

Environmental Communication Activities

In addition to pushing forward its own initiatives, the Ajinomoto Group is also focusing on partnerships with other members of society to encourage the creation of a sustainable society and to promote eco-lifestyles. The Group actively communicates its environmental information and listens to public opinion on various occasions, while energetically promoting eco-living, starting at the dining table, and building a sustainable social framework.

Communicating information, and listening to public opinion

The Ajinomoto Group attaches importance to the disclosure of environmental information, and its various communication activities include the publication of Environmental Reports, which are issued separately from CSR Reports to provide more detailed information on the company's environmental efforts. The Group also considers it important to make opportunities to directly meet or talk with people, such as through the website, exhibitions, stakeholder dialog meetings, and lectures at colleges so that the Group can communicate its commitment to environmental conservation and listen to public opinion, as well as discuss together various subjects related to food and the environment. By identifying the public's expectations of the Group and by sharing common subjects and issues with the public, the Group can make use of the feedback received on these occasions to improve and develop its environmental initiatives, and collaborate with the public in building eco-lifestyles.

■ Awarded the Green Reporting Award for the third running year

The Ajinomoto Group published its first Environmental Report in fiscal 2000, and from fiscal 2006, started to issue a CSR Report concurrently to ensure a more open sharing of information. The Environmental Report has received the Green Reporting Award for three consecutive years.

2006: The Environmental Report Award of the 10th Environmental Communication Awards (co-organized by the Ministry of the Environment and Global Environmental Forum)

2007, 2008: The 11th and 12th Green Reporting Awards' Second Prize (co-organized by Toyo Keizai Inc. and Green Reporting Forum)



Opinions concerning the Environmental Report 2008 (summary)

- Excellent as a communication tool. It is also praiseworthy that the report is made from the viewpoint of entire lifecycles of products, and that the relationships with agriculture and fisheries in the upstream food supply chain are explored to pursue sustainable food. (The 12th Green Reporting Award Comment)
- The importance of biodiversity is well recognized, and this is praiseworthy. Specific goals should be set and managed. (From "Third-Party Opinions" in the report)
- I never imagined that there were companies who are so committed to protecting the environment. (A college student)

The Ajinomoto Group considers it important to communicate information and have direct dialog with the public on various occasions.

- Direct dialog with customers at Eco-Products 2008 (December 2008), Japan's largest environmental product exhibition, and the Appreciation Day for Customers at the Ajinomoto Stadium (May 2009)
- Hearing opinions on the Group's overall CSR strategy including the environment at a stakeholder dialog meeting (December 2008)
- Lectures regarding the Group's environmental commitment, which are held more than 10 times a year

Building a sustainable social framework

The Ajinomoto Group is actively promoting the development of a sustainable social framework in collaboration with various organizations.

■ Collaboration with other food companies —Participation in the Investigative Commission on Food-Related Environmental Problems—

In October 2005, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. became one of the founders of this commission, the members of which include the environmental divisions of 24 leading food companies in Japan. The Japan Food Industry Center (JAFIC) became the secretariat for the commission in April 2007. Under the concerted efforts of this commission, the food industry is tackling various problems such as those associated with the Containers and Packaging Recycling Law.

■ Collaboration between industry, academia and government —Participation in the LCA Study Group and the Study Group for Developing and Promoting a Carbon Footprint Program—

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is a member of the Food Study Group run by the Institute of Life Cycle Assessment Japan, and other groups, and actively conducting research on lifecycle assessments.

Assessment of environmental impact throughout the lifecycle of products → p. 33

■ Society in general

—Promotion of the Team Minus 6% campaign—

The Ajinomoto Group is a corporate member of Team Minus 6%, a national campaign to prevent global warming. To promote this campaign among the general public, the Group called for visitors to the Ajinomoto Stadium on the Appreciation Day for Customers held in May 2009 to participate in the campaign, and encouraged 815 people to sign up.



■ Collaboration with NPOs and NGOs

—Cooperation with the Green Purchasing Network (GPN)—

The GPN is one of the largest environmental organizations in Japan, with the number of member organizations being around 3,000. The major objective of GPN is to promote the concept and practice of green purchasing. In addition to cooperating with GPN in developing green purchasing guidelines for foods, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. also supports and takes part in their nationwide green purchasing campaigns and other activities.

Web <http://www.gpn.jp/English/index.html>

—Support for "Green Lane," an environmental education project for future generations—

Since fiscal 2007, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. has been a co-sponsor of "Green Lane," an environmental education material developed by the Green Cross Japan Foundation for elementary school children, to support environmental education for future generations. It is a booklet consisting of a reading section and a three-month diary section, and children can refer to the reading section in keeping a diary of their experiences and observations related to the environment. The booklet has already been distributed to 100,000 elementary school children across Japan.



