We support consumers’ product choices by granting the JHFA Mark on certified health food products.

JHFA Certification Programs

There are two types of certification programs: “standard-based JHFA certification” for which an evaluation is conducted in accordance with the prescribed standards; and “individually evaluated JHFA certification” for which an evaluation is conducted for individual products.



Standard-based type
 JHFA standards have been established for 69 food categories.

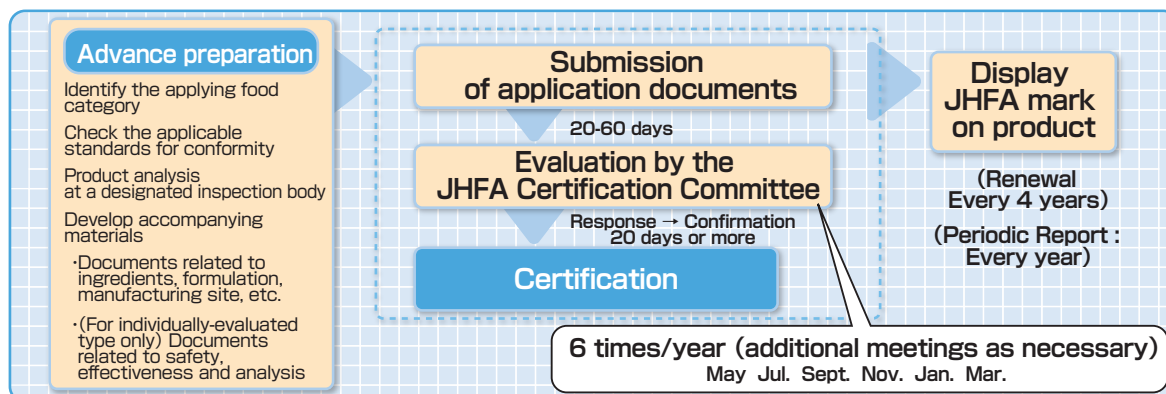


Individually evaluated type
 The JHFA Mark may be applied to food categories that are not covered by existing JHFA standards.

Flow of JHFA Certification and Processing Period

Product evaluation is required to obtain JHFA certification. A rigorous emulation is carried out by the JHFA Certification Committee comprised of third-party experts.

It takes 3 to 4 months from application to certification. After certification, periodic reports are required annually, and renewal is required every 4 years.

