

# Social



## Human Resources Management

Human resources and organizational management ————— P095

## Occupational Safety and Health

Occupational safety and health ————— P105

## Human Rights

Respecting human rights ————— P108

## Supply Chain Management

Responsible supply chain management ————— P117

## Relationships with Local Communities

Contribution to community development ————— P120

## Accessibility

Improving product accessibility ————— P121

Appropriate communications and information sharing — P122

## Product Safety

Quality management ————— P123

# Human resources and organizational management

## Approach

The Ajinomoto Group views the further accumulation and growth of four intangible assets (technology, human, customer, and organization) as important matters in achieving our aspirations (Purpose). We hasten efforts in the area of human resources, as human assets are particularly important for innovation arising from a match of technological and customer assets.

We develop measures from the global-scale perspectives of purpose, diversity, and challenge to solve the major issues in the area of human resources under a concept of “connecting.” In this way, we co-create innovation and strengthen our human assets (human resources investment<sup>[1]</sup>): approximately ¥10 billion in fiscal 2030; cumulative ¥100 billion between 2023 and 2030). For us, the well-being of our employees is the foundation for strengthening our human assets, and we will work to improve this well-being from a holistic approach, including health promotion and financial asset building. The results of these efforts will not only strengthen our human assets, but will also build as organizational assets. These assets will serve as a major foundation to support our technological and customer assets, thereby further strengthening all four intangible assets.

[1] Investment amount, including opportunity investment

## Key issues for further improvement in the area of human resources

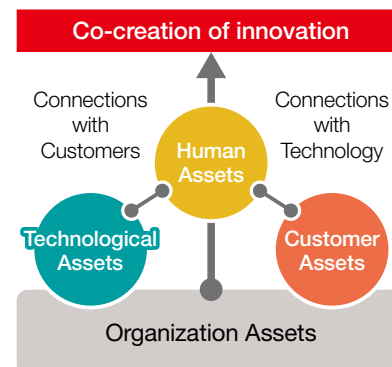
- Further acceptance of values and purpose shared across the Ajinomoto Group
- Form a cross-sectional team to strengthen co-innovation under the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion that integrates food and amino science, geography, gender, careers, etc.
- Revitalize the pioneering spirit (the spirit of constantly challenging ourselves to cultivate new business and new markets) representing one of our most important values since our founding
- Encourage further employee physical and emotional health, the foundation of all

## Four Connecting Strategies

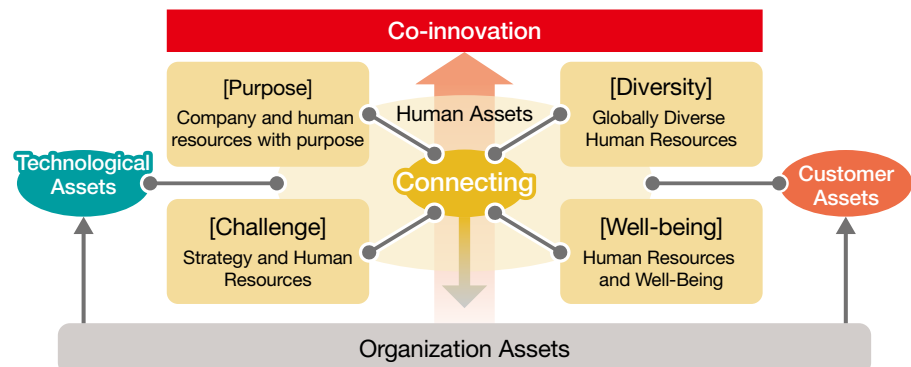
Purpose	Creating ASV requires an environment in which people from inside and outside the Company come together in shared Purpose, applying their knowledge and experience to new challenges. As a top priority, we are accelerating the ASV management cycle so that our diverse human resources can all work towards the same goal, and to connect our companies and their human resources with a common Purpose.
Diversity (DE&I)	To co-innovate toward ASV, we must seek diverse human resources from inside and outside the Company, accepting and utilizing diversity (attributes, knowledge, experiences, etc.) in a fair manner. We aim to build connections strategically among diverse human resources located around the globe.
Challenge	To achieve ASV, we need not only specific employees, but also accumulation of small challenges by each and every employee. We aim to build connections between business strategies and employees by taking on challenges to build systems that support ambition and foster a culture of learning from failures.
Well-being	We believe that the health, mental, and financial well-being of each individual and family is the foundation of all life. Well-being is essential in achieving ASV. We aim to build connections between well-being and employees by stepping up measures in areas such as work styles, workplace environments, health management, and asset building support.

> ASV Report 2024 (Integrated Report) P70-77

## Four intangible assets



## Basic concept of our human resources strategy



## Human Resource Management

## Global human resources management system

## Framework

The Ajinomoto Group employs a global human resources management system based on a common foundation to foster and recruit diverse human resources around the world,

ensuring we put the right person in the right position. The system consists of a mechanism to visualize key positions and key personnel (position management and talent management) as shown below.

Position management (right position)	
Clarify the positions required for the organization to execute our business strategy. Determine the requirements for each job and the people necessary to perform said duties.	
Grade system	Grade system based on job grade
Evaluation system	Annual targets based on the Ajinomoto Group Way and other guidelines set at the beginning of each fiscal year and after transfers Continuous feedback through daily communication with superiors to confirm year-end performance results, evaluations, process-driven goals, and barriers to effective performance throughout the year Organization heads and management personnel set goals based on a visualization of competency issues through 360-degree feedback; managers conduct individual performance evaluations, including team-based performance evaluations, on an ongoing basis throughout the year
Compensation system	Establish global compensation policies Compensation program complies with the laws and regulations of each country and region Compensation reflecting job-grade and performance Competitive compensation levels based on country, regional market wage

Talent management (right person)	
To discover and develop human resources, we strive to appoint and assign the right person in the right position considering the duties and personnel requirements above. Ensure the rapid promotion of key talent.	
HR Committee	Membership from the Executive Committee Creating succession plans for key global positions, and discussing to form a pool of human resources for next-generation leaders Establish HR committees at our three divisions in Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and four regional headquarters and coordinating with the main HR Committee
Succession plan	Determines key positions by Regional Headquarters, Group companies and divisions
Development plan	Plans for key talent

## Human resource career management framework

To link employee growth with company growth, the Group offers workplace environments, human resource management systems, educational programs, and regular employee reviews in support of self-directed career development.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. values one-on-one dialogue with each employee to help them achieve their purpose and take on new challenges. In particular, to help employees achieve their own career goals, we have held annual one-hour career interviews and feedback interviews with supervisors since the 1980s. This one-on-one dialogue has been the foundation of our human resources development. To improve the quality of dialogue, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. has conducted coaching training for all managers since fiscal 2023. In addition, we established a human resources career management infrastructure. The cornerstone of this infrastructure is a single, integrated human resources system built on 360-degree feedback for managers, including human resources-related data and measures. This system makes available to all employees the profiles of each individual's expertise, internal and external experience, etc., in addition to routine job title and organizational information for easy searching. Through a combination of dialogue and this integrated human resource information system, we expect to optimize human resource allocation efficiently based on diverse skills and experience, while encouraging employees to develop careers autonomously and improve engagement.

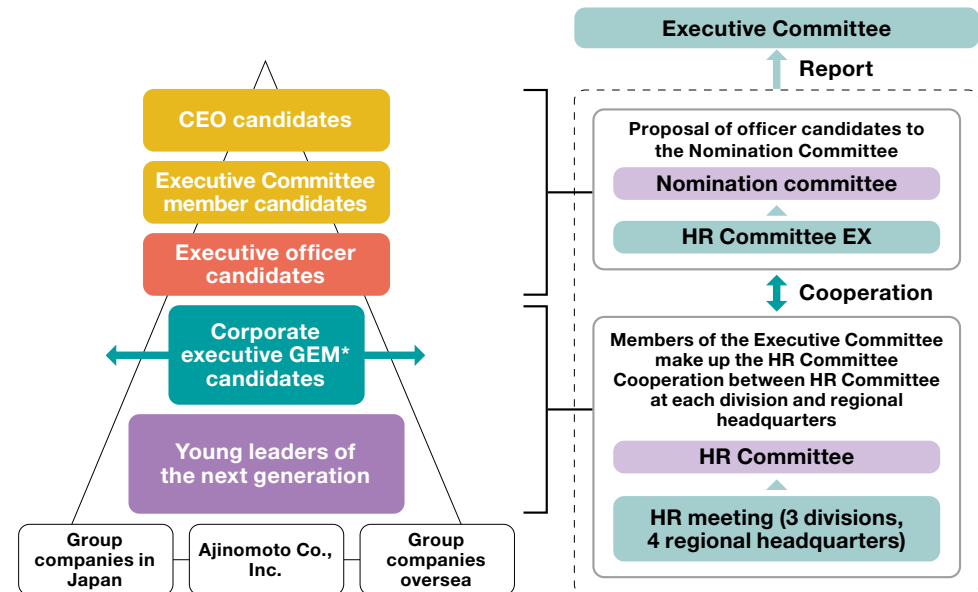
## Human Resource Management

## Human resource management framework

The Human Resources Committee is a subordinate body to the Executive Committee. The Human Resources Committee is responsible for the smooth operation of our global human resources management system and various measures related to improving human resources assets. The Human Resources Committee is chaired by the CEO and consists of members of the Executive Committee. A total of 12 discussions (including subcommittee meetings) were held in fiscal 2023. In terms of building a human resources pipeline, we are creating succession plans<sup>[1]</sup> for key global positions in conjunction with the Nomination Committee, forming a pool of human resources for next-generation leaders and strengthening strategic development and appointment.

The Ajinomoto Group Academy develops management personnel who will lead Group strategy in the future. We offer Executive Coaching (EC) for executive officer candidates, the Global Leaders Seminar (GLS) for executive director and GEM candidates, the Future Leaders Seminar (FLS) for next-generation leaders, and the Regional Leadership Seminar at each regional headquarters, which fosters future leaders in each region. We strive to develop managers who have a deep understanding of the Ajinomoto Group roadmap and Philosophy—which we consider a necessary element in our managers—to lead Group strategy into the future. At the same time, we endeavor to improve the linkage between these management candidates and our succession plan for future management, seeking to fill out our human assets pipeline, fostering numerous diverse managers who have a global perspective. To this end, we provide training by job level to foster the mindset and skills necessary to lead the Ajinomoto Group. A total of 245 participants people (124 of which are foreign nationals) participated in EC, GLS, and FLS between fiscal 2018 and fiscal 2023. As of April 2024, 13 of the participants (two of which are foreign nationals.) had been appointed as directors.

[1] Fiscal 2023 results: Successor candidates have been selected for around 85% of approximately 135 key global positions, including Corporate Executive Officers. Over the next few years, we will accelerate the formation of a pipeline of diverse human resources across the Group through further expansion of targeted positions and the creation of succession plans for each major domestic and overseas Group affiliate, among other actions



\*Group Executive Manager: As of May 2023, approximately 110 positions exist across the Group

## Initiatives for fostering purpose and building resonance

The Ajinomoto Group established a management cycle to achieve our Purpose. We consider employee engagement arising from various initiatives to be an important factor in increasing corporate value. Therefore, we strive to improve our employee engagement score (ASV achievement process score) scores (Fiscal 2023: 76%; Targets: 80% in Fiscal 2025 and 85% in Fiscal 2030). In addition, we conduct an annual correlation analysis between the results of our engagement survey and business performance. From the results of the past five surveys, we confirmed that "Empathy for our purpose", "Customer Focus", "Enhancement of productivity" and "Fair evaluation" correlate with per-employee sales and business profit. We pursue organized efforts to foster resonance with our Purpose through a standardized approach, improving engagement that grows stronger as a result of each initiative.



## Human Resource Management



## Initiatives and results toward employee engagement

Initiatives	FY2023 Performance
1. Dialogues with the CEO	Total of 55 dialogues held with group companies in Japan and overseas.
2. Dialogues with General Managers of each division	Total of 82 dialogues held with group companies in Japan and overseas.
3. Organizational and personal goals	Implemented in each organization.
4. Personal goal presentation	Conducted at AJICO + 31 domestic and overseas Group companies (previous year +1). Each organization runs on its own program (e.g., sharing new ideas) to make improvements
5. Share best practices	Total of 820 ASV-related posts by employees.
6. ASV Awards	Nine recognitions presented at the 8th Annual ASV Awards. Total employee votes: 15,342
7. Monitoring via engagement survey	Employee engagement score 76% (+1 point year on year) * From FY2023, changed to the category average value for the ASV realization process
8. Address issues in next-year plans	Implemented in each organization

The Ajinomoto Group strengthens efforts to develop the talents of each employee to solve problems, as well as to foster a personal resonance with our Purpose. Among other things, we continue to improve nutritional, environmental, and digital literacy. The results of these efforts were as follows.

## Annual average hours and expenditures for education and training per employee (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.)

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Total expenditures for education and training-related expenses (Thousands of yen)	249	236	236
Human resources system engagement survey-related costs (Thousands of yen)	105	58	49
DE&I-related (Thousands of yen)	18	16	18
Other expenditures for education and training (Thousands of yen)	126	162	169
Average training hours <sup>[1]</sup>	40	76	76

[1] Training hours are calculated as total hours per employee for training (Calculated from FY2021). In addition, some training programs led by business and operations-related organizations are not included in the data

## Nutritional, environmental, and human rights literacy training

The Group has been working to improve sustainability literacy since 2021, promoting environmental and human rights education from a sustainability perspective for all Group employees in conjunction with nutrition education. We will promote understanding and resonance among employees regarding the connection between sustainability issues around the world and the Group's efforts in this area. We build connections between these efforts to treat ASV as one's own initiative and the co-creation of social and economic value through our businesses. Fiscal 2023 participation was as follows.

