

Establishment of Specifications and Standards for Containers and Packages for Cow's Milk and Milk Products made of Polyethylene Telephthalate Resin

Purpose and background

This activity is to expand the scope of synthetic resins which can be used as materials of containers and packages for normal milk and other certain milk products for sale.

The Food Sanitation Law defines "container and package" as an article in which a food or additive is contained or packed and with which the food or additive is offered when it is delivered. Containers and packages for milk or milk products are regulated both by the Ministerial Ordinance concerning Compositional Standards, Etc. for Milk and Milk Products (originally specified in Ministerial Ordinance No. 52, 1951) and by the Specifications and Standard for Food and Food Additives, Etc (originally specified in Ministry of Health and Welfare Notification No. 370 in 1959).

The Ministerial Ordinance specifies synthetic resins that can be used as materials of containers and packages for milk and milk products for sale. Any person is not permitted to use materials other than specified ones. This time the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has decided to permit the use of polyethylene telephthalate resin (PET) as the materials for containers for normal milk, certified milk, pasteurized goat milk, modified milk, partly skimmed milk, skimmed milk, processed milk, and cream for sale, in response to a request from the related industry. The MHLW will establish necessary specifications for PET used for this purpose.

The MHLW has already received a report from the Food Safety Commission that the use of PET is unlikely to pose any problem with safety as long as PET-bottled milk and milk products are controlled under appropriate conditions. This report is underlain by the fact that the safety of PET, which is already used for containers for non-milk beverages and certain milk products such as formulated milk powder, is ensured.

Outline of additional specifications

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will permit the use of synthetic resins which can be used as materials of containers and packages for normal milk and other certain milk products for sale.

1. Containers and packages for normal milk, certified milk, pasteurized goat milk, modified milk, partly skimmed milk, skimmed milk, processed milk, and cream for sale.

Synthetic resins whose use is permitted as materials of milk containers

- ✓ PET resin and PET-processed paper will be added.
- ✓ PET resin will be permitted for use as a material of parts coming into direct contact the food.

2. PET containers and packages shall meet the following tests.

Material tests

- Cadmium and lead: Not more than 100 ppm

Elution test

- Heavy metals: Not more than 1 ppm
- Residue on evaporation: Not more than 15 ppm
- Potassium permanganate consumption: Not more than 5 ppm
- Antimony: Not more than 0.025 ppm
- Germanium: Not more than 0.05 ppm

Strength tests

- Sealing strength: Not less than 13.3 kPa
- Pinholes: No spot shall be formed on the filter paper.

Either of the following tests

- Bursting strength
 - Containers with a capacity of not more than 300 ml: Not less than 196.1 kPa (not less than 392.3 kPa in case of foods which can be kept at room temperature)
 - Containers with a capacity of more than 300 ml: Not less than 490.3 kPa (not less than 784.5 kPa in case of foods which can be kept at room temperature)
- Piercing strength: Not less than 9.8N