Health and Nutrition

Initiatives to solve nutrition and health issues P035
Evolution of treatment and prevention P046
Disseminating information on MSG safety and benefits P050

Initiatives to solve nutrition and health issues

Approach to nutrition

Strategy

The Ajinomoto Group supports consumers in achieving nutritionally balanced diets through our business activities. Around the world, an increasing number of people suffer from health problems stemming from diets and lifestyles, including the excessive intake of salt, sugar, fat, and the insufficient intake of protein and vegetables. In response, the Ajinomoto Group implements efforts to improve nutrition as a way to solve such health issues based on the Group Shared Policy on Nutrition and the Ajinomoto Group Nutrition Strategy Guidelines.

The Group Shared Policy on Nutrition states clearly that we aim to provide products and information that improve the nutritional balance of daily meals based on various nutritional needs. The policy also states that we provide reliable solutions obtained through scientific research on the nutritional and physiological functions of proteins and amino acids. These nutrition improvement initiatives are based on the principle of Nutrition Without Compromise.

> ASV Report 2026 (Integrated Report) P080
> Nutrition Without Compromise
> Group Shared Policy on Nutrition

The three pillars of our approach to nutrition

The Ajinomoto Group leverages “AminoScience” to contribute solutions to nutrition issues under a three-pillar approach that supports Nutrition Without Compromise.

- Without compromising taste

The Ajinomoto Group continues to develop and sell healthy products (salt reduction, etc.), and we do so without compromising on taste. By providing seasonings such as umami seasoning (MSG), we contribute to delicious and healthy meals.

- Without compromising access ~delivering nutrition to everyone~

Through innovation using “AminoScience” and distribution initiatives, we will help make nutritious meals more accessible than ever before in terms of availability, affordability, and convenience.

- Without compromising the local way of life

When expanding our businesses globally, we adapt our operating models to respect national and local customs, food preferences, resources, ingredients, and stakeholders. While communities and economies grow and shift, our emphasis on personalization becomes even more relevant.

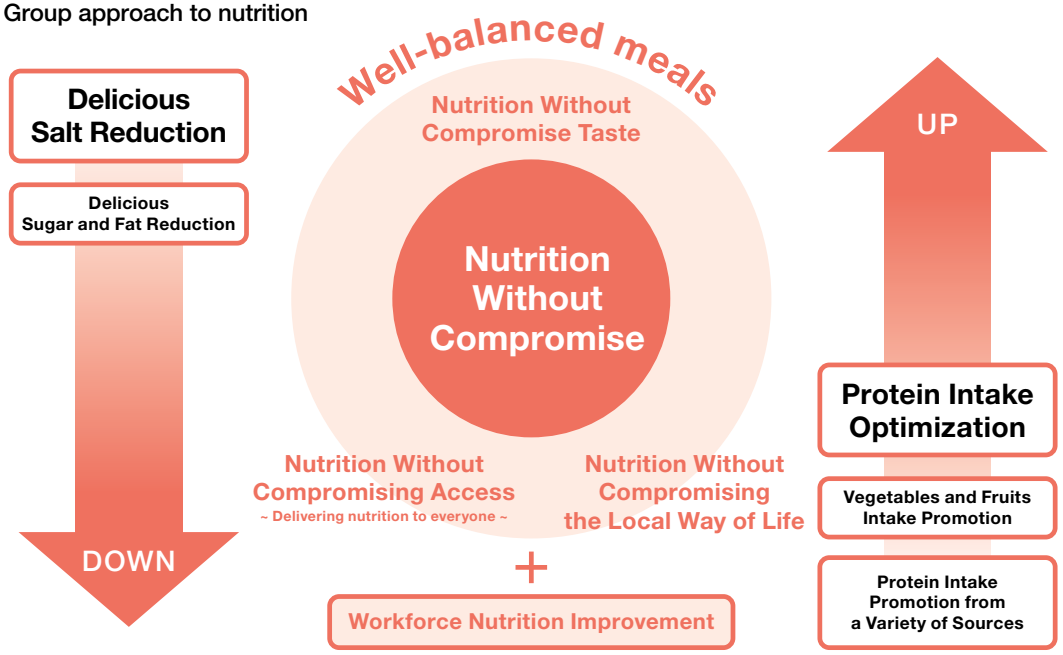
The Ajinomoto Group provides nutritious foods that taste good, are convenient and easily accessible, and respect local customs and flavors. At the same time, we are also committed to protecting the sustainable global environment on which such food is based.

Six key approaches to nutrition

The following pages describe our six key approaches to nutrition.

> P038 Delicious salt reduction
> P038 Protein intake optimization
> P039 Delicious sugar and fat reduction
> P040 Vegetables and fruits intake promotion
> P040 Protein intake promotion from a variety of sources
> P040 Workforce nutrition improvement

Ajinomoto Group approach to nutrition



Improving product accessibility

Strategy

The Ajinomoto Group provides opportunities for nutritious meals through affordable and appropriately designