

Food Categories [Reference]

● Basic idea

Drinking water, infant foods and milk, for which special consideration is required, are separately classified into three different categories, while the others are all classified into a single category as general foods. In this manner, all foods and drinks are classified into four categories.

Food category	Reasons to establish the limits	Range of foods
Drinking water	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Water is essential for human life and there is no substitution for water, and its consumption is large. 2. WHO's guidance level for radioactive cesium in drinking water is 10Bq/kg. 3. Strict management is possible for radioactive materials in tap water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drinking water, water used for cooking and tea drinks, which is a substitute for water
Infant foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Food Safety Commission pointed out that "the susceptibility to radiation may be higher in childhood than in adulthood." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foods approved to be labeled as "fit for infants" based on Article 26, paragraph (1) of the Health Promotion Act (Act No. 103 of 2002) ○ Foods and drinks sold as intended for infants
Milk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children consume a lot. 2. The Food Safety Commission pointed out that "the susceptibility to radiation may be higher in childhood than in adulthood." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Milk (cow milk, low-fat milk, processed milk, etc.) and milk drinks specified in the Ministerial Order concerning the Ingredient Standards for Milk and Dairy Products (Order of the Ministry of Health and Welfare No. 52 of 1951)
General foods	<p>For the following grounds, foods other than given above are categorized as "general foods."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can minimize the influence of individual differences in eating habits (deviation of the foods to be consumed) 2. Easy to understand for the general public 3. Consistent with international views, such as those of the Codex Alimentarius Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Foods other than given above

Prepared based on the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's website, "Measures for Radioactive Materials in Foods"



Standard limits concerning radioactive materials in foods are established respectively for the four food categories.

For "drinking water," the standard limit was set at 10 Bq/kg due to the following three grounds: (i) Water is essential for human life and there is no substitution for water, and its consumption is large; (ii) WHO's guidance level for radioactive cesium in drinking water is 10Bq/kg; and (iii) Strict management is possible for radioactive materials in tap water (p.42 of Vol. 2, "Waterworks System").

For "milk," the standard limit was set at 50 Bq/kg because (i) children consume a lot and (ii) the Food Safety Commission pointed out that "the susceptibility to radiation may be higher in childhood than in adulthood."

For "infant foods," the standard limit is the same as that for milk at 50 Bq/kg as the Food Safety Commission pointed out that "the susceptibility to radiation may be higher in childhood than in adulthood."

As reasons to set the limit at 100 Bq/kg for "general foods," the following three points are cited: Setting the value in this manner (i) can minimize the influence of individual differences in eating habits (deviation of the foods to be consumed), and is (ii) easy to understand for the general public and (iii) consistent with international views, such as those of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (an intergovernmental body created for the purpose of protecting consumers' health and ensuring fair-trade practices in the food trade, etc. that establishes international standards for foods).

(Related to p.172 of Vol. 1, "Indices Concerning Radioactive Materials in Foods")

Included in this reference material on March 31, 2013

Updated on March 31, 2019