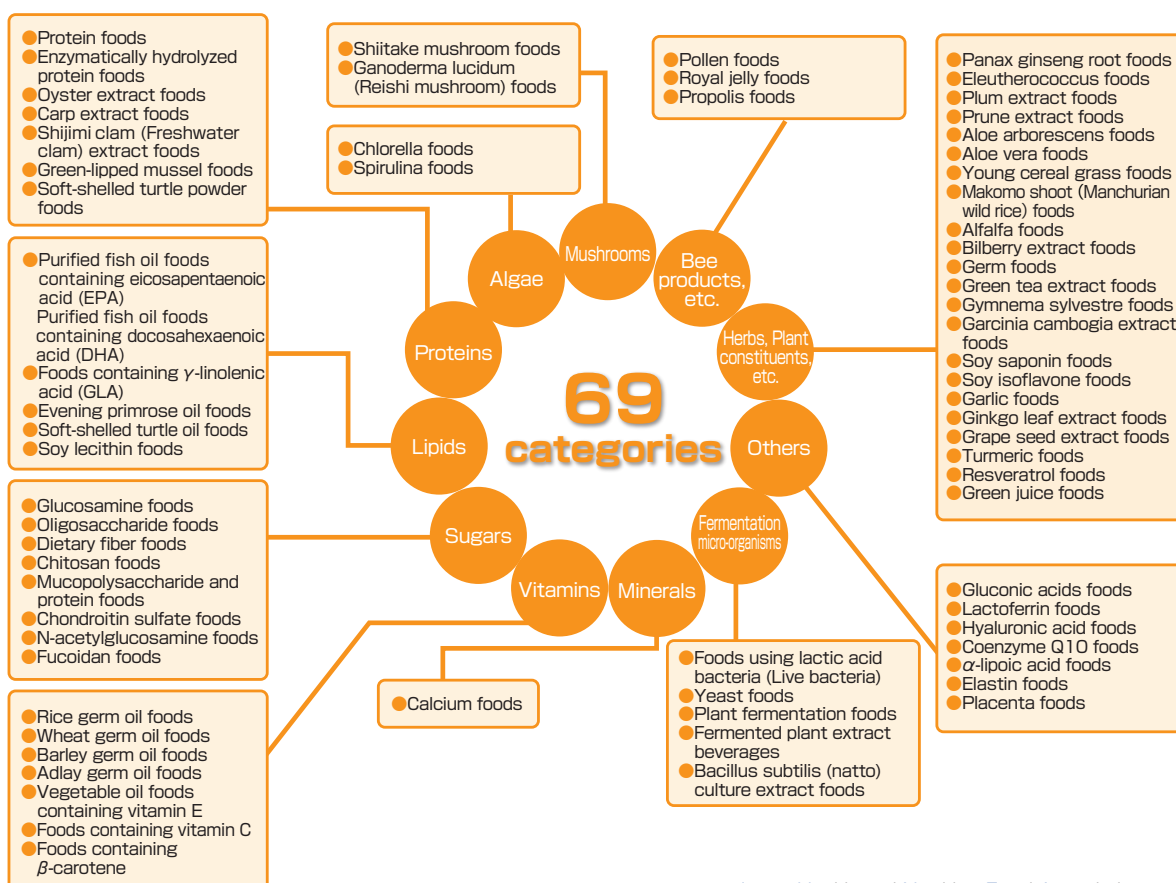


Overview of Individually Evaluated JHFA Certification

For products intended to be marketed with health or functional benefits, individual product evaluations are conducted to ensure safety, efficacy, and quality from the perspective of appropriate product design. Certification is granted to products that pass these evaluations.

Application		Evaluation
Product quality	Safety	●Is the product quality appropriate? (formulation, analysis, manufacturing, quality control, packaging, etc.) ●Are there any problems with the safety of the product? ●Does the product have the potential to help maintain and promote health?
Effectiveness	Analysis	
(Possibly effective) Individually certified health food		This product has been certified by the Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association for compliance with JHFA quality standards. This product has been certified by the Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association for compliance with JHFA standards including quality, manufacturing, processing and labeling.
(Effective in human trials) Individually certified health food with functional benefit		This product has been certified by the Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association based on scientific information supporting health benefits, and on product quality. This product has been certified by the Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association based on scientific information beneficial for maintaining and promoting health and on product quality. This product has been certified by the Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association for benefits of maintaining and promoting health, along with safety and product quality.

Food Categories with Established JHFA Standards



GMP Certification Programs

Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) is a guideline for manufacturing management and quality control of products and raw materials. Compliance with GMP is essential to ensure the safety and better quality of products and raw materials, while implementation of GMP is expected to increase consumer trust and confidence in health foods.

We have been operating a GMP certification program through inspections and evaluations since April 2005, and certified factories are permitted to display the “GMP Factory Mark” for their companies’ advertising and promotional materials. Furthermore, individually approved products are allowed to display the “GMP Product Mark.”