Web <http://www.midorinokomichi.net/> (Japanese only)

Promotion of Eco-living, Starting at the Dining Table

Promotion through advertising

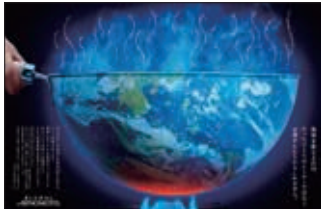
Various advertisements have been developed to promote eco-living, which can be started right away in various daily activities related to dining, such as shopping, meal decision-making, cooking and eating.

“Take a bite out of global warming.” (2006)



The Ajinomoto Group played on Japan's "Cool Biz and Warm Biz" dress code concept with the "COOLVEGE and WARMVEGE"¹ campaign aimed at combating global warming through food choices. This campaign won Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry's Award in the 46th Advertisement Beneficial to Consumers Contest.

1. COOLVEGE and WARMVEGE: Cool Veggies and Warm Veggies



“Saving the planet doesn't need a hero: It needs moms.” (2007)

This environmental advertising campaign highlights an ecological cooking checklist, based on the concept of halting global warming from the kitchen. This campaign won the Grand Prize in Division Two of the 60th Dentsu Advertising Awards.



“Keep the planet clean: Don't waste.” (2007)

This environmental advertisement makes the case that the company's seasonings enable flavorful cooking that is good for people and for the environment. This campaign won the 14th Nikkei Ecology Award in the Nikkei BP Advertising Awards 2008, among other awards.

Corporate message advertisement in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Group “Eat Well, Live Well.” (2009)



On the 100th anniversary of its founding, the Ajinomoto Group expressed its determination to continue to work for all life for the next 100 years.



Suggestions for eco-living, starting at the dining table

<http://www.ajinomoto.co.jp/company/kankyo/eco/index.html> (Japanese only)

Environmental advertisements (download)
http://www.ajinomoto.co.jp/cm/newspaper/index_kankyo.html (Japanese only)

Lectures, events, and exhibitions utilizing the advertisements and other means to promote eco-living



The advertisements are utilized for environmental volunteer training seminars and on other occasions. (NPO Kanagawa Environmental Education Leaders Association (The ads have been used since June 2009.))



A stage demonstration of ecological dining at Eco-Products 2008, Japan's largest environmental exhibition (December 2008)

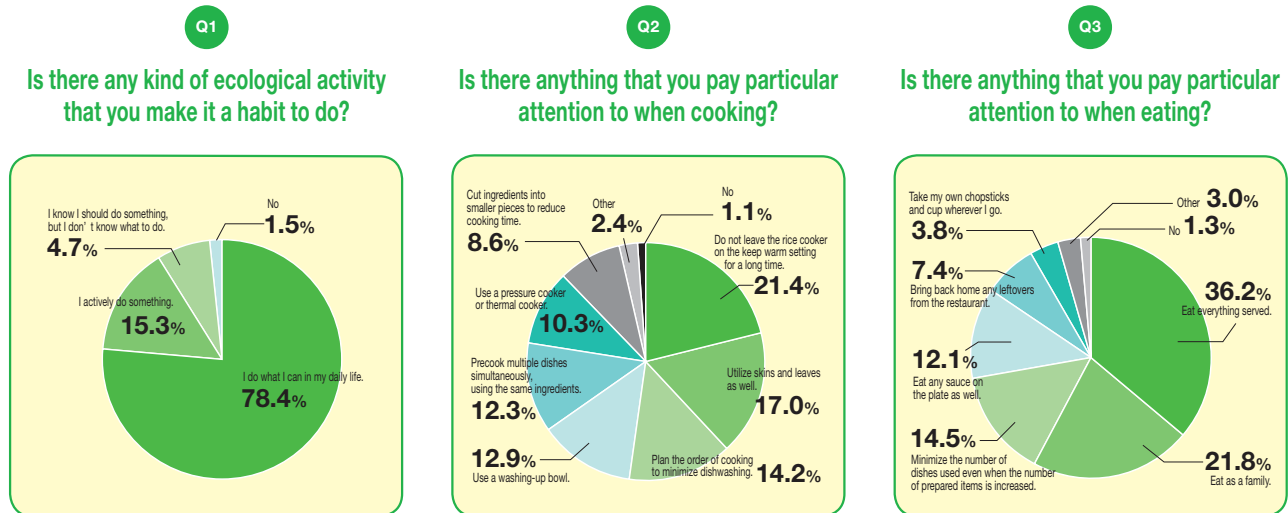


Visitors to the Ajinomoto Stadium on the Appreciation Day for Customers were encouraged to write their resolution to take action for the environment on these leaves. (May 2009)

