# Japan Increases Quarantine Checks on Food Imports

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TOKYO, July 23 (Kyodo) — Japan will enhance quarantine checks on food imports after Tuesday's revelation that a Chinese company had sold outdated chicken to some Japanese retailers, the chief government spokesman said Wednesday.

McDonald's Co. (Japan) and convenience store chain FamilyMart Co. have announced that they had imported chicken from Shanghai Husi Food Co. and have suspended sales of some of their products in Japan.

"The government will enhance the check system to prevent problematic food from entering Japan," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a press conference. "We will firmly take measures to secure foodsafety."

The government has instructed quarantine stations to "suspend imports of food products manufactured by the company in question," Suga said.

He also said the government has not received any report of health problems related to the chicken imports from the Chinese company.

The health ministry said Wednesday Japan's processed meat imports from Shanghai Husi Food in the year to this month totaled some 6,000 tons and that their buyers have been limited to McDonald's Co. (Japan) and FamilyMart.

China's Xinhua News Agency reported that Shanghai food authorities have seized some 100 tons of problematic food products at Shanghai Husi Food.

The authorities have also found the food firm had sold products to companies in China such as fast foodchains Pizza Hut and Burger King, as well as the Seven-Eleven convenience store chain, Xinhua said. Another media report said the U.S. Starbucks coffee chain also used to sell products using chicken from Shanghai HusiFood.

But the owners of these chains in Japan said Wednesday they are operated separately from the Chinese chain operators and are not using the food products of the Chinese firm.

They are Seven & i Holdings Co. for the Seven-Eleven chain in Japan, Burger King Japan, Starbucks Coffee Japan Ltd. and Kentucky Fried Chicken Japan Ltd. for the Pizza Hut chain in Japan.

FamilyMart President Isamu Nakayama told reporters his company will strengthen inspections to provide secure products.

"We will not necessarily stop importing goods from China," Nakayama said of future deals with Chinese companies. "But we will try to find reliable partners."

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