



Marukan Vinegar (U.S.A.) Inc.

16203 VERMONT AVENUE, PARAMOUNT, CA 90723 • PH: (562) 630-6060 • FAX (562) 630-0330

December 13, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

Marukan Vinegar (U.S.A.), Inc. has been stating that its rice vinegars are vegan for many years, probably dating back to the first time we were asked. Marukan vinegars do not contain any animal ingredients, nor are they processed with compounds which would be considered derived from animals. Nothing has changed in our process for making our products. However, at this time we will discontinue claiming our products are vegan.

We have just been made aware that at least one of our processing agents is either cultivated or processed with lactose. Lactose is a sugar which is commonly derived from milk and dairy products. While updating our supplier documentation, we recently discovered that at least one of our suppliers would not comply with giving their product a vegan declaration. While there is no lactose in our product, nor is it contained in any processing agents which contact our vinegar at any point in the work-in-process stage, we are not sure where this leaves us in terms of our ability to make a "vegan" product claim. It follows that if all our suppliers cannot assure us that their product is vegan, even if it is known to not contain animal substance, in fact our product may not be vegan.

We are currently engaging with vegan certification bodies to pursue a vegan certification on all our products that will qualify. Through this process we will better understand their standards and if necessary, search for alternative processing agents that will allow us to confidently make a vegan product claim in the future.

We understand that consuming a plant-based diet means many things to different people and we want to respect all their views while not misleading anyone. Therefore, at this time, we will no longer claim that our products are vegan until further information or reputable third-party vegan certification is obtained.

Marukan's customers and distributors may have determined a standard for what makes a product vegan or suitable for vegans to consume. If any such party designates Marukan products as such, we will not challenge their standards or product designation. We regret if our change in view to our ability to claim vegan has an impact on your ability to claim this or any other product attributes.

Thank you for your understanding.

Sincerely,

Jon T. Tanklage
President

Marukan Vinegar (U.S.A.), Inc.