Ensuring Fair Competition

The Ajinomoto Group Standards of Business Conduct (hereinafter the “Standards of Conduct”) ensure fair and transparent business transactions and require employees to fully understand and comply with laws and regulations concerning competition in all countries in which the Group operates.

Based on the Standards of Conduct, the Ajinomoto Group has developed corporate guidelines for compliance with antitrust law in Japan. Outside of Japan, the Ajinomoto Group has implemented corporate guidelines for compliance with United States antitrust law and European competition law, which apply to some 20 group companies. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. also implements Supplier CSR Guidelines prohibiting behavior that impedes equitable, transparent, and unfettered competition.

Raising employee awareness
The Ajinomoto Group implements regular employee training on antitrust law at its group companies. In fiscal 2013, information sessions were conducted on corporate guidelines for compliance with United States antitrust law and European competition law, and sessions on antitrust law were conducted for procurement staff at group companies outside Japan. In fiscal 2014, the Group will conduct training on antitrust law for sales staff in Japan, as part of efforts to enhance the awareness of its employees.

Highlight

Familiarizing employees with legal issues and risks using manga
Ajinomoto Co., Inc. implements regular training on antitrust law for sales staff, as part of efforts to enhance legal compliance. The company also publishes a manga (comic book) featuring an original character named “Mame-Mame” (Beans), who explains about the law and compliance for all sales staff in Japan, seeking to reach employees with an accessible format.

Preventing Corruption

Bribery and corruption not only destroy trust in a company, but can also be a factor hindering the development of a region by inviting human rights violations, poverty, and environmental destruction. The Ajinomoto Group strives to prevent bribery and corruption by implementing the Ajinomoto Group Standards of Business Conduct.

Ajinomoto Group Standards of Business Conduct (excerpt)

3.1 Complying with antitrust and related laws
3.1.1 We take steps to ensure compliance with antitrust laws, competition laws and other laws and ordinances intended to ensure fair competition in each country where we do business, as well as with related internal guidelines, while pursuing free and fair transactions.
3.1.2 We implement policies to avoid collusion with competitors to arrange prices or sales/production volume, etc., and do not engage in behavior to limit competition (including participating in cartels) or in bid-rigging.
3.1.3 We implement policies to avoid employing unfair means, either alone or with other parties, to eliminate competitors from or block their entry into the market.

3.4 Practicing appropriate socialization and courtesies
3.4.1 We act with good judgment regarding gifts, entertainment and other business-related customs and courtesies.
3.4.2 We do not engage in conduct such as offering inappropriate gifts, entertainment or money to customers or business partners for the purpose of building or maintaining business relationships.
3.4.3 We do not engage in conduct such as asking business partners for gifts, entertainment or money for our personal benefit.

3.5 Prohibiting bribery and corruption
3.5.1 We do not provide gifts, entertainment, money or other benefits that could be considered bribes to domestic and foreign public or quasi-public officials, regardless of the means.

Reference
See “Compliance with anti-bribery laws” on p. 40.