Actively seek for customers' expectations

“Tell Us about Your Ecological Dining Habits” Questionnaire

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. conducted a questionnaire survey titled “Tell Us about Your Ecological Dining Habits” via the Ashitanomoto (A taste of the future) page on the company’s website in June 2009 during the national Environmental Month, and received 969 responses expressing the respondents’ ecological ideas and opinions and expectations of the company. These responses showed that people’s interest in ecological dining is high, and so are their expectations of the products and services of the company. The results of the survey and the opinions received will be fed back into the planning of the company’s future environmental activities.



Q4 What is your approach to ecology?

- I have my own kitchen garden. I value the vegetables I grow myself and they are delicious to eat.
- When only a small amount of mayonnaise is left in the container, I make dressing by adding vinegar and other flavoring to use up all the mayonnaise.
- This is a very basic thing, but I make it a rule to wash food trays, milk packs, and PET bottles and take them back to the supermarket. I also try to watch movies on environmental problems with my family whenever possible to raise our awareness. The future looks gloomy, and that's why it is important to continue our efforts.
- Gratitude—This is the single most important thing. I thank not only producers or processors, but also Mother Earth every day for providing us with food. I believe this kind of attitude will lead us to protect the environment. I also feel that ecological activities are not something you are told by somebody else to do, but something you should do voluntarily because you recognize their importance.
- My wife and I check electricity and water charges every month, look for areas that need improvement, and encourage each other. We are actually enjoying it; it's like playing a video game and moving on to the next stage. (Partial extracts)

Web “Tell Us about Your Ecological Dining Habits” questionnaire http://ashitanomoto.ajinomoto.co.jp/post_56.html (Japanese only)

- The above site also shows the results of other questions listed below:
- Q: What first made you aware of the importance of ecological activities?
 - Q: Is there anything that stops you from ecological activities?
 - Q: When in your daily life do you feel that you have wasted something? (e.g. when you throw away cooking oil that is past its best-by date, or when you are unable to eat all you have put on your plate in an all-you-can-eat style restaurant.)
 - Q: Is there anything you purchased as a replacement of something, or selected, for ecological reasons?
 - Q: What factors do you take into account when selecting ingredients and food products?
 - Q: Do you have any advice for the Ajinomoto Group to improve their products from an ecological viewpoint? If yes, please tell us.

Establishing a study group within the company

Promoting eco-living from the customers' perspective

The Ajinomoto Group continuously works to enable its customers to live eco-lifestyles through its products, services, and various other business operations. To make these activities even more customer-oriented, the Food Products Company of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. established an internal study group: “Food Products Company Environmental Taskforce” in May 2009. Through this taskforce, staff from different areas such as product development, in-store communication, and advertising combine their efforts to pursue specific contributions and ideas that reflect more closely the needs of society and customers. These activities will be expanded into other food companies in the Group in the near future to allow a much larger number of customers to benefit from them.

In-store communication activities

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is promoting eco-menus based on “COOLVEGE and WARMVEGE” the catchphrase in the “Take a bite out of global warming” advertisement (see p. 45). “COOLVEGE and WARMVEGE” is a concept to encourage people to overcome heat in summer and cold in winter, not by relying on air conditioning, but through the optimum choice of ingredients and dishes. In summer 2009, the company allied with JA Zen-noh Fukushima, an agricultural cooperative association in Fukushima which is famous for its cucumbers, started a joint project between “Kyuri-Biz” —JA Zen-noh Fukushima’s campaign with a concept similar to “COOLVEGE and WARMVEGE”—and the Cook Do® series of Ajinomoto Co., Inc.

Ajinomoto Communications, Inc., a company of sales promotion professionals, supports these activities by developing and offering eco-recipes, developing environmentally friendly sales promotional tools, and through other operations.



2. Kyuri-Biz: The word “Kyuri-Biz” was coined by JA Zen-noh Fukushima based on the word “Cool Biz,” the dress code proposed by the government to combat global warming. The “Kyuri-Biz” campaign claims that eating cucumbers, a summer vegetable, in hot summer makes sense because (1) 95% of a cucumber is water, and therefore cucumbers have the effect of cooling the body, and (2) cucumbers contain potassium, which stimulates the discharge of salt by the human body, and promotes urination.