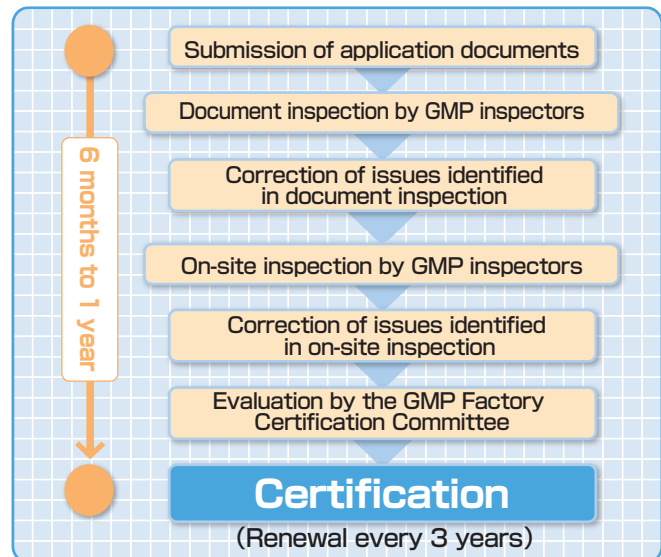
Certification of Factories

日健栄協認定工場

GMP



<GMP Factory Mark>



Approval of Products

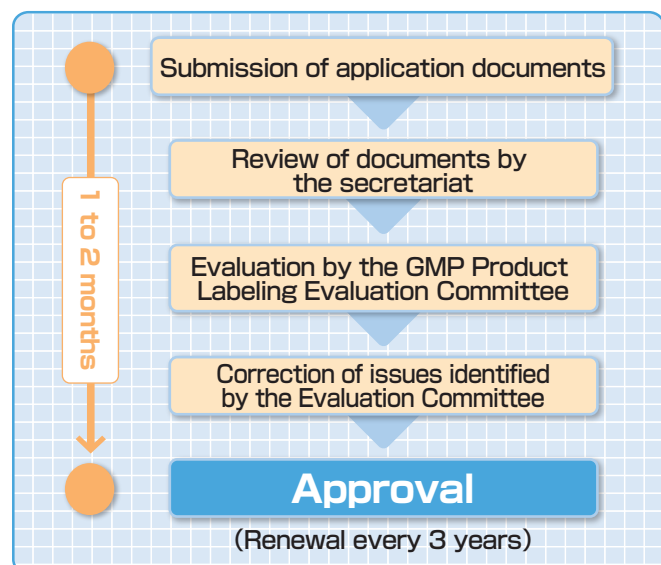
日健栄協認定製品

GMP



<GMP Product Mark>

Products manufactured at GMP-certified factories are eligible to display the “GMP Product Mark” upon obtaining individual product approval.



In-house Safety Assessment Certification Program



This program certifies voluntary safety assessments of health foods in accordance with notifications issued by the competent regulatory authorities.

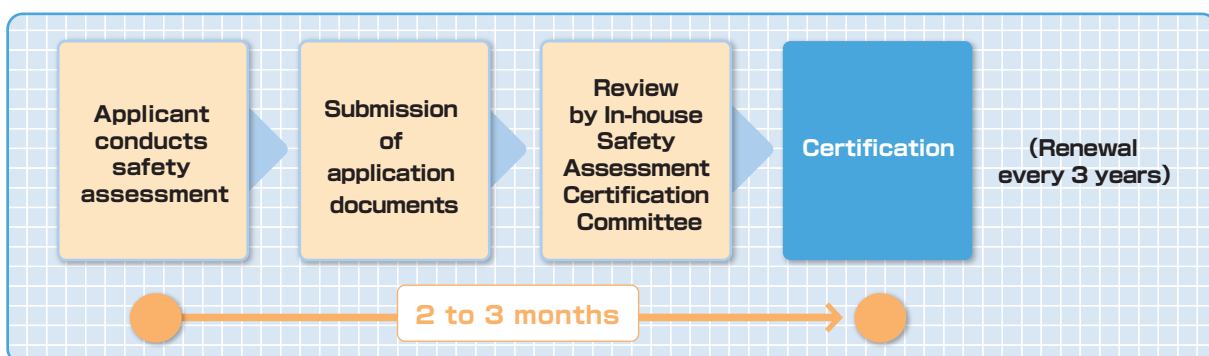
Health Food Department

In-house Safety Assessment Certification Program for Health Foods reviews and certifies the results of safety assessments voluntarily conducted by food business operators for health food raw materials. Certified raw materials and the products containing them may display the designated registration code number and safety mark.

Although the certification does not serve as a complete guarantee of safety or effectiveness, food business operators may benefit from the following advantages:

- (i) providing consumers with information to help them make informed choices regarding health foods
- (ii) Enhancing consumer confidence in product safety by having expert third parties review their safety assessments
- (iii) Strengthening the company's image as one committed to safety

Flow of Obtaining Certification



Amid rising public health awareness, a variety of health foods are available on the market. To ensure their safety, the competent regulatory authorities issued a notification titled “Regarding ‘Guidelines for in-house inspection and product design concerning safety of ingredients for foods in tablet, capsule and other forms’ and ‘Guidelines for manufacturing control and quality control (GMP) of foods in tablet, capsule and other forms.’” (Issue by the Director, Food Safety Standards and Evaluation Division, Public Health Bureau, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, March 11, 2024) In line with the notification, we are carrying out this third-party certification program.