> P040-041

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2025 (Target)
Nutritional literacy training	26,145 (aggregate)	56,316 (aggregate)	88,365 (aggregate)	100,000 (aggregate)
Environmental literacy training	2,765	8,850 (total)	18,402 (total)	—
Human rights literacy training	—	—	Began at the end of March (Japan)	—

## Human Resource Management

## Percentage of certified business DX professionals and employees at Ajinomoto Co., Inc. each fiscal year

Since the practice of DX at Ajinomoto Co., Inc. comes down to each individual employee, we began training DX professionals in fiscal 2020. In particular, our educational program for business DX professionals offers beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, and a total of 2,745 employees have obtained certification over the four-year period from 2020 to 2023. We are currently working to build program and systems for Group companies in Japan and overseas.

	FY2020		FY2021		FY2022		FY2023		Cumulative FY2020-FY2023	
	Certified employees	Percentage of employees	Certified employees	Percentage of employees	Certified employees	Percentage of employees	Certified employees	Percentage of employees	Certified employees	Percentage of employees
Beginner	743	23.3%	854	26.8%	430	13.5%	236	7.4%	2,263	71.1%
Intermediate	51	1.6%	192	6.0%	115	3.6%	57	1.8%	415	13.0%
Advanced	9	0.3%	16	0.5%	26	0.8%	16	0.5%	67	2.1%
Total (cumulative <sup>[1]</sup> )	803	25.2%	1,062	33.3%	571	17.9%	309	9.7%	2,745	86.2%

[1] Includes employees taking multiple courses

## Generating results through visualizing the ASV realization process

The Ajinomoto Group quantitatively measures employee ASV engagement through an annual engagement survey. This survey helps us understand and take action to improve issues, leveraging the PDCA cycle. We monitor the ASV realization process index, which organizes the process leading to the creation of ASV results (the process to generate results from both individual and organizational perspectives) and establishes an index consisting of multiple questions from the engagement survey.

### Initiatives and results toward our employee engagement survey score

	FY2021 Result	FY2022 Result	FY2021 Result	FY2025 Target	FY2030 Target
(Old) ASV as one's own initiative	61%	62%	—	—	—
(New) ASV realization process	—	75%	76%	80%	85%~

\* We revised the composition of questions and indexes in FY2022.

## Initiatives for diversity (diversity, equity & inclusion)

The Ajinomoto Group has evolved its approach from the concept of diversity and inclusion (D&I) to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I). This message was issued by President Fujie through internal PR channels. For the Group, equity is a concept similar to fairness, and means a company provides an environment that fits individual needs and circumstances and ensures that employees receive equal rights and opportunities. As a result, we aim to be a company where each of our employees works together in mutual respect irrespective of such concepts as gender, age, nationality, disability, and experience. This confluence of diverse individuals from inside and outside the organization creates mutual growth with the organization thanks to harnessing each diverse individual's strength, leading to the continuous creation of innovation for the future. With this, we will make steady progress toward its Purpose as set forth in the 2030 Roadmap.

Regarding the status of our diversity, by 2030, we aim to have diversity<sup>[1]</sup> in 30% of our human resources at the leadership level<sup>[2]</sup>. In terms of women, the percentage of female managers by region is relatively low in Japan. Therefore, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. set a target to increase the percentage of female directors and line managers (organization heads and group managers) to 30%, respectively, by the end of fiscal 2030. At the same time, the company is taking measures to strengthen the pipeline of female human resources, as well as to increase the number of mid-career hires who have strong expertise or are knowledgeable about launching new businesses, etc. In fiscal 2023, we overhauled the International Assignment Guideline, which stipulates transnational transfers within the Group, to encourage the cross-border exchange of human assets among Group companies. As of March 2023, we had 291 international transfers, 22 of which were from non-Japanese countries to other countries. We plan to add more international transfers in fiscal 2024 onward.

[1] Leadership level: Executive officers and division/organization heads, or similar key positions

[2] Diversity focused on gender, nationality, and affiliation

### Percentage of diversity at the leadership level

	End of June 2022	End of June 2023	End of June 2024	FY2025 Target	FY2030 Target
Diversity ratio <sup>[3]</sup>	16%	17%	21%	25%	30%

[3] Percentage of those at the leadership level who have at least one diversity factor

## Human Resource Management

## Mid-career hires as a percentage of annual hires (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.)

	FY2021 Result	FY2022 Result	FY2023 Result	FY2024 Forecast
Share of career hires	35%	40%	47%	50%+

## Percentage of female directors (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.)

	End of June 2022	End of June 2023	End of June 2024	FY2030 Target
Percentage of female directors	36%	27%	36%	30%

## Percentage of female line managers (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.)

	FY2021 Result	FY2022 Result	FY2023 Result	FY2030 Target
Percentage of female line managers	11%	11%	11%	30%

## Percentage of female managers

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2030 Target
Group total	27%	27%	29%	40%
Japan	11%	12%	13%	—
Asia	38%	38%	39%	—
EMEA	33%	36%	36%	—
Americas	35%	35%	38%	—
Ajinomoto Co., Inc. <sup>[4]</sup>	12% (12%)	13% (15%)	14% (18%)	30%

[4] Percentage of female managers in junior positions in parentheses

## Ratio of locally hired overseas executives (persons)

	FY2021 Result	FY2022 Result	FY2023 Result
Total overseas executives	193 <sup>[5]</sup>	200 <sup>[5]</sup>	192
Ratio of locally hired overseas executives	112 <sup>[5]</sup>	121 <sup>[5]</sup>	123
Number of locally hired overseas executives	58% <sup>[5]</sup>	61% <sup>[5]</sup>	64%

[5] Revised due to review of tabulation

## Human Resource Management

## Diversity, equity, and inclusion promotion framework

### Framework

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. has established a Human Resources Committee chaired by the CEO and human resources meetings at the three divisions in Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and regional headquarters, chaired by the general managers of each of these respective organizations. At this committee and these meetings, members formulate plans to promote diverse human resources from a medium- to long-term perspective, and examine and implement specific support for their career development. In terms of career support for women, the Company is a member of the 30% Club<sup>[1]</sup> Japan, implementing cooperative measures between companies. The DE&I Promotion Team, established within the HR Dept. along with the director in charge of diversity and HR, plays a central role in the planning and operations of cross-organizational activities in cooperation with contact points of each major division and Group company. This is so that each and every employee can fulfill his or her potential in his or her own way.

[1] A global campaign established by corporate leaders, etc., in the UK in 2010 to increase the percentage of women in key decision-making organizations of companies, including among corporate boards of directors

- Creating an organizational culture: Plan and execute unconscious bias training and DE&I lunch seminars; provide DE&I e-learning courses; internal and external communications.
- Respect for human rights: Plan and hold training for people in charge of dealing with harassment (including domestic Group companies); training for all employees on harassment; establish a process regarding harassment from reporting to response measures for preventing recurrence (internal announcements upon disciplinary action).

- Diverse human resources: Create sexual minority support systems and policies; establish a dedicated consultation desk and training for staff in charge at Group companies in Japan; provide comfortable work environments for persons with disabilities (annual survey for interested parties); foster dialogues between employees with disabilities and the president; provide professional life counselors for persons with disabilities at relevant business sites; create guidebooks for persons with disabilities and departments in which such individuals work; mentor program to improve employee engagement at special-purpose subsidiary Ajinomoto Mirai Co., Ltd.; encourage new- and mid-career hiring based on the 2030 Roadmap for employment and job satisfaction of persons with disabilities.
- Establish an environment linking careers Dokodemo Career (e.g., systems enabling continuation of full-remote 9work if they move for the benefit of their partner's career), Work-Life Balance leave (leave for partner's transfer, leave for infertility treatment), establish on-premises daycare centers and nursing rooms.

The following initiatives have been underway at affiliates in Japan since fiscal 2023.

- Ajinomoto Fine-Techno: Held a career festival and hosted a roundtable discussion with female employees.
- Ajinomoto Digital Business Partners: Established the *MiRal Project*, a project to encourage the employment of people with disabilities, directly under the president; holding regular meetings two-to-three times monthly since April 2023; considering a collaboration between Ajinomoto Mirai (special subsidiary) and volunteer members.

## Diversity, equity, and inclusion promotion performance

### Performance

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. launched AjiPanna Academy in fiscal 2020 as a measure to support female human resources development, which provides opportunities and helps employees think independently about careers in higher-level positions that leverage their talents. The support for multifaceted growth through career workshops, business skills training, and mentor programs has contributed to a growth mindset amongst female human resources, and a willingness of supervisors, organizational heads, and officers to develop female human resources. Fiscal 2023 participation in various DE&I programs was as follows.

- Career workshop for women in non-management positions (supervisors also in attendance): Attended by a total of 102 individuals from Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and certain Group companies, along with 76 supervisors (89% of the female employees felt a positive change in themselves; 86% of supervisors felt a positive change in the female employees under their supervision).
- Semi-annual business skills training for non-management female employees: Attended by a total of 14 female employees from Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and other Group companies (95% satisfaction with curriculum overall; 86% motivated to take on new challenges at higher positions). Of the Ajinomoto Co., Inc. female employees receiving training in fiscal 2020, 55% received promotions to management positions. An average of 42% received promotions to higher positions between fiscal years 2020 and 2022.
- Mentoring program by organization managers and executives for women in management positions at Ajinomoto Co., Inc.: Total of 25 participants (100% satisfaction rate).



## Human Resource Management

- As part of our efforts to bridge the generation gap, we publish messages from male executives encouraging male employees to take paternity leave. We endeavor to understand how different generations approach healthcare, creating an organizational culture where people of all genders are free to be involved in childcare and housework.
- DE&I Lunch Seminars (including certain domestic Group companies): Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities became mandatory in April 2024. In conjunction with this mandate, we held two seminars on the topic of disability (basic knowledge of disability and introduction of special-purpose subsidiary Ajinomoto Mirai) attended by a total of 145 participants.
- Used PR tools to publish three workplace case study videos of employees with disabilities and their supervisors, as well as experiences and interview reports from employees with disabilities.
- Training for vocational consultants working with employees who have disabilities: Attended by four eligible employees.
- Awarded as a Nadeshiko Brand in 2023 as a listed company that excels in women's empowerment.
- Awarded the Gold Rating in the PRIDE Index for 2023 for efforts to support sexual minorities in the workplace.

### Initiatives to accelerate challenge

We believe that it is essential for mutual growth of both the organization and individual that the Group's diverse human resources maximize their abilities and take on challenges autonomously to achieve our purpose. With this in mind, we are promoting the following initiatives.

- Self-nomination transfers: In fiscal 2022, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. began full-fledged transfers through internal open recruitment. Transfers based on internal recruitment numbered 43 individuals in fiscal 2022 (6% of transfers) and 48 individuals in fiscal 2023 (7% of transfers).

- Volunteer cross-organizational project participation (TRY&A-CROSS): This program aims to provide more opportunities for employees to take on the challenge of achieving their own *My Purpose*, fostering a more personal approach to taking on new challenges. The program also aims to bring human assets with diverse expertise and experience together across group companies to pursue ASV. Total of eight projects in 2024 (including two cross-group projects).
- Support for self-directed career development: Dispatching employees to business partners, external research institutions, MBA programs, or professional graduate schools, etc. (e.g., Hitotsubashi University, International University of Japan, Stanford University etc.).
- A-STARTERS (project for creating new businesses): In this project, we hold open recruitment and selection for employees of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and major Group companies in Japan who want to launch new businesses, promoting commercialization of new business plans. It was launched in 2020, and ideas selected in the project are considered for commercialization.

### Number of A-STARTERS Applicants

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
No. of applicant teams	47	51	29

- Revision of personnel system for non-management employees: In fiscal 2023, we revised the personnel system for non-management employees to create diverse career paths and help each employee develop their talents and expertise. The system also encourages employees to take on challenges by setting goals that accelerate growth. In addition to promoting steady growth based on the existing job qualification system, the revised personnel system will be able to evaluate the ability of employees to demonstrate their competence as experts in specific fields

by adopting some of the concepts of the job grading system (hybrid grading). In addition, we have established a personnel system that enables us to appropriately evaluate human resources who take on challenges with a high degree of specialization and difficulty. We also provide opportunities for early certification in Next Manager's Pool (NP), a pool of human resources one stage below recognition as key personnel. In this way, we encourage the promotion of capable talent to key positions as early as possible.

### Initiatives for well-being

#### Approach

The Ajinomoto Group believes that the well-being of our employees is the foundation of its human assets. To enhance the job satisfaction of Group employees and to help them and their respective companies grow together, the Group supports the promotion of their mental and physical health, and works to foster well-being in the finance asset and career development.

- Health management: The Group promotes health management with the Director, Executive Officer & President as the health promotion manager. In 2018, we established the Ajinomoto Group Health Declaration and are working to create a workplace environment that maintains and promotes employee health in line with the circumstances of each corporate entity in each country. We believe that the health of our employees and their families is one of the most important elements of our management foundation, and with that we aim to foster a state of health well-being, where, while companies support improving the health of employees and their families, employees themselves have a high level of awareness and knowledge of health and practice self-care to maintain their physical and mental health.