Foods with Function Claims Department

Main activities

Support for notification of Foods with Function Claims

Initiatives for appropriate advertising of Foods with Function Claims

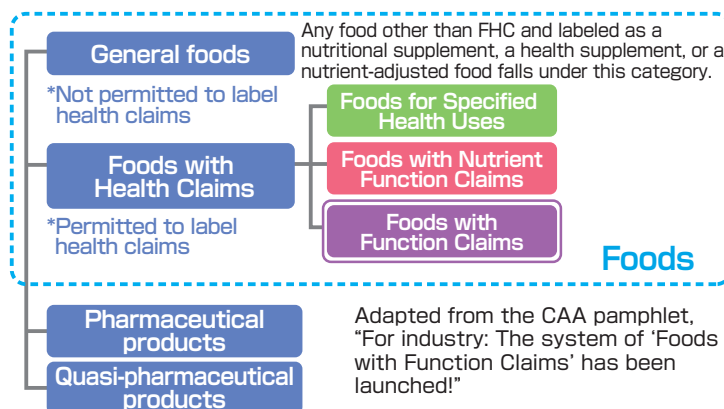
Courses and seminars

Foods with Function Claims (FFC)

The Foods with Function Claims (FFC) system was established in 2015 as part of Japan's regulatory framework for Foods with Health Claims (FHC). Alongside Foods for Specified Health Uses (FOSHU) and Foods with Nutrient Function Claims (FNFC), the FFC system introduced a new category within the FHC framework, allowing food products to label health claims.

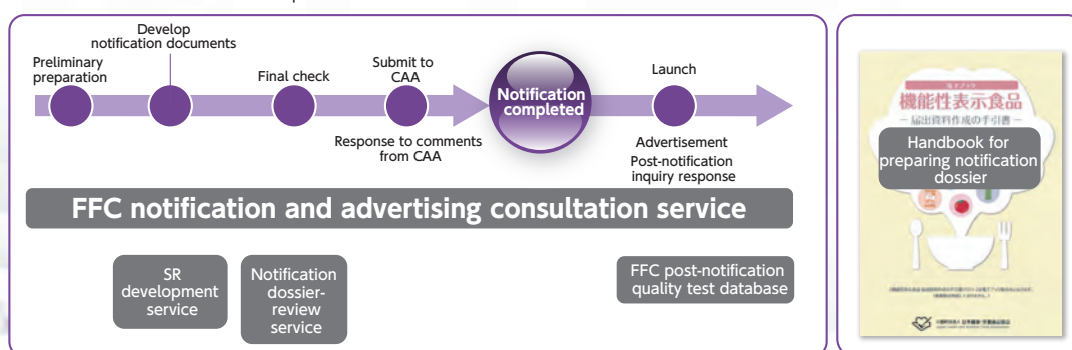
Unlike FOSHU, FFC is not individually approved by the Consumer Affairs Agency (CAA).

Bearing health claims is allowed under the sole responsibility of food business operators, who submit a notification dossier to the CAA. To help consumers make voluntary and rational food choices, food business operators are required to ensure product safety, collect scientific evidence to substantiate health claims, and provide information through appropriate labeling.



Support for Notification of FFC

To submit a notification for FFC, food business operators are required to prepare documents related to safety, effectiveness, manufacturing process control, product labeling, and quality management. By leveraging the expertise we have cultivated through initiatives across various areas of the health food sector, we provide comprehensive support from the preparation phase to post-notification follow-up.



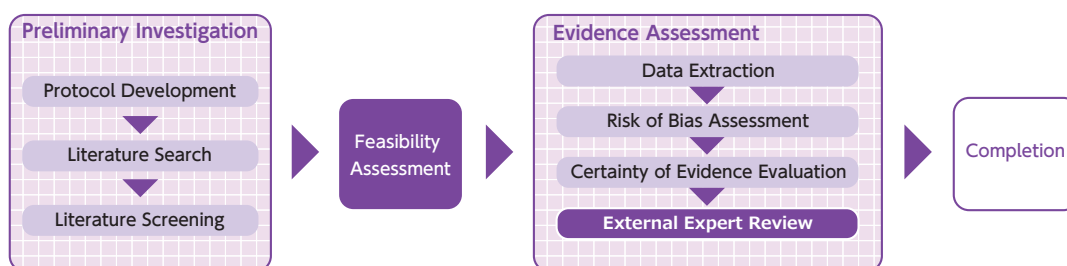
FFC Notification and Advertising Consultation Service

Since the establishment of the FFC system in 2015, we have supported approximately 1,000 consultations as of March 2025. We provide expert guidance on a wide range of topics related to FFC notifications, including preliminary preparation, development of the notification dossier, responses to comments from the CAA, and advertisement.

Systematic Literature Review Development Service

The systematic literature reviews (SRs) that have undergone external expert review will be prepared within approximately three months using the format designated by the CAA. Based on our extensive experience, including over 50 SRs and more than 300 notifications (as of March 2025), we provide high-quality and reliable SRs.

SR Development Process



Notification Dossier Review Service

Prior to submission to the CAA, we conduct a thorough review of the complete set of notification dossier, focusing on any procedural deficiencies. We also offer advice on whether the dossier meets the requirements set forth by the CAA. Once the review is complete, a certificate is issued, which may be attached at the time of submission as supporting documentation indicating that an external organization has endorsed the dossier.

FFC Post-notification Quality Test Database

We encourage food business operators' efforts for information disclosure through the operation of the FFC Post-notification Quality Test Database, a public website that provides access to the status of quality tests conducted after notification.

Handbook for Preparing Notification Dossier

First published in 2017, this handbook has been widely used by food business operators as a guide for preparing notification dossiers. It includes essential content from official CAA materials, such as guidelines and Q&A, and offers detailed insights into common pitfalls, thereby supporting efficient and accurate notification.

Initiatives for Appropriate Advertising of FFC

To further improve and ensure the appropriate advertising expressions for FFC, we operate the Working Group on Advertising for FFC comprised of member companies, and the FFC Advertising Review Committee, which includes external experts.

Working Group on Advertising for FFC Since 2017

- Comprised of advertising and creative staff from member companies
- Research and development of guidelines for fair advertising
- Hosting seminars on advertising
- Support for the FFC Advertising Review Committee

FFC Advertising Review Committee Since 2018

- Media: Web, Video, Print
- Guidelines: Relevant laws and notifications, and voluntary standards established by the industry
- Members: External experts and representatives from the Working Group

Foods for Specified Health Uses Department

Main activities

Consultation and support for applications for Foods for Specified Health Uses

Dissemination and awareness raising for Foods for Specified Health Uses

Support for activities of working groups on FOSHU system

Courses and seminars

Foods for Specified Health Uses

To realize a “long and healthy life,” it is important to adopt the mindset of taking responsibility for one’s own health.

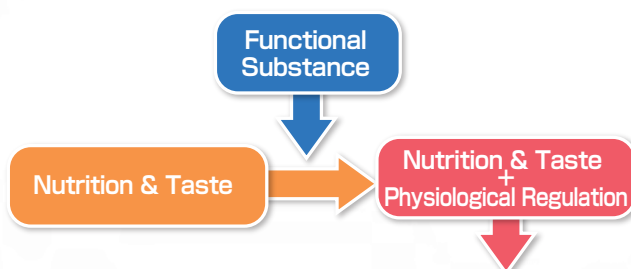
Food has the primary function of providing nutrition for sustaining life, the secondary function of offering taste for enjoying meals, and the tertiary function of maintaining health through physiological regulation such as supporting homeostasis, enhancing biological defense, recovering from disease and promoting anti-aging.

Foods for Specified Health Uses (FOSHU) are foods that emphasize the tertiary function. They contain functional substances that influence the body’s physiological functions and are used for specific health benefits, such as maintaining normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels or regulating intestinal conditions. FOSHU is approved by the Consumer Affairs Agency following strict evaluation based on scientific evidence of their effectiveness, safety and quality.

Foods for Specified Health Uses (FOSHU)



The FOSHU System, established in 1991, is the world’s first groundbreaking system in which a government permits foods to label specific health claims. It has since attracted global attention.