## Human Resource Management

At Ajinomoto Co., Inc., health policies are centered on the concept of self-care, where employees themselves have nutritionally well-balanced meals, conduct moderate exercise, and get good sleep. This self-care is supported by a partnership between the Company's Wellness Promotion Center, which has eight occupational physicians and 15 health staff members, the HR departments, and the Ajinomoto Health Insurance Society.

- Interviews with all employees by industrial physicians and medical staff

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. provides support necessary for every employee through individual health consultations. Every employee working in Japan and employees overseas is given a 30-minute interview by an industrial physician or medical staff at the Wellness Promotion Center at least once per year. Based on medical checkups and stress assessment results, employees receive individual health guidance that is respectful of each person's values and lifestyles, while also ensuring any latent physical or mental health problems are addressed. Guidance and advice services are also available for employees who work long hours or who are stationed overseas.

- Self-care support measures

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. supports employee self-care through events that award points to employees depending on the degree of improvement in regular medical checkup test values. In addition, as part of the workplace nutrition improvement, the Company's cafeterias in five locations in Japan offer My Health Lunch, low-sodium options based on the concept of eating well and improving health. In addition, employees can check the results of their own health checkups, work data, and lifestyle data at any time in chronological order on My Health, a personal health management website.

- Mental Health Recovery Program

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. operates an independent Mental Health Recovery Program. Every month while taking temporary health leave and after returning to work, employees on this program receive ongoing support through interviews with industrial physicians and medical staff to assess their personal values and sources of fulfillment, learning to enjoy work by dealing with stress. As part of this program, employees set goals based on the stage of their symptoms.

- Named a 2024 KENKO Investment for Health Stock Selection (sixth time); named a Certified Health & Productivity Management Organization (Large Enterprise, White 500) for an eighth consecutive year

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. was recognized (for the sixth time) by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Tokyo Stock Exchange as a 2024 KENKO Investment for Health Stock Selection. For an eighth consecutive year, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. was recognized as a White 500 organization for 2024 (Large Enterprise), which recognizes the top 500 large enterprises in terms of outstanding health and productivity management.

- Ajinomoto Group employee awareness of health management

In the fiscal 2023 Engagement Survey, group employee favorability score for Health Management<sup>[1]</sup> was 83%.

[1] The percentage of group employees who responded that the company provides an environment and engages in measures to maintain and promote health in consideration of employee mental and physical health

### Employee score for health management

FY2020 Result	FY2021 Result	FY2022 Result	FY2023 Result
81%	83%	82%	83%

- Systems supporting diverse and flexible work styles that lead to job satisfaction
- Introduced the Anywhere Career system allowing employees to link careers with fully remote work without having to stop their careers due to moving for the benefit of their partner's career or nursing care for a partner in Japan or overseas. (2022)
- Introduced the Anywhere Office system allowing telecommuting for employees anywhere, anytime as long as security measures are in place and they are where they can concentrate on their work. Since fiscal 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, we have further encouraged hybrid work and eliminated restrictions on the number of telecommuting days.
- Introduced the Super Flex flextime system with no core hours, by-the-hour paid leave, and telecommuting system (2014).

● Childcare leave system that leads to job satisfaction  
Taking advantage of legal revisions in 2022, we have drastically revised the system and its operation, including granting 20 days of paid childcare leave, approval for taking childcare leave in installments, and simplification of application procedures, in order to facilitate more flexible use of childcare leave versus the previous male childcare leave system. As a result, in fiscal 2023, 90% of male employees took childcare leave, the average number of days taken was 15.9 days, and about 60% of employees took 10 days or more. Going forward, we will maintain our aim to foster a culture of mutual support and assistance not only in important life events such as childbirth and childcare, but also in nursing care and others.

> ASV Report 2024 (Integrated Report) P127  
> External Evaluation (2024 Nadeshiko Brand, PRIDE Index 2023 (Gold))

## Human Resource Management

- Remuneration and financial asset building

The Ajinomoto Group is striving to improve employee financial well-being, including remuneration, in line with the development of their respective companies throughout the Group.

#### Annual compensation by job title, gender (Ajinomoto Co., Inc. only; as of April 2024)<sup>[1]</sup>

Job title	Avg. compensation, men (B)	Avg. compensation, men (B)	Ratio (A/B)
Executive (Base salary only)	22,560,000	22,560,000	1
Management (Base salary only)	7,513,174	7,982,582	0.941
Management (Base salary+ bonuses and other cash incentives)	13,590,464	14,474,236	0.939
Non-management	7,382,928	8,613,200	0.857

[1] Under our unified personnel system, men and women are paid the same wages for the same job level.

Since fiscal 2022, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. has held regular online financial literacy seminars for employees with a single legal domicile to help with financial asset building. Working with outside experts on different topics, including employee stock ownership plans (69% participation as of June 2024), corporate pension funds, DC plans, the new NISA, and inheritance, we offer programs throughout the year based on our own systems and policies. A total of approximately 1,600 employees participated in seminars in fiscal 2023. Employees attending the seminar are offered the opportunity

to have a free individual consultation with a financial planner if they so desire. Beginning in fiscal 2024, we plan to expand the number of participants in seminars to include employees of domestic Group companies to improve financial asset-building literacy throughout the Group.

- Human rights awareness and education for employees

The Ajinomoto Group conducts human rights awareness and education activities within each Group company to encourage employee understanding of the Ajinomoto Group Policies (AGP) which prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment. In so doing, we nurture individuals who have a strong sense of human rights. In fiscal 2023, we held e-learning related to business and human rights for all employees. At the same time, we also ensured that all employees knew about the hotline (harassment consultation service).

In Japan, we hold worksite meetings on the AGP annually to help employees, including part-time and temporary workers, identify and resolve issues in the workplace. The AGP questionnaire includes topics focused on discrimination and harassment to aid in identifying and preventing harassment.

The Ajinomoto Group established a hotline as an anonymous internal reporting system that enables officers and employees, including part-time and temporary workers, to make reports or seek advice by phone, e-mail, fax, letter, or other means (phone support is available in Japanese and English, while web support is available in 22 languages).

#### Main training and initiatives in FY2023

- Harassment training for new hires: Attended by 100% of 140 new hires.
- Two employees completed training as fair employment human rights awareness promoters.
- Training for harassment and sexual orientation/gender identity consultation desk personnel: Attended by 100% of

27 eligible personnel.

- We invited Ajinomoto Group companies in Japan to submit human rights slogans. We received 2,681 entries from 1,752 employees across 13 companies.

### Labor-management relations

All non-management employees of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. are members of the labor union (60% of all employees). Labor agreements require the company to notify employees and their representatives before making any major changes that impact employees (minimum prior notice requirements are confidential and therefore not disclosed).

Labor agreements also stipulate various requirements concerning safety and health, education and training, and medical checkups. Both management and employees work together to improve workplace safety, health standards, and motivation. The purpose of this meeting is to mutually confirm health and safety activities and working conditions, and to share information on legal revisions.

## Occupational Safety and Health

# Occupational safety and health

## Basic approach to occupational safety and health

### Approach

It is clearly stated in our Group Shared Policy on Occupational Safety and Health that one of the most important components of our corporate activities is the participation of all our employees in occupational health and safety on the basis of respect for society. Furthermore, the policy also contains specific actions related to its implementation.

> Group Shared Policy on Occupational Safety and Health

## Occupational safety and health management system

### Framework / Performance

The Ajinomoto Group Board of Directors oversees the execution of occupational health and safety management through reports from the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee established the Occupational Safety and Health Committee as a subordinate organization to determine important policies, develops plans, and conducts reviews of activities related to occupational safety and health. Subject matters decided and deliberated by the committee shall be reported to the Executive Committee. To foster an understanding of the Group Shared Policy on Occupational

Safety and Health, we created the Occupational Safety and Health Management Guide and Standards and encourage Group companies to spread awareness of and use these guidelines.

In addition, we established the Safety & Disaster Prevention Promotion Headquarters to drive and support measures related to occupational accidents and disaster prevention. If an accident, disaster, or other emergency has occurred or may occur, that threatens Group occupational safety and health, this headquarters assesses the situation, makes recommendations, and provides guidance. The headquarters also reports to company executives and relevant departments.

### Framework



## Occupational Safety and Health

### ■ Status of ISO 45001 certification

The Ajinomoto Group aims to obtain ISO 45001 certification at all production, and is pursuing the establishment of an ISO-compliant management system.

As of March 2024, 70 of the 99 plants in the Ajinomoto Group have obtained ISO 45001 certification. One plant has obtained other third-party certifications. We are also working to obtain third-party certifications by fiscal 2025 for those plants that are not yet certified.

### ■ Safety and health assessments, audits, and inspections

The Ajinomoto Group generally conducts the Occupational Safety and Health Assessments at the start of new product manufacturing. This is one means to prevent occupational accidents. In addition, we conduct internal audits based on the occupational safety and health management system at each company and business site to prevent accidents, disasters or violations of the law.

Measures	Description	FY2023 Result
Occupational safety and health Assessment	Generally conducted at the start of new product manufacturing, when expanding production capacity or changing manufacturing processes, developing new substances, and during the planning stages of constructing or demolishing buildings, structures and equipment.	69 assessments
Occupational safety and health audits and inspections	Internal audits are implemented for each company and business site. In the event of a serious accident or disaster within the Group, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. conducts an onsite emergency Occupation Safety and Health Audit to investigate causes, determine corrective measures, and prevent recurrence.	Two safety audits
Equipment inspections for safe and stable production	Regular maintenance and legal inspections are conducted at factories. For factories that operate 24 hours a day, we suspend all production periodically to allow employees and specialists time to conduct legally mandated inspections.	Conducted at each business site
Occupational accident prevention at designated worksites	Any sites considered a high risk by the chief of the Safety & Disaster Prevention Promotion Headquarters (frequent occupational accidents or disasters, inadequate management, etc.) are designated as Special Safety Management Requested Site and given guidance for safety improvement.	No designated worksites

## Occupational safety and health activities

### Performance

Our goal is to have zero serious accidents, which we will achieve by following our occupational safety and health practices. There were 17 serious accidents in fiscal 2023 (16 in the previous year), and 132 out of 148 sites achieved the goal of zero serious accidents.

The number of serious accidents caused by operating machinery increased to four (three in the previous year), and the number of serious accidents due to falls remained the same as the previous year at four.

To achieve our goal of zero serious accidents by fiscal 2030, in fiscal 2024, in addition to implementing countermeasures against accidents involving falls, operating machinery, and other causes, we will also focus on further improving our safety infrastructure by, for example, fostering a strong safety culture.

> Personnel and Labor-Related Data: Frequency of serious accidents and accidents with absence

### Identify sources of occupational hazards and form action plans

Sources of occupational hazards	Risk assessment	Action plans
Machines in operation	Caught in or trapped between machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share cases of serious accidents that have occurred within the Group; issue notices for the prevention of similar accidents</li> <li>• Consolidate safety measures within the Group and share information said measures (lateral expansion)</li> <li>• Conduct comprehensive safety inspections of operating machinery (Aiming for 100% implementation of tangible safety measures, such as installing machinery covers)</li> </ul>
Uneven road/floor surfaces	Fall accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement sort and set in order consistently in the surrounding area (secure aisles, do not place or leave objects in aisles or vicinity, do not leave leaks or spills)</li> <li>• Ensure safety in the surrounding area (conduct maintenance for steps and unevenness on paths or floors, secure aisles and work spaces)</li> <li>• Gain wider adoption of Ajinomoto Group Falling over Prevention Exercise Program and ensure pre-work stretching exercises, etc.</li> </ul>



## Occupational Safety and Health

## Response to safety and health laws and accidents

In each case, in addition to submitting an improvement report to the authority, we took steps necessary to prevent recurrence.

Ajinomoto Healthy Supply Co., Inc. Takasaki Plant (Violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act)	Failure to submit in a timely manner evaluations of psychological burdens and also specific evaluations of work involving organic solvents
Ajinomoto Food Manufacturing Co., Ltd. Kawasaki Plant (Violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act)	Failure to stop a machine to allow a conveyor belt to be repaired and adjusted
Ajinomoto Food Manufacturing Hokkaido Co., Ltd. Tokachi Plant (Violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act)	Failure to stop a machine to allow cleaning and other tasks to be performed
Ajinomoto Bakery Co., Ltd. Shimada Factory (Violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act)	Failure to stop machines to allow cleaning, adjusting, and other tasks to be performed.
Ajinomoto Engineering Corporation Kyushu Branch (Violation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act)	Failure to provide necessary guidance to subcontractors to ensure their compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Law

## Employee occupational safety and health education

The Ajinomoto Group conducts occupational safety and health education tailored to employee job descriptions and tasks. Major education and training programs conducted during fiscal 2023 were as follows.

- Health and safety seminar for managers
- Fall prevention seminar
- Seminar on preventing caught-in accidents involving food processing machinery

## Disaster preparedness

## Performance

The Ajinomoto Group routinely collects information related to natural disaster forecasts and damage projections. On an ongoing basis, we confirm the safety of our buildings and production facilities, taking appropriate steps and revising training drills as necessary. Each Group company and site implement evacuation and fire-fighting drills. We continue to revise and update organizational structures, communications systems, and manuals.

We also partner with local governments to provide safety for local residents. Several sites are working with governments to determine how to offer safety and food to local residents in the event of a disaster.

# Respecting human rights

## Approach, policy, and structure

### Basic policy

#### Approach

As we realize sustainable growth through Ajinomoto Group Creating Shared Value (ASV), the Ajinomoto Group engages in the SDGs and other efforts related to the international consensus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) policies. In doing so, we recognize that all business activities must be premised on respect for human rights. We support international standards for human rights including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, and the United Nations Global Compact. Further, we have established our own Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy (AGP) on Human Rights. This policy is based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and ensures that as a corporate group that conducts business globally, all of the Ajinomoto Group companies, and officers and employees respect internationally recognized human rights and comply thoroughly with international human rights obligations and related laws and regulations of the countries where we operate. In addition, we encourage our business partners and other related parties (including upstream suppliers) to support this policy and respect human rights, and work together to promote respect for human rights. Ajinomoto Group policies are approved by the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee before being signed by the president and CEO.

> Group Shared Policy on Human Rights  
> Ajinomoto Group Policies (AGP)

### Promotion framework

#### Framework

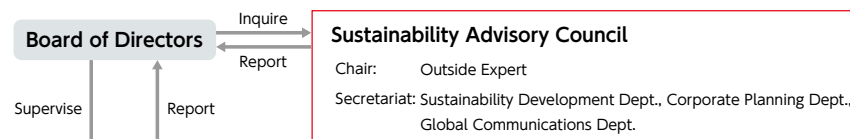
The Ajinomoto Group pursues ESG and sustainability initiatives that include respect for human rights in the supply chain. We pursue these efforts under the Board of Directors, mainly through the Sustainability Committee (a subordinate body of the Executive Committee) and the Risk Management Committee. The Sustainability Committee and the Sustainability Development Department create

roadmaps regarding human rights initiatives in the supply chain, make proposals, and provide support to incorporate sustainability into business plans. These two bodies report to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. In addition, the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and the Sustainability Advisory Council hold discussions on human rights topics as appropriate.

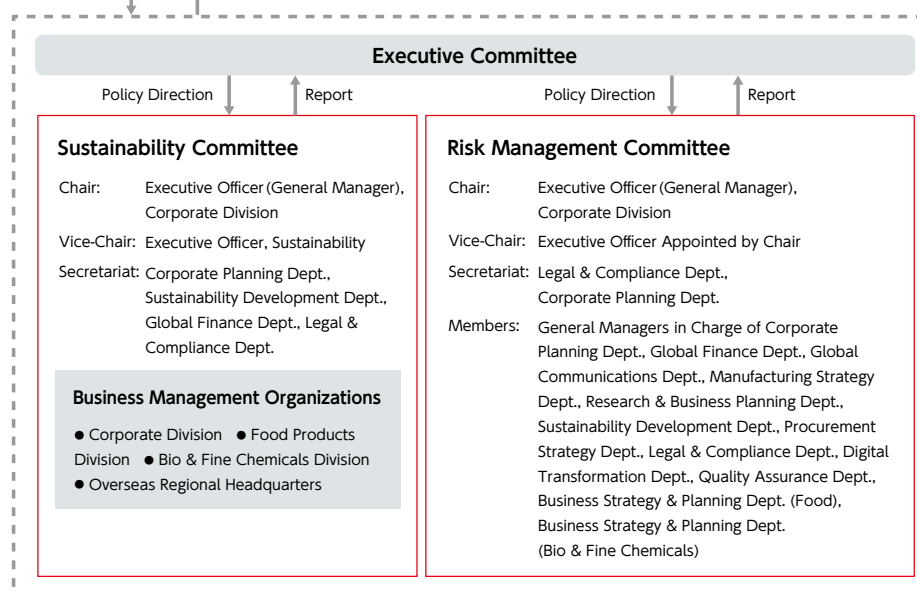
[1] The Business Conduct Committee and its subordinate body, the Human Rights Specialist Committee, lead efforts of the Ajinomoto Group to address human rights issues.

### Framework for ESG and sustainability

#### [Supervision]



#### [Execution]



## Human Rights

## Human rights due diligence in the Ajinomoto Group

## Basic concepts

## Approach

In accordance with the UNGPs and the Group Shared Policy on Human Rights, the Ajinomoto Group engages in dialogue and consultation third-party experts<sup>[1]</sup> on human rights and other stakeholders. In this way, we ensure respect for human rights for all stakeholders (employees, business partners, local communities, customers, etc.) across the Ajinomoto Group value chain, including production and sales across all businesses, as part of our human rights due diligence process. We conduct periodic (every four years: 2014, 2018, 2022) country-specific human rights risk assessments for raw materials procurement, production, and sales in the food business, using these assessments to advance our human rights due diligence process. Our Roadmap to 2030 depicts our specific initiatives.

[1] The Caux Round Table Japan (CRT Japan), the Global Alliance for Sustainable Supply Chain (ASSC)

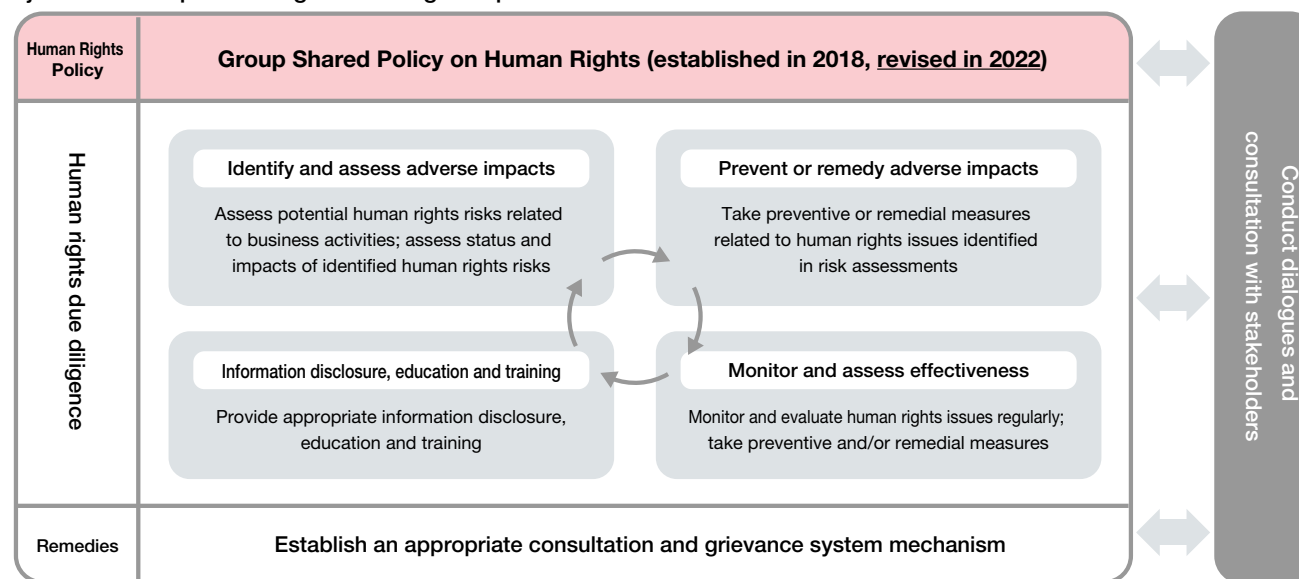
## Promotion framework

## Structure

Our approach to establishing a UNGPs-based management system covering the value chain emphasizes depth and comprehensiveness, while placing the utmost importance on dialogue with rights holders. Our main focus is on direct,

in-depth dialogue with rights-holders, while our approach to comprehensiveness complements these efforts by thoroughly identifying and understanding risks that cannot be uncovered through depth alone. We are committed to minimizing human rights risks in the value chain through these efforts.

## Ajinomoto Group human rights due diligence process



## Human Rights

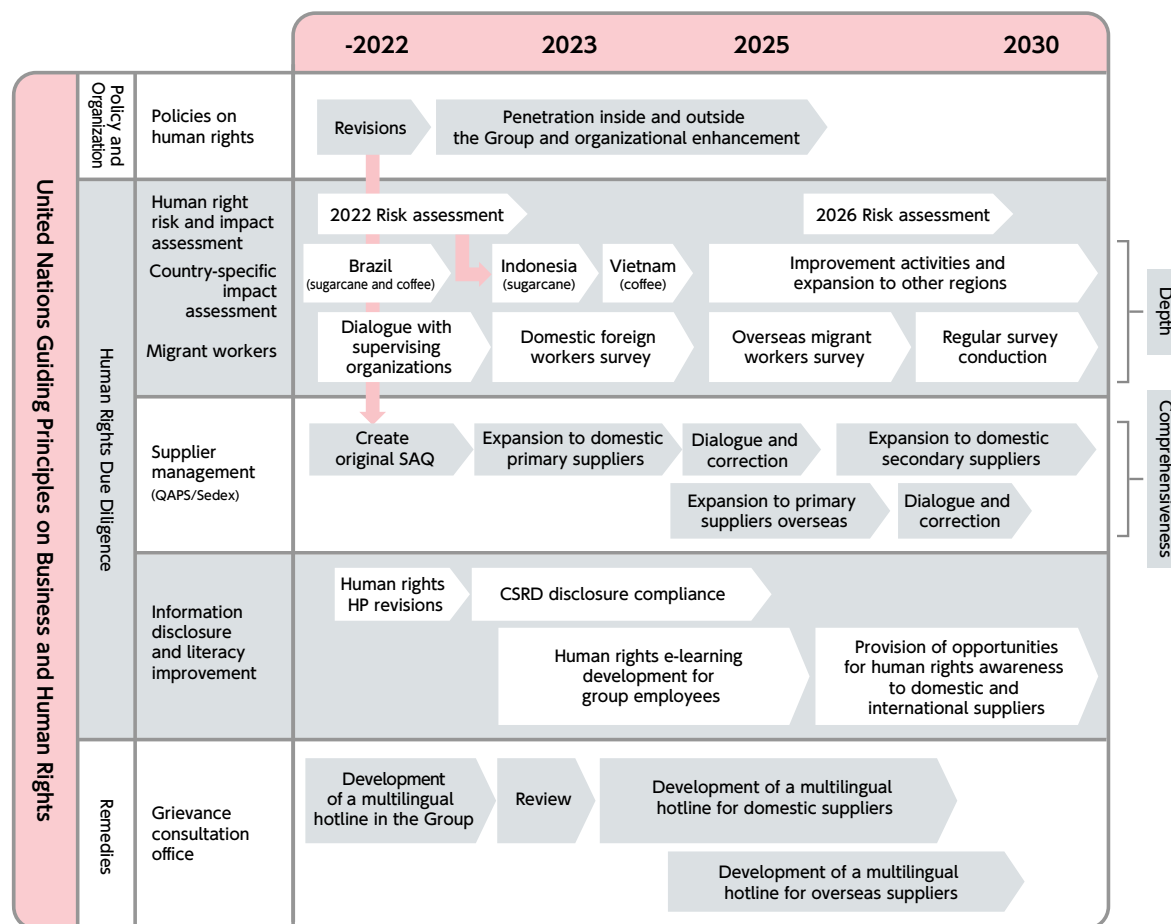
## ■ Depth

We intend to establish a management structure that enables us to identify human rights issues through direct dialogue with rights holders and to promptly address the issues identified.

## ■ Comprehensiveness

Strengthening cooperation with suppliers and other business partners is indispensable. We use a unique questionnaire based on the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers to identify human rights risks and support improvements through dialogue.

## Roadmap to 2030



## ■ Identify and assess adverse impacts

## Performance

As part of our depth approach, the Ajinomoto Group conducts regular human rights risk assessments and related human rights impact assessments. We then consider actions to prevent or mitigate human rights issues identified through these efforts.

## ■ Human Rights Risk Assessment

We investigate and identify human rights risks from a third-party perspective in each country involved in raw material procurement, production, and sales based on Ajinomoto Group business operations (conducted every four years).

## ■ Human Rights Impact Assessment

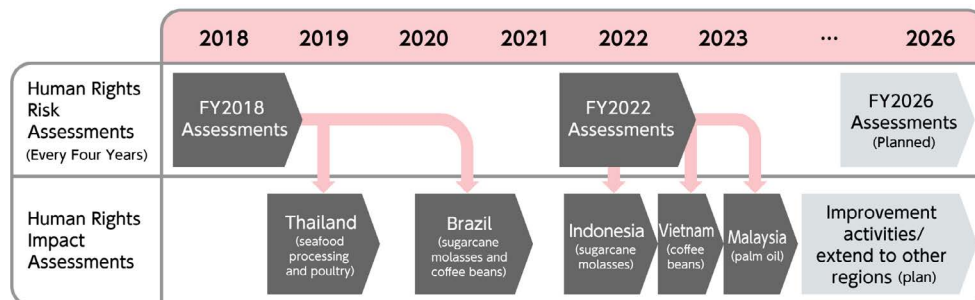
Based on the risks uncovered in the human rights risk assessment, we visit the countries and regions in question to engage in direct on-site dialogues with stakeholders (employees of business partners, rights holders such as local residents, NPOs, etc.) to understand the human rights impact and issues.

\* QAPS: Questionnaire for Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers

Sedex: Abbreviation for Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. A global membership organization that provides data on labor standards, business ethics, etc. within the global supply chains.

## Human Rights

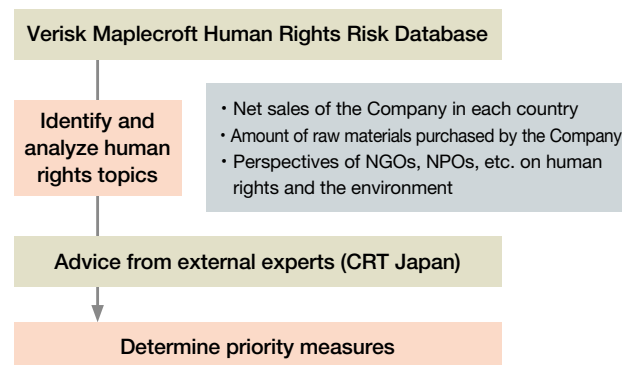
## Human rights risk assessment and human rights impact assessment



## (1) FY2022 Human Rights Risk Assessment

The 2022 human rights risk assessment analyzed and identified human rights issues in the countries in which the Ajinomoto Group operates our food business. We collaborated with external human rights experts (CRT Japan) to analyze risks based on raw material purchases and sales using human rights risk data from Verisk Maplecroft. Furthermore, we identified high-risk countries, regions, and industries according to our company's value chain from a global human rights perspective, based on the perspectives of NGOs and NPOs in human rights and the environment. As a result, South-East Asia and Brazil were identified as high-risk countries and regions, and occupational health and safety, child labor, modern slavery (forced labor) and discrimination in particular as high-risk items<sup>[1]</sup>. We also identified the risks depicted in the following table based on evaluations of priority raw materials<sup>[2]</sup> sourced by the Ajinomoto Group.

## 2022 human rights risk assessment procedures



[1] Risks assessed: child labor, decent wages, appropriate working hours, discrimination, freedom of association, modern slavery, occupational health and safety, and land grabbing

[2] We prioritized the following five raw materials in our human rights risks assessments.

## 2022 human rights risk assessment results (priority raw material evaluation)

Raw materials assessed	Coffee beans	Sugarcane molasses	Soybeans	Shrimp	Palm oil
High Risk Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child labor</li> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>Decent wages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child labor</li> <li>Occupational safety and health</li> <li>Modern slavery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>Occupational safety and health</li> <li>Land grabbing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modern slavery</li> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>Decent wages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decent wages</li> <li>Occupational safety and health</li> <li>Modern slavery</li> </ul>
Countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brazil</li> <li>Vietnam</li> <li>Indonesia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vietnam</li> <li>Brazil</li> <li>Indonesia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brazil</li> <li>China</li> <li>Paraguay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thailand</li> <li>Ecuador</li> <li>Vietnam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Malaysia</li> <li>Peru</li> <li>Thailand</li> </ul>

&gt; P086-089

## (2) Human Rights Impact Assessments (Direct Dialogue With Rights Holders)

Based on the human rights risk assessment results, we conduct on-site visits in target countries and regions, engaging in direct dialogues with stakeholders affected by our businesses (business partner employees, local residents, other rights holders, NPOs, etc.) to grasp human rights impacts and issues. In fiscal 2023, the assessment targeted the Malaysian palm oil industry.

## ■ Human Rights Impact Assessment in Malaysia (Palm Oil) (January 2024)

We conducted dialogues and interviews with palm oil refining companies, palm farmers, foreign workers, and certification bodies in Malaysia (The inspection covered all transactions in the palm oil supply chain in Malaysia, whether direct or indirect).

## &lt;Summary of results&gt;

No serious human rights violations, such as forced labor or child labor, were found within the scope of this survey. However, we will continue to conduct surveys on an ongoing basis.

The Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) is a government-mandated certification system in Malaysia. Through dialogues with farmers, farmers' associations, the Malaysian Palm Oil Certification Council (MPOCC), which administers the certification system, and other parties, we learned that the MSPO certification leads to continuous improvement through supporting overall factors (e.g., stakeholder responsiveness and on-site conditions) for small farms and stakeholders in the Malaysian palm oil industry.



## Human Rights



> Ajinomoto Co., Inc. 2024 Human Rights Due Diligence (Malaysia)

## Prevent or remedy adverse impacts, and monitor and assess effectiveness

### Performance

#### ■ Initiatives With Suppliers and Business Partners

The Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers summarizes our expectations in seven-point list for business partners necessary to fulfill our corporate social responsibility and to contribute to sustainable societies. Based on this policy, the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers clarifies further specific actions to be taken by business partners.

The intent of these policies is to avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts on human rights by

companies or organizations with whom the Ajinomoto Group has business relationships. We address such impacts should they occur. We also strive to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts linked directly to Ajinomoto Group businesses, products, or services through business relationships, even if we do not contribute to such impacts.

- > Group Shared Policy for Suppliers
- > Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers
- > P086-090

## Compliance status survey for the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers

### Performance

From our comprehensiveness approach, the Ajinomoto Group aims to monitor, prevent, and correct adverse human rights impacts on all business partners throughout our value chain as we head toward the year 2030. We complement the depth approach through these efforts, minimizing human rights risks in the value chain through the comprehensive identification and recognition of risks not thoroughly covered.

To understand the overall aspects of our business partners, we joined Sedex<sup>[1]</sup> and launched operations in 2018. Furthermore, we began conducting compliance surveys in 2022 as an effort to further strengthen our efforts for business partners based on the UNGPs. Here, we prepared the Compliance Questionnaire of Guidelines for Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers (QAPS<sup>[2]</sup>), a unique list of questions based on the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers. Using QAPS, we will identify risks related to governance, human rights (forced labor, child labor, etc.) occupational safety and health, and other risks on a regular basis for business partners. The Ajinomoto Group holds dialogues with business partners identified as high-risk to support the prevention and improvement of human rights issues. We also urge business partners to understand their own human rights risks and to consider corrective and

remedial measures. Through these processes, we aim to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and remediation of human rights issues in the supply chain on an ongoing basis.

[1] Sedex: Abbreviation for Supplier Ethical Data Exchange.

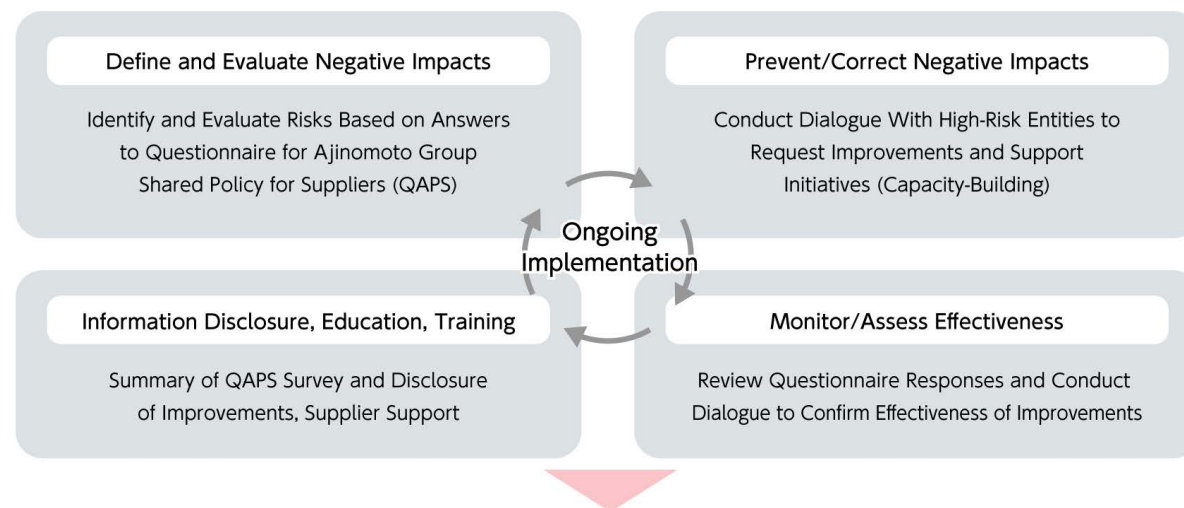
A global membership organization that provides data on labor standards, business ethics, etc. within the global supply chains.

[2] QAPS: Questionnaire for Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers

> Human Rights

## Human Rights

## Overview of initiatives with suppliers and business partners



## Raise Level of Respect for Human Rights throughout the Supply Chain

## Human rights of foreign workers

In 2020, we voiced our support for the Tokyo Declaration 2020 on Responsible Acceptance of Foreign Workers in Japan formulated by the Global Alliance for Sustainable Supply Chain (ASSC) regarding the recruitment of foreign workers under Technical Intern Training Program or those with Specified Skilled Worker visa, and we have requested that our suppliers create an environment in which foreign workers can be active in their work. In fiscal 2021, we participated in the development of the Responsible Employment Guidelines for Migrant Workers as Technical Intern Trainees and Specified Skilled Workers in Japan as a member of the CGF Social Sustainability Working Group.

Based on these guidelines, we visited and held dialogues with supervising organizations and registered support organizations related to the technical intern trainees employed by domestic Ajinomoto Group companies. Through these efforts, we confirm that technical intern trainees and specified skilled workers are appropriately paid and provided support in their work and daily life. We also regularly visit sites where foreign workers are employed, mainly in domestic Ajinomoto Group companies, to understand and confirm working and housing conditions. We regularly hold direct dialogues with foreign workers and other on-site employees with responsibility for foreign workers to identify and remedy human rights risks.

## Dialogue with stakeholders regarding foreign workers

Year	Participants	Dialogue details
2022	Foreign technical interns and foreign workers with specified skills accepted within the Group (three companies and six plants)	Discussions on working conditions, living conditions, and support systems (confirming work sites and housing environments)
	Supervising organizations and registered support organizations (six companies in total)	Discussions on support systems in employment and daily life
2023	Technical intern sending organizations (Vietnam, two companies)	Interviews and discussions on education and support systems, costs, and other factors to be settled before sending trainees to Japan
	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Discussions on the current status of laws and regulations in Vietnam and immigration to Japan
	Foreign technical interns and foreign workers with specified skills accepted within the Group (three companies and six plants)	Discussions on working conditions, living conditions, and support systems (confirming work sites and housing environments)

## Human Rights



Dialogue With Foreign Workers



## Information disclosure, education, and training

## Performance

## (1) Education and Training Within the Group

The Ajinomoto Group holds training and briefing sessions on business and human rights for directors, employees, and business partners as needed.

## Education and training on human rights

Year	Target	Training details
2022	Group company employees in Japan	Rolled out e-learning educational videos on the Group Shared Policy on Human Rights as part of our AGP communication measures
	Major primary business partners in Japan (suppliers)	Explained the Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy on Human Rights, the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, and the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, and requested responses to compliance survey
2023	Local management and employees of subsidiaries in Indonesia	Lectured on business and human rights, explained human rights due diligence, and discussed contents
	Local management and employees of subsidiaries in Vietnam	Lectured on business and human rights, explained human rights due diligence, and discussed contents
	Group procurement staff in Japan	Explained revisions to the Group Shared Policy on Human Rights, the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, and the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, and requested responses to compliance survey
	Major primary business partners in Japan (contract manufacturers, etc.)	Explained the Group Shared Policy on Human Rights, the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, and the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers through videos, and requested responses to compliance survey
	Major primary business partners in Japan (suppliers)	Requested the party in question share the results of the compliance survey on the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and the Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers
2024	Group company employees	We will provide information (through videos) on human rights issues throughout the value chain to Group employees in Japan (over 8,000 employees). In these videos, we focus on the Group Shared Policy on Human Rights, aiming to incorporate and familiarize the policy at each site (to be rolled out overseas beginning in the second half of 2024).
	Local management and employees of subsidiaries in Malaysia	Lecture on business and human rights, explained human rights due diligence, and discuss contents

## &gt; Ajinomoto Group Education and Training on Human Rights

## 2024 Video of delivery to Group employees in Japan (excerpt)

- ① Elimination of discrimination
- ② Prohibition of child labor and forced labor
- ③ Respect for fundamental labor rights
- ④ Adequate provision of wages and reasonable working hours
- ⑤ Ensuring a safe working environment and promoting health and well-being
- ⑥ Support for work-life balance
- ⑦ Contribution to building a more diverse and inclusive society
- ⑧ Safeguarding personal information

and inclusive society.

Prohibition of child labor and forced labor

across the world.

## Human Rights

## (2) Compliance With Laws and Regulations on Respect for Human Rights in Each Country

The Ajinomoto Group adheres to human rights laws and regulations in each country as we develop our business globally.

## ■ Compliance With the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act

The Ajinomoto Group discloses the following statement from relevant local subsidiaries regarding the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010 (CTSCA), enacted in California, the United States.

> Ajinomoto Foods North America, Inc.  
CA TSCA Notice

## ■ Dialogue with stakeholders

## Performance

The Ajinomoto Group holds regular dialogues with human rights experts and stakeholders to further our efforts to respect human rights and to obtain expert opinions. We also introduce and communicate proactively our initiatives at seminars and training sessions at external organizations to receive outside feedback.

## Human rights dialogues with stakeholders

Year	Participants	Dialogue details
(1) Dialogue with stakeholders that face potential impacts from our business activities		
[1] Excludes dialogue with parties subject to the above-mentioned country-specific human rights impact assessments, business partners, suppliers, foreign workers, and those involved in education and training		
2023	Ajinomoto Group Labor Union	Discussed feedback obtained through union member questionnaires and direct dialogue among union members, as well as the feedback response status, etc.
(2) Dialogue with human rights experts		
Monthly (Regular)	CRT Japan	Human rights issues in the Ajinomoto Group and the Group approach to addressing such issues
2022	Overseas human rights experts (organized by CRT Japan)	Discussed human rights due diligence initiatives pursued in the Ajinomoto Group
	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Discussed human rights due diligence initiatives of the Ajinomoto Group at Business and Human Rights Academy individual guidance sessions
2023	Know The Chain	Discussed KTC evaluation methodologies and Ajinomoto Group initiatives
	World Benchmarking Alliance (organized by CRT Japan)	Introduced and discussed human rights due diligence initiatives of the Ajinomoto Group during dialogue between the WBA and Japanese companies
	UN Human Rights Council	Discussed human rights due diligence progress in Japanese companies
	Overseas human rights experts (organized by CRT Japan)	Discussed human rights due diligence initiatives pursued in the Ajinomoto Group
	World Benchmarking Alliance	Discussed the living wage approach expected of companies

## Lectures and speeches at seminars, trainings, etc.

Year	Seminars and training	Topics
2022	Fiscal 2022 Human Rights Training Video for Companies, commissioned by the Ministry of Justice	Introducing human rights due diligence initiatives of the Ajinomoto Group
	Fiscal 2022 CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and Human Rights Seminar, commissioned by the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (Osaka)	
2023	Seminar on Guidelines for Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains, Etc., commissioned by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (Sapporo and Fukuoka)	
	Human Rights Due Diligence in a Connected World: Approaches to shaping sustainable business practices from Japan (organized by UNDP and MOFA)	
	NIKKEI LIVE Real-World Solutions for Supply Chain Human Rights Compliance	
	The 12th International 2023 Business and Human Rights Conference, organized by the Caux Round Table Japan (Tokyo)	
	Human Rights Due Diligence: Advanced Examples at Japanese Corporations (Vietnam) [online seminar sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]	
	What We Should Know About the Relationship between Products and Services and Human Rights: Corporate initiatives related to business and human rights (Nippon Association of Consumer Specialists (NACS))-	
2024	Seminar on Respect for Human Rights for Food Companies, sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Tokyo)	

## Human Rights

## Remedies

## Performance

## ■ Grievance mechanism

The Ajinomoto Group established several consultation and reporting offices within and outside the group to promptly and appropriately address damage resulting from adverse human rights impacts. Each consultation office strictly protects whistleblower's privacy, and related departments work together to appropriately address and resolve the situation.

> [Group Shared Policy on Whistle-blowing](#)

## ■ Ajinomoto Group Hotline

We established an internal whistle-blowing hotline for Ajinomoto Group employees (regular, part-time, and temporary employees, etc.) and executives. We unified our domestic and global counters in 2023, enabling access in 22 languages. This unification ensures that the diverse employees of our group companies have easy access to the hotline. The whistleblower can choose between real name and anonymity. Business Conduct Committee of Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is responsible for conducting surveys and responding in cooperation with related organizations.

> [P134](#)  
> [Ajinomoto Group HOT LINE](#)

## ■ Supplier hotlines

The Ajinomoto Group established the supplier hotline in fiscal 2018 as a contact point for reporting from suppliers. The hotline is designed to detect and correct suspected violations of laws and deviations from AGP by Ajinomoto Group executives or employees.

> [Supplier Hotline Consultation Form \(Japanese Only\)](#)

## ■ Hotline for Foreign Workers

The Ajinomoto Group has been participating in an advisory capacity since the 2020 establishment of the Japan Platform for Migrant Workers toward Responsible and Inclusive Society (JP-MIRAI) created by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) together with other stakeholders including companies, lawyers, and NGOs. This aims to resolve issues faced by foreign workers undergoing technical training and those with special skills. In fiscal 2022, we participated in the Consultation and Relief Pilot Project for Migrant Workers launched by JP-MIRAI. Moving forward, we intend to expand this system to cover the whole supply chain and utilize it in the early detection of issues with labor and human rights.

> [JP-MIRAI Portal](#)



## Supply Chain Management

# Responsible supply chain management

## Approach to responsible supply chain management

### Approach

Under Ajinomoto Group supply chain management, we continue to refine our supply chain to be resilient against group-wide global risks. At the same time, we pursue sustainability initiatives that include improved nutrition and health, respect for human rights, GHG emissions reductions, plastic waste reduction, food loss reduction, and sustainable procurement. We also strive to create a virtuous cycle of mutual trust, fostering empathy, and mutual growth with others involved in the supply chain.

### Past Initiatives

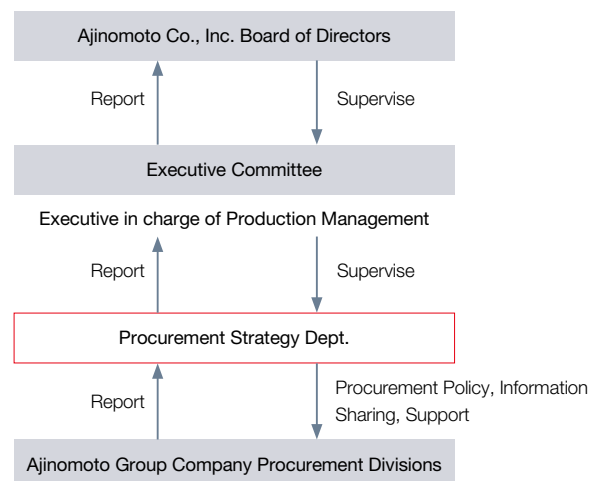
2006	Established Group Shared Policy on Procurement
2018	Established Group Shared Policy for Suppliers Joined Sedex[1] (corporate ethical data platform)
2020	Endorsed the Tokyo Declaration 2020 on the Responsible Acceptance of Foreign Workers formulated by The Global Alliance for Sustainable Supply Chains (ASSC)
2021	Participated in the formulation of the Responsible Employment Guidelines for Migrant Workers as a member of the CGF Social Sustainability Working Group
2022	Revised the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and Group Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers to incorporate globally required standards for human rights

[1] Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. A global membership organization that provides data on labor standards, business ethics, etc., within the global supply chains.

> P109-115

## Supply chain management promotion framework

The Ajinomoto Co., Inc. Procurement Strategy Dept. within the Corporate Division creates procurement policies for the Ajinomoto Group under the guidance of the executive in charge of production management. Group companies create and implement plans and strategies based on these policies. We also use tools that allow persons within the Group to access procurement policies, best practices, and other necessary information, providing timely communications on pertinent topics. We also established a system whereby Ajinomoto Group companies report procurement information to the Procurement Strategy Dept. Procurement information reports are conveyed to the executive in charge of production management.



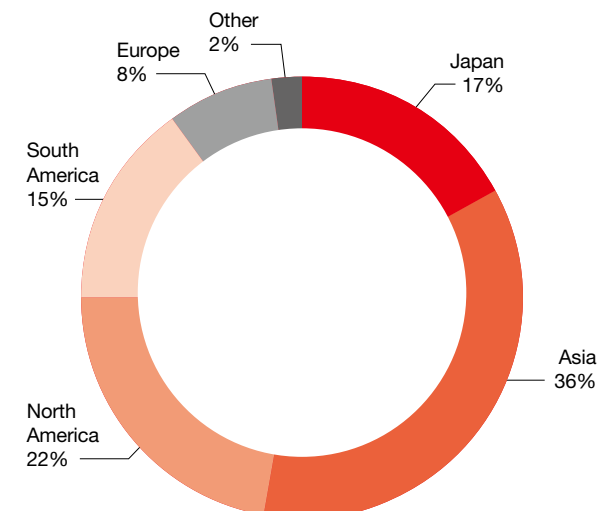
## The state of our global supply chain

### Performance

The Ajinomoto Group markets products in more than 130 countries and regions, operating 116 plants in 24 countries and regions worldwide. We procure raw materials from suppliers all over the world, so our supply chain is equally wide-ranging.

Our fiscal 2022 composition of raw materials by region (transaction value) was 17% from Japan and 36% from Asia, 22% from North America, 15% from South America, 15% from Europe, and 2% from other regions.

### Raw materials by region (transaction value; FY2022)



## Supply Chain Management

## Group Shared Policy on Procurement

## Approach

The Ajinomoto Group regards our suppliers of raw materials, products, services, and other goods to indispensable partners in contributing to a sustainable society.

We formulated the Group Shared Policy on Procurement and Group Shared Policy for Suppliers along with other related guidelines to clarify expectations of suppliers necessary to fulfill our corporate social responsibility and to contribute to sustainable societies. In addition, we send questionnaires to suppliers to monitor compliance with these policies. We request appropriate action and offer assistance when we find areas for improvement. We may review the contracts of suppliers who show no improvement, either with or without our assistance.

## ■ Group Shared Policy on Procurement

The Ajinomoto Group strives to be fair, impartial, transparent, and straightforward in all purchase transactions. We work with suppliers as true business partners, and comply with laws and regulations, contract terms, and business conduct to earn the trust of our customers and other stakeholders.

## ■ Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers

The Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers clarifies seven areas related to our expectations of suppliers necessary to fulfill our corporate social responsibility and to contribute to sustainable societies. This policy applies to all Ajinomoto Group companies, as well as suppliers, affiliates, and contract manufacturing partners, as well as their respective executives and employees (regular employees, temporary employees, contract employees, contract agents, etc.).

We ask suppliers to understand the purpose of this policy and work actively toward compliance. We also ask suppliers to ensure their business partners (upstream suppliers, agents, and employees) understand the purpose of the policy and work toward compliance actively.

## Supply chain initiatives

## Performance

## ■ Supplier selection

When selecting suppliers for expanding business or creating new business relationships, we prioritize quality, cost, stable procurement, and sustainability initiatives.

## ■ Fostering an understanding of and encouraging compliance with policies and guidelines

We hold regular briefing sessions for suppliers (twice a year) to share the approach and circumstances of the Ajinomoto Group' and exchange opinions. Here, we ask suppliers to understand the purpose of the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and work actively toward compliance. We also ask suppliers to ensure their business partners (upstream suppliers, agents, and employees) understand the purpose of the Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and work toward compliance actively.

## ■ Assess and encourage compliance with group policies and guidelines

We use the Questionnaire for Ajinomoto Group Shared Policy for Suppliers (QAPS\*), an internal questionnaires, to evaluate compliance with Group Shared Policy for Suppliers and Guidelines for Group Shared Policy for Suppliers, which reflect global standards of human rights and social norms.

This questionnaire mainly identifies the risks in governance, human rights (e.g., forced and child labor), and occupational health and safety that our business partners face. Staff from the Purchasing Division and the Sustainability Development Departments then engage in direct conversation with the suppliers considered to have room for improvement (approximately 20% of all suppliers) to ascertain facts and support and encourage improvements. Through these

## Supply Chain Management

efforts, we quantify the degree of improvement in selected areas, confirm improvements, and reduce supplier risk.

\* Questionnaire regarding I. *Compliance With Statutory and Regulatory Requirements, and Accepted Social Norms*, II. *Respect for Human Rights*, and III. *Occupational Health and Safety*.

> P109-115  
> Human Rights

### Selection and Audits of Key Material Suppliers

We designate the raw materials that have significant effects on the competitive advantage of our main products as key materials in our supplier selections. To conduct audits, we identify significant suppliers as key material suppliers based on supply risk and quality risk in terms of the difficulty in procuring said raw materials from other than the current supplier and whether said raw materials or similar materials have caused quality issues, have been contaminated (foreign substances, residual agricultural chemicals), or have been associated with other complaints in the past three years.

#### Supplier audits in fiscal 2023\*

Audited organization	Audited items	Audited items
Ajinomoto Co., Inc.	Raw materials	156
	Packaging materials	32
Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co.,	Raw materials	119

\* Audits are conducted not only on key material suppliers but also on all suppliers on a regular basis.

### Supplier hotlines

The Ajinomoto Group established the supplier hotline to detect and correct suspected violations of laws and deviations from the Ajinomoto Group Policy (AGP) by Ajinomoto Group executives or employees.

> P116  
> P134

### Skills development for procurement staff

The Procurement Division participates in annual compliance training and conducts study sessions on the Subcontract Act with the Legal Affairs Division to raise awareness of compliance.

Training conducted in FY2023

- Compliance training
- Study session on the Subcontract Act

## Relationships with Local Communities

# Contribution to community development

## Toward regional development

### Approach

The Ajinomoto Group works to solve social issues in each region through our business. We understand and respect local culture and values, aiming to strengthen relationships and contribute to the well-being and development of local communities by creating positive impacts through our production activities.

Our Group Shared Policy on Local Community Enhancement clearly states our commitment to contributing to the development of our communities through dialogue and cooperation with society, appropriate donations, and other support activities.

> Group Shared Policy on Local Community Enhancement

## Activities for regional development

### Performance

#### ■ Contributing to farmer productivity and sustainable agriculture (Thailand)

Ajinomoto Co. (Thailand) Ltd. uses cassava and sugarcane as the main raw materials of AJI-NO-MOTO®. The company also establishes a sustainable bio-cycle in which co-products\*, or byproducts, are sold to farmers through Ajinomoto FD Green (Thailand) Co., Ltd. for use as a nutrient in cassava fields.

The country faces various challenges including aging farmers, successor shortages, and declining cassava yields from the increased spread of a viral disease called the Cassava Mosaic Disease since 2018. Ajinomoto Co. (Thailand) Ltd. partnered with Ajinomoto FD Green (Thailand)

Co., Ltd. to launch the Thai Farmer Better Life Partner project in June 2020, aiming not only to solve the problems faced by cassava farmers, but also to improve their economic value and create cycles. Specifically, the companies focus their efforts on supporting cassava farmers in Kamphaeng Phet Province through basic education on cultivation, free soil diagnosis, and new fertilizer development. Kamphaeng Phet Province is a leading agricultural province in Thailand and is the residential province for the Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd. manufacturing base and Ajinomoto FD Green (Thailand) Co., Ltd., the companies focus their efforts on supporting cassava farmers through basic education on cultivation, free soil diagnosis, and new fertilizer development. In fiscal 2023, 1,357 farmers participated in the project, improving cassava yields by an average of 31%.

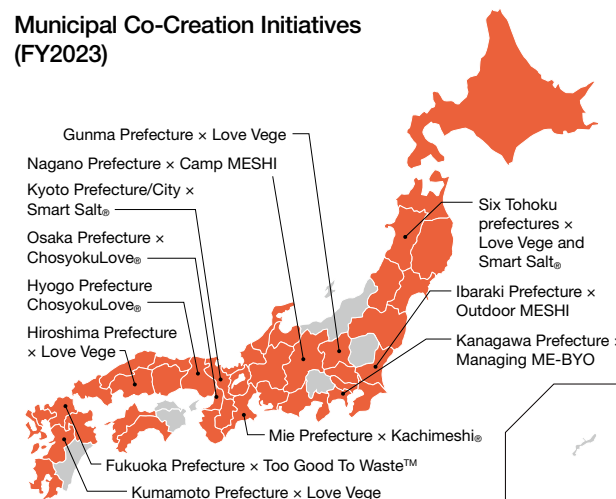
Ajinomoto Co. (Thailand) Ltd. is committed to contributing to sustainable agriculture in Thailand, aiming to go beyond improving cassava farmer productivity and supporting farmer self-reliance to also strengthen bio-cycles.

\* Co-products: Nutrient-rich byproducts of amino acid production that can be used as fertilizer.

#### ■ Improving local nutrition through co-creation with local governments (Japan)

We work to solve local food and health issues through our business in Japan, contributing to the well-being of local governments, other business partners, and area consumers. We collaborated with 38 local governments in fiscal 2023 to encourage each region to reduce sodium and sugar intake, while increasing intake of fruit, vegetables, and protein.

## Municipal Co-Creation Initiatives (FY2023)



## Foundation activities

### Performance

The Ajinomoto Group supports needs-based activities in food and nutrition through foundations established in three countries.

Country	Foundation	URL
Japan	The Ajinomoto Foundation	<a href="http://www.theajinomotofoundation.org">http://www.theajinomotofoundation.org</a>
	Ajinomoto Foundation for Dietary Culture	<a href="https://www.syokubunka.or.jp/english/">https://www.syokubunka.or.jp/english/</a>
	Ajinomoto Scholarship Foundation	<a href="https://ajischolarship.com">https://ajischolarship.com</a>
Thailand	Ajinomoto Foundation	<a href="https://ajinomotofoundation.or.th">https://ajinomotofoundation.or.th</a> (English and Thai only)
Brazil	Instituto Ajinomoto	<a href="https://www.ajinomoto.com.br/instituto-ajinomoto/">https://www.ajinomoto.com.br/instituto-ajinomoto/</a> (Portuguese only)

## Accessibility

# Improving product accessibility

## Approach

The Ajinomoto Group expands our business through our own mail order and external e-commerce site, helping consumers purchase products anytime, anywhere. We have established a system to analyze the awareness and behavior of consumers through digital data. We provide products that meet the trends of users on e-commerce websites in Japan and overseas. At the same time, we have established our own distribution networks that include rural areas in developing and emerging countries with weak distribution mechanisms. In this way and more, we provide products not only through supermarkets, but also in grocery stalls within markets. We have adopted a cash-based direct sales model for staff to sell physical goods (products), depending on the conditions in each country or region. By communicating directly with shopkeepers and consumers, we exchange a wealth of information and deepen our understanding of consumer needs. In turn, this allows us to offer products more rooted in the local community.

We also establish reasonable prices and convenient product formats tailored to the lifestyle conditions in each country or region. For example, we offer a minimum standard size of our umami seasoning AJI-NO-MOTO® for 500 rupiah (about 5 yen) in Indonesia and for 4 pesos (about 10 yen) in the Philippines<sup>[1]</sup>.

The Group strives to improve product availability and accessibility by utilizing digital data and collecting information through direct communications.

[1] Average exchange rate for fiscal 2023 was used to convert product prices into Japanese yen.



PT AJINOMOTO INDONESIA



AJINOMOTO PHILIPPINES CORPORATION

> Group Shared Policy on Product Accessibility



# Appropriate communications and information sharing

## Responsible communications with consumers

### Approach

The Ajinomoto Group markets products in more than 130 countries and regions. Each region has its own deliciousness and its own customs related to preparing and eating food. Each region also has particular ways of communicating that are considered appropriate. Communicating in accordance with the local culture is crucial to conveying the value of a product or service.

Given these differences, we have stated our commitment to practicing responsible marketing communications in our Group Shared Policy on Marketing Communications. This policy acknowledges that extra caution is needed in marketing communications designed for children. We pledge to act responsibly, refraining from exploiting the inexperience or imagination of children or using language that can mislead children.

We updated our policies in April 2020 to clarify that the Ajinomoto Group Policies are based on the ICC Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communications, which are global standards established by the International Chamber of Commerce.

Group companies in Japan publish social media guidelines on their respective websites, disclosing the rules with which employees must comply when engaging in social media.

Packaging on food-related products display both legally required information and voluntary information unique to the Ajinomoto Group, including lists of allergens and details of ingredients that may be unfamiliar to customers.

- > [Group Shared Policy on Marketing Communications](#)
- > [Group Shared Policy on Package Description](#)
- > [Product package labeling \(Japanese only\)](#)

## Incidents of non-compliance

### Performance

During fiscal 2023, the Ajinomoto Group was not subject to any public announcements made by the Japan Consumer Affairs Agency related to violations of the Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations.

# Quality management

## Basic approach to quality assurance

### Approach

Since our founding, the Ajinomoto Group has put our customers first in our efforts to ensure the safety and security of our products and services. Issues concerning quality assurance and appropriate information disclosure are significant we face, specifically as a company that handles food products for consumer ingestion. We place great importance on listening to and responding sincerely to our customers' requests. Through these efforts, we provide products and services that earn customer trust and satisfaction. Under the management leadership of management, each employee makes every effort to provide safe, high-quality products and services, contributing to better lives for customers around the world. Aiming for high quality does not equate to aiming for excessive-quality for customers. Rather, the high quality we strive for refers to our delivery of products and services that meet customer satisfaction standards and ensure customer safety.

Our Group Policy on Quality defines the following five specific initiatives.

1. Listen sincerely to customers' requests
2. Be proactive in disclosing appropriate information
3. Pursue safety and comply with laws and regulations
4. Guarantee quality with our unique quality assurance system based on the ISO approach
5. Make every effort on an individual employee basis

> Group Shared Policy on Quality

## Ajinomoto System of Quality Assurance (ASQUA)

### Approach

The Ajinomoto Group has our own quality assurance system, ASQUA. As of March 2024, 97 Group companies have implemented ASQUA.

The core of ASQUA is based on ISO 9001, the international quality management system standard. We supplement this standard with other manufacturing management standards such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)<sup>[1]</sup>, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)<sup>[2]</sup>, and the Group's own rules and requirements. Furthermore, companies that adopt ASQUA assure quality based on Group Shared Policies<sup>[3]</sup>, the Ajinomoto Quality Assurance Regulations, the Regulation for Quality Assurance, the quality standards, and other rules established by each internal organization.

Quality standards range from development, procurement of raw materials, and sales to customer communications. We review these standards constantly in light of internal and external trends. Currently, we are working to ensure global compliance with our quality standards. For certain food business quality standards, we added our own requirements in addition to those equivalent to the GFSI-recognized certification programmes, which are global standards on food safety. Through these standards, we strengthen food safety throughout the Ajinomoto Group.

[1] Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point: Procedures for safe and hygienic food production

[2] Good Manufacturing Practice: Standards for the production process and quality control of products

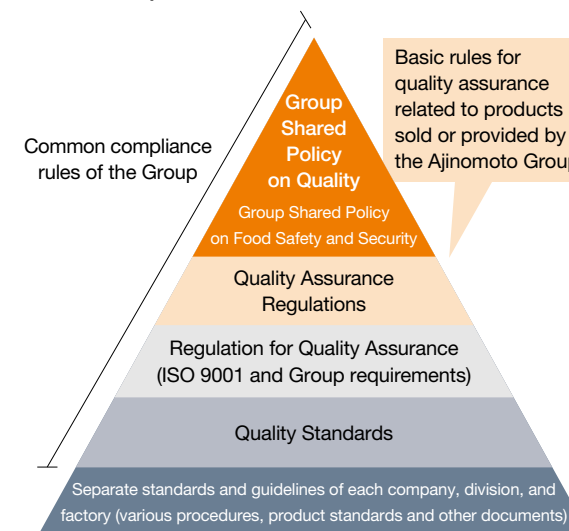
[3] Group Shared Policy on Quality, Group Shared Policy on Food Safety

> Group Shared Policy on Quality  
> Group Shared Policy on Food Safety  
> Ajinomoto System of Quality Assurance (ASQUA)

## ASQUA framework



## ASQUA components



## Product Safety

## Promotion framework for quality assurance

## Framework

Under the supervision of the Board of Directors, the Ajinomoto Group established the Quality Assurance Committee under the Executive Committee to deliberate policies and various measures regarding quality assurance. The committee drafts basic policies and plans, and escalates Group-wide implementation once approved by the Executive Committee. The status of these plans is reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee every six months. Matters decided and deliberated by this Committee shall be reported to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors.

## Response to quality-related incidents

The Ajinomoto Group defines our response to quality incidents in the Regulation for Quality Assurance and the Standard for Determination of Responding to Quality Emergencies.

In the event of a quality incident, the Product Control Division (mainly the business department) takes leadership in handling the incident together with the related parties. If the quality incident is determined to be serious and in need of immediate attention, it is first reported to management immediately. At the same time, we organize an emergency response team to report to the government, disclose information to customers, and strive for the prompt recall of products through newspaper advertisements and our website. Information, including on the current progress, is reported promptly to management, who provides necessary instructions as needed. Furthermore, the Product Control Division works with relevant parties to identify the cause of the quality incident, hold thorough discussions on the process, organization, and motivational factors that led to the quality incident, and take steps to prevent future recurrences and strengthen quality assurance.

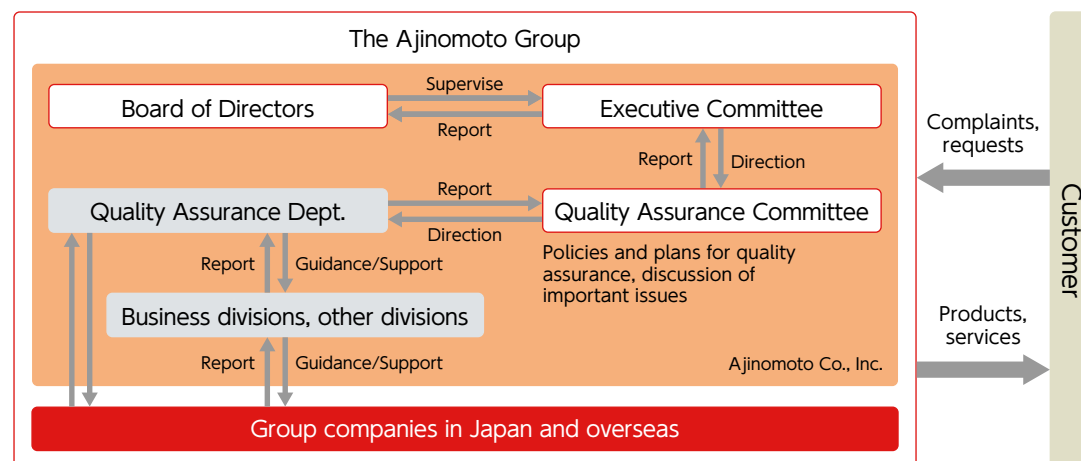
## Obtaining and maintaining third-party certifications

The Ajinomoto Group encourages Group companies to acquire and maintain ISO 9001 certification. As of March 2024, 65 of 74 eligible Group companies have acquired ISO 9001 certification. The Group is working to build a certification system for eligible companies not yet certified, many of which are newly acquired or established companies. In response to customer requests or other cases, the Ajinomoto Group acquires certification of other standards such as FSSC 22000 recognized by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI).

## Certification received related to the food safety management system

Certification Standards for the Food Safety Management System	ISO 22000	GFSI-Recognized Certification Programmes			
		FSSC22000	BRCGS	IFS	SQF
Total no. of companies with food plants: 51	4	21	9	5	2

## Framework diagram



## Product Safety

## Develop human resources to improve quality assurance levels

### Result

The Ajinomoto Group focuses on human resources development to further improve quality assurance levels. Each year, the Group reviews our quality training plan, implementing systematic programs to meet the needs of individual organizations. We resumed group trainings in fiscal 2023, in addition to online and e-learning formats.