Examples

- Foods that maintain intestinal condition
- Foods for people with elevated cholesterol level
- Foods for people with elevated blood pressure
- Foods that help absorb minerals
- Foods for people concerned about bone health
- Foods that are less likely to cause cavities
- Foods that make teeth strong and healthy
- Foods for people starting to worry about blood sugar level
- Foods for people concerned about blood triglyceride level and body fat

Nutrition Food Department

Main activities

Support for applications for Foods for Special Dietary Uses

Dissemination and awareness raising for Foods for Special Dietary Uses

- Study group on utilization of the Foods for Special Dietary Uses system

Consultation and support for nutrition facts labels and Foods with Nutrient Function Claims based on the Food Labeling Standards

Cooperation with related organizations

- Medical Nutrition Council of Japan
- Japanese Industry Association for Medical Nutrition

Courses and seminars

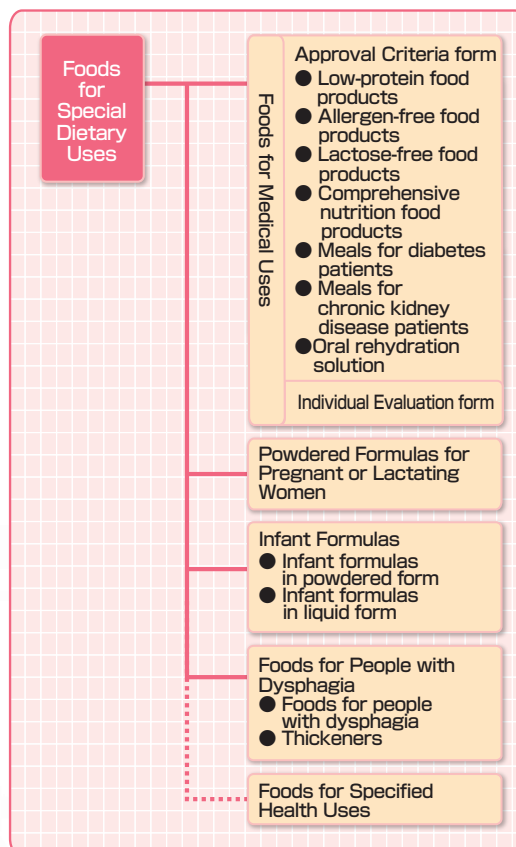
- Seminars, etc. when notifications are issued by the Consumer Affairs Agency

Foods for Special Dietary Uses

Foods for Special Dietary Uses (FOSDU) are foods labeled for special uses that are suitable for the development of infants, and the maintenance and recovery of the health in pregnant or lactating women, individuals with swallowing difficulties, and patients. To sell a food as FOSDU, it is necessary to obtain approval from the Consumer Affairs Agency.



<Foods for Special Dietary Uses mark>



Foods with Nutrient Function Claims

Foods with Nutrient Function Claims (FNFC) are foods intended to supplement nutrients such as vitamins and minerals, and sold with labeling that indicates the functions of those nutrients. To sell a food as a FNFC product, the amount of each relevant nutrient contained in the recommended daily intake must fall within the prescribed upper and lower limits. In addition to nutrient function claims, cautionary statements and other mandatory labeling items must also be displayed on the product label.

Scientific Affairs Department

Main activities

Publication of academic journal “Journal of Nutritional Food”

Health Food Consultation Desk for Consumers

Domestic and international information providing service

Publication of Academic Journal “Journal of Nutritional Food”

Free-access Online Journal

It is required to submit peer-reviewed papers to the Consumer Affairs Agency when applying for Foods for Specified Health Uses (FOSHU) or Foods for Medical Uses (Individual Evaluation form), and when submitting notifications of Foods with Function Claims (FFC).

“Journal of Nutritional Food” is a free-access online academic journal that publishes peer-reviewed research articles on the effectiveness and safety of health foods and related topics.

How Your Paper Gets Published

- (1) Submission of manuscript
- (2) Format check
- (3) Peer review by two or more referees
- (4) Revision based on the referees' feedback
- (5) Editorial board review
- (6) Typesetting
- (7) Online publication



Health Food Consultation Desk for Consumers

As consumers become increasingly health-conscious, greater attention is being paid to lifestyle-related diseases, and the use of health foods as a means of primary prevention is steadily increasing.

On the other hand, various inquiries are being made about the contents of products and purchase decisions.

As part of our consumer education efforts, our association has established the “Health Food Consultation Desk” to raise public awareness regarding health related issues and the appropriate use of health foods.

Consultation Days

Tuesdays and Thursdays
(except national holidays)

Hours

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Phone Number

03-3268-3295

Training Planning Department

Main activities

Training and certification of Food Quality Adviser

Courses and seminars

Training and Certification of Food Quality Adviser

Food Quality Adviser Training Course

In 2002, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare announced that the necessity of training advisory staff who can provide accurate information to help consumers select and consume health foods safely and appropriately.

In line with this view, we have been training "Food Quality Advisers", experts who provide consumers with reliable guidance on Foods with Health Claims and other health foods. Our online on-demand training course for Food Quality Advisers provides comprehensive knowledge on food laws and regulations, food safety, benefits of food components, nutrition and health. After completing the course, participants take a qualification assessment exam (six short essays, and subject-based basic knowledge tests). Those who pass are qualified as a Food Quality Adviser.

The certification for Food Quality Adviser is subject to renewal every 5 years.

Courses and Seminars

Seminar for Newcomers

This seminar provides a clear overview of health foods and is designed for new hires, staff with limited experience, and those newly assigned to health food-related business operations. In addition, we also provide field-specific introductory courses for newcomers.

Seminar for Mid-level Employees

This seminar provides skill-enhancement content and is designed for people with 5 to 6 years of experience. This seminar can be utilized as part of employee training within companies.

Communications & Public Relations Department

Main activities

Public relations activities

Liaison and coordination with administrative agencies and other organizations

Public Relations Activities

- Member communications via e-mail newsletters and the members-only section of the website
- Offering consumer information through the dedicated section of our website
- Media and press relations
- Participation in various exhibitions

Liaison and Coordination with Administrative Agencies and Other Organizations

- Cooperation and information exchange with the government agencies, consumer groups, and industrial organizations.

Association Profile

Association Profile

Name	Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association
Address	2-7-27 Ichigaya-sadohara-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162-0842, Japan TEL: +81-3-3268-3134 FAX: +81-3-3268-3136 E-mail: jhnfa@jhnfa.org Website: https://www.jhnfa.org
Director General	YAJIMA Tetsuya, M.D., Ph.D.
Date of foundation	April 1, 1985: Founded as Incorporated Foundation, Japan Health Food Association (approved by the then Minister of Health and Welfare) July 1, 2011: Certified as Public Interest Incorporated Foundation, Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association
Executives	22 trustees, 20 board directors, 2 auditors
Basic assets	259 million yen
Number of members	627 companies (As of Aug.31, 2025)
History	October 1, 1979: Established as Incorporated Foundation, Japan Health Food Research Association April 1, 1985: Founded as Incorporated Foundation, Japan Health Food Association (approved by the then Minister of Health and Welfare) July 16, 1992: Merged with Japan Dietetic and Enriched Foods Association, and renamed to Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association July 1, 2011: Certified as Public Interest Incorporated Foundation, Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association
Objectives	Our association promotes public health by establishing standards for health foods and operating certification programs, such as the JHFA mark, GMP for health foods, and In-house Safety Assessment for health foods. We collect relevant information, conduct research, and disseminate accurate knowledge on Foods with Health Claims and Foods for Special Dietary Uses. As for the nutrition labeling in accordance with the Food Labeling Standards, we encourage proper nutrition labeling practices in accordance with the intent of the Food Labeling Act, thereby supporting the sound development of our members and related industries.
Outline of business	1. Establishment of standards for health foods and implementation and promotion of the JHFA certification programs 2. Implementation and promotion of the GMP certification programs for health foods 3. Implementation and promotion of the In-house Safety Assessment certification program for health foods 4. Support for application and dissemination of Foods for Specified Health Uses and Foods for Special Dietary Uses 5. Support for notification and dissemination of Foods with Function Claims 6. Consultation on Foods with Nutrient Function Claims and nutrition labeling in accordance with the Food Labeling Standards 7. Research and dissemination of appropriate knowledge about health foods 8. Training and certification of Food Quality Advisers 9. Publication of academic journal 10. Collection and analysis of domestic and international information on health foods and general food products and provision of relevant information and insights to our member companies

Membership Information

Membership Information

— Striving to Bridge Members and Government for Sound Development—

The benefits of becoming a member of JHNFA are:

- Free access to all seminars in your first year of membership.
- Consultation and application/notification support services—trusted by major companies and local governments— available free of charge or at member rates.
- Certifications available at member rates.
- Biweekly email updates on domestic and international health food trends.
- Use of the JHNFA mark on various promotional tools and business media.
- Various manuals and reference books available at member rates.

Membership categories:

Regular member: Food business operators, including companies and organizations.

Associate member: Food business operators, including companies and organizations, who are currently paying the enrollment fee in installments.

Supporting member: Individuals or organizations not involved in food manufacturing or distribution.

Enrollment fee : 300,000 yen

Waived for associate members (first year); exempt for supporting members

Membership fee: Based on department affiliation (Health Food Department, Foods with Function Claims Department, Foods for Specified Health Uses Department, or Nutrition Food Department)

Annual membership fee: 100,000 yen for 1 department, up to 250,000 yen for 4 departments

Enrollment Procedures

- Applicants must comply with the Code of Ethics for Sales Activities and the Regulations on Membership and Fees.
- An interview and a mutual agreement may be required for enrollment.
- The following documents are required at the time of application.

1 Membership Application Form

2 Pledge Statement

3 Articles of Incorporation

4 Certificate of Registered Matters (Complete certificate of historical matters, or a copy of a registration certificate (within the past 3 months))

5 List of executives

6 Company brochure or other documents outlining business activities.

7 Financial statements for the past 2 fiscal years

Application forms and other related forms are available for download from our website.

To overseas businesses considering membership: Please note that, as a general rule, all information, publications, and seminars provided by our association are available only in Japanese.

- Health Food Department
Tel: +81-3-3268-3131 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136

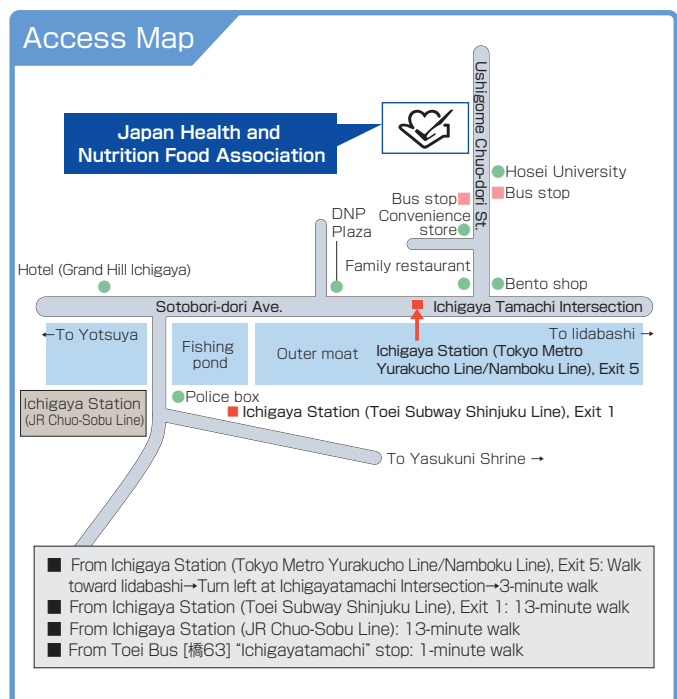
- Foods with Function Claims Department
Tel: +81-3-6635-7481 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136

- Foods for Specified Health Uses Department
- Nutrition Food Department
Tel: +81-3-3268-3132 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136

- Scientific Affairs Department
Tel: +81-3-3268-3133 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136

- Training Planning Department
Tel: +81-3-3268-3160 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136

- General Affairs Department
- Communications & Public Relations Department
Tel: +81-3-3268-3134 Fax: +81-3-3268-3136



Japan Health and Nutrition Food Association

Public Interest Incorporated Foundation

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