### Quality training in each area

#### Japan

In November 2023, the Company Quality Assurance Department led the 44th meeting of the Management and Technical Conference on Quality. The meeting met for the first time in four years since the COVID-19 pandemic and attracted approximately 320 participants from Ajinomoto Group companies. This meeting is a place for the human resources involved in quality assurance at our Group companies to introduce their respective quality-related activities, form new networks, and discuss quality beyond the framework of their usual work.

### Other Quality Training Conducted by the Company Quality Assurance Department in FY2023

Trainings	Participants
E-learning quality training for Group employees	1,294 in Japan and overseas
Pharmaceutical GMP training	171 in Japan and overseas
Basic course on food labeling	142 in Japan
New Top Management Quality Training Course for newly appointed organizational heads, domestic Group company heads, and new quality assurance management representatives and managers	40 in Japan
ISO 9001 training for Food Business Division transferees; ISO 9001 internal audit briefings	162 in Japan



#### ASEAN

Ajinomoto SEA Regional Headquarters Co., Ltd. led the ASEAN QA Seminar for inexperienced quality assurance staff (18 participants from 4 companies), the QA Dept. Manager Meeting for quality assurance managers from each group company (10 participants from 6 companies), and the quality auditor training to train quality auditors (15 participants from Vietnam and 12 participants from Myanmar).

#### China

Ajinomoto (China) Co., Ltd. led the TAC SQE Seminar for quality assurance staff from each group company (24 participants).

#### North America

Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America, Inc. led the ASQUA School in North America for quality assurance staff from each group company (50 participants including online participants).

#### Global

The Company Quality Assurance Department led the Global Regulatory Meeting to share and discuss the latest information on the usefulness and safety of the Group's core materials.

Twenty-three key members from Europe, North America, South America, ASEAN, Africa, Korea, Taiwan,

Thailand, and Japan congregated in Japan to exchange views.

## Product Safety

## Quality assurance across the supply chain

## Framework

The Ajinomoto Group practices strict quality assurance by applying the ASQUA globally at each stage, from product development to customer communication. Our efforts are guided by the Group Shared Policy on Quality and the Group Shared Policy on Food Safety.

- > Group Shared Policy on Quality
- > Group Shared Policy on Food Safety

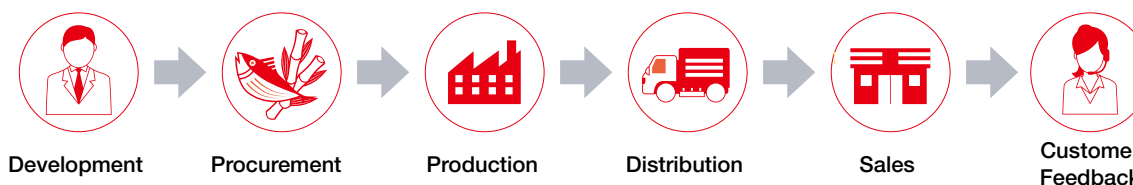
## Development

To deliver safe, high-quality products, the Ajinomoto Group implements strict quality assessments in each stage of the product development process in accordance with the ASQUA Standard for Quality Assessment. Only products that have passed all assessments reach the end customer.

## Raw materials procurement

We select suppliers in accordance with the Standard for Quality Control of Ingredients provided in ASQUA. Raw materials purchased from suppliers are strictly controlled through lot-by-lot inspections. We hold regular evaluations, quality audits, briefings, and questionnaires for suppliers, aiming to reduce quality risks and improve quality levels. The Ajinomoto Group is committed to forming stronger ties with our suppliers to continue improving quality.

> P117-119



## Production

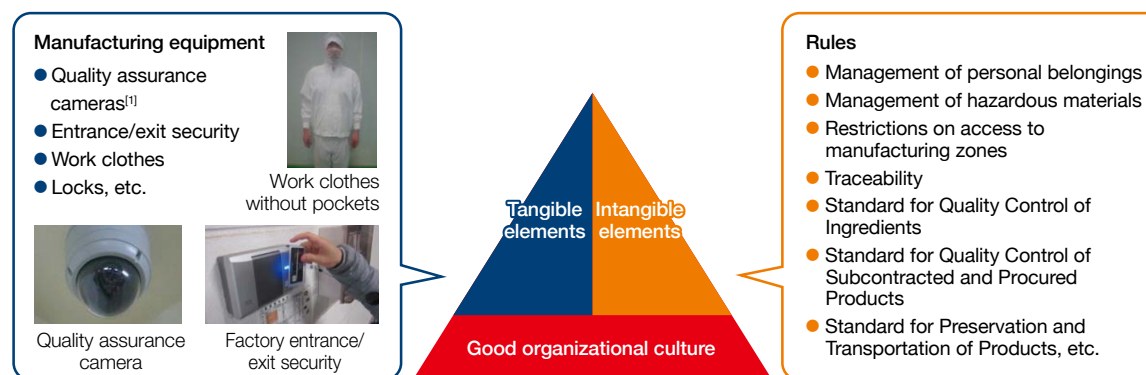
■ Structural enhancements for food safety

We believe that creating a workplace culture that is open and based on employee trust is the key to strengthening our food safety system. We also review and improve tangible elements, such as production facilities, and intangible elements, such as quality standard and guidelines. In this way, we minimize the risk of intentional product tampering and strengthen quality assurance across the supply chain.

■ Measures to prevent manipulation of quality-related data  
We continue to foster employee compliance and awareness of quality assurance from the customer's perspective. The validity of data related to development, production, and the functional features of food products is evaluated and judged objectively and fairly in quality assessment meetings and by committees of internal experts. To ensure the proper operation of these systems, we conduct ongoing quality audits and third-party certification audits.

In addition, global standards require systems that store and prevent the manipulation of analysis data on manufactured pharmaceuticals and active pharmaceutical ingredients. We continue to strengthen management based on these standards.

## Conceptual diagram for assuring food safety



[1] Confirm no problems or operational errors in the plant. Secure customer trust via quality assurance cameras.



## Product Safety

### ■ Initiatives to reduce quality-related complaints and issues

We carefully investigate the causes of all quality complaints and issues that occur, one by one, to prevent recurrence. Details of any quality-related issue and information on preventative measures are communicated promptly to Group companies in Japan and overseas to prevent recurrences. We have also created a database of major past quality issues, using this information to evaluate risks.

One quality incident occurred in 2023, resulting in a recall of approximately 250 packages of *Niku Miso Cabbage Cook Do*®, *Kyo-no Ohzara*®, for 3-4 servings due to contamination of manufacturing water in certain products.

### Number of recalls<sup>[1]</sup> and collections from distributors<sup>[2]</sup> by the Ajinomoto Group

Fiscal year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number	3	4	5	3	1

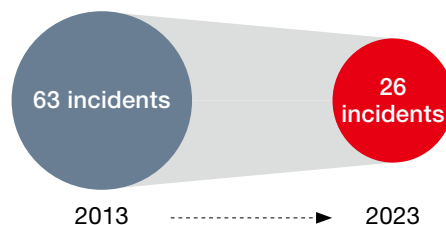
[1] Market recall of goods involving press releases

[2] Collection of goods from distributors prior to sale on the market based on internal standards

### ■ Monitoring serious complaints

The Ajinomoto Group monitors the number of serious complaints, as defined by internal standards, from customers at companies in Japan and overseas for a period of over 10 years. Over the 10-year period from 2013 to 2023, we reduced the number of serious complaints by approximately 40% through our medium- to long-term efforts to reduce quality complaints and issues.

### Number of serious complaints



### ■ Distribution

The Ajinomoto Group exercises strict control over product quality, which includes factors such as freshness, temperature, and moisture, during storage and transportation from factories until our products reach the customer. These activities follow ASQUA standards regarding the management of storage, transportation, warehouses (in Japan only), and other operations.

### ■ Sales

We publish helpful information on our product packaging and websites to offer customers greater confidence in their purchases.

#### ■ Product packages

The packages of retail products marketed by the major Group companies in Japan indicate not only all legally required information, but also other quality-related information of the following type (except when space is limited, etc.).

- Method of storage (once opened)
- Product usage warnings
- Explanations of raw materials that may be unfamiliar to customers and prompt a large number of inquiries
- Easy-to-identify list of allergens (both mandatory and recommended labeling)
- Easy-to-identify labeling of packaging materials
- Customer service contact

> Product package labeling (Japanese only)

#### ■ Website

Our global website publishes information on group quality assurance activities in multiple languages. Group companies operate their own owned media through which they provide information to customers in each country/region.

> Quality Assurance

## Product Safety

## Customer feedback

## ■ Initiatives to reflect customer feedback

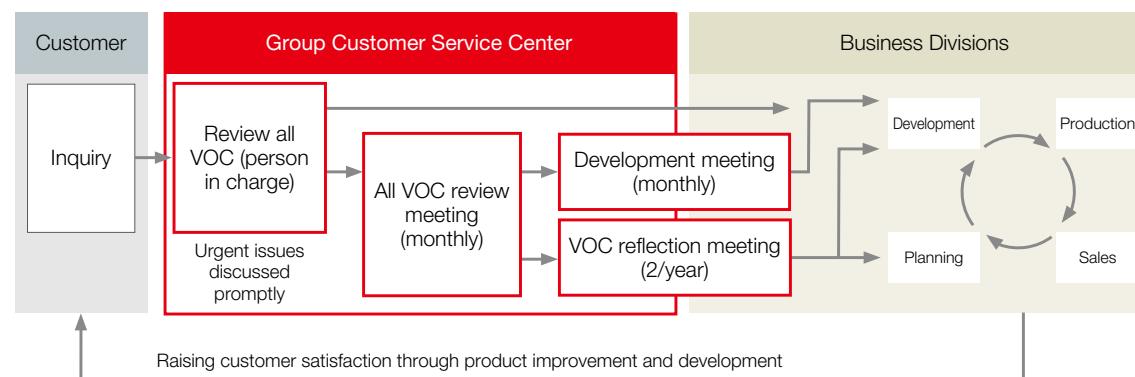
We reflect the voice of our customers (VOC) in the development and improvement of appealing products and services in accordance with the ASQUA standards. As of March 2024, we operate under these standards in a total of 13 countries.

> Quality Assurance

■ Monitoring customer feedback that may point to health hazards, violations of laws and regulations, or other serious problems.

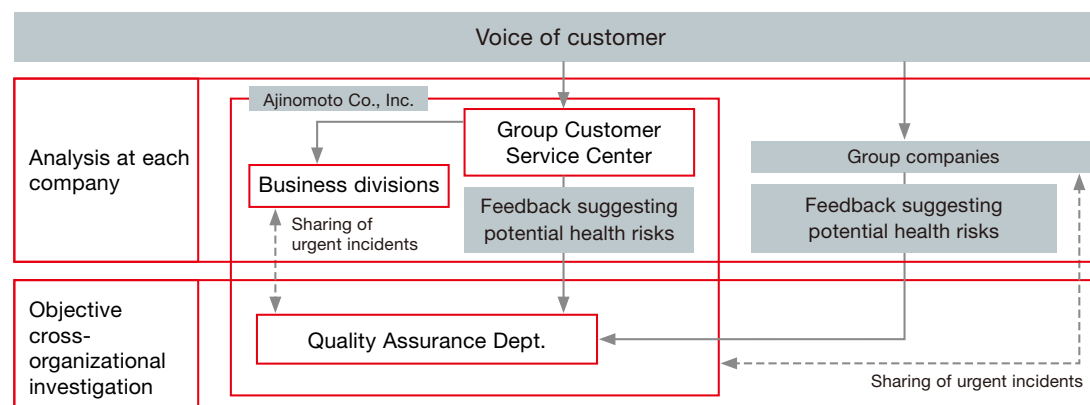
All VOC is analyzed by each Group company. Customer service centers of each company and the Quality Assurance Department both read and analyze feedback that may point to serious problems health hazards, violations of laws and regulations, or other serious problems, ensuring feedback is double-checked. In this way, the Ajinomoto Group establishes a system to ensure that we do not overlook serious problems. preventing delayed responses. We operate under this system in a total of 16 countries as of March 2024.

The Group Customer Service Center is accessible year-round, including on weekends and holidays, in the event of health hazards or other customer emergencies.

Product development system reflecting VOC at the Group Customer Service Center<sup>[1]</sup>

[1] Handling customer service functions for Ajinomoto Co., Inc., Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc., and Ajinomoto AGF, Inc.

## Structure to monitor customer feedback that may point to health hazards, violations of laws and regulations, or other serious problems



## Product Safety

### ■ Breakdown of customer feedback in fiscal 2023

- VOC received by Ajinomoto Co., Inc.:  
20,954 (97.2% vs. fiscal 2022)
- VOC received by three Ajinomoto Group food product companies<sup>[1]</sup> in Japan:  
34,644 (93.0% vs. fiscal 2022)

[1] Ajinomoto Co., Inc., Ajinomoto Frozen Foods, Co., Inc. and Ajinomoto AGF Co., Inc.

### ■ Efforts to improve customer satisfaction

The three food product Group companies in Japan regularly conduct surveys to confirm and improve customer satisfaction regarding the quality of response to customer quality-related claims. The investigation, business, and customer service departments work to share specific feedback to improve customer satisfaction. Surveys conducted during fiscal 2023 by Ajinomoto Co., Inc. indicated that 96.4% of customers were satisfied with the response to issues they raised, 81.7% were satisfied with the investigation reports, and 90.8% intend to continue to use the company's products.

### Breakdown of customer feedback (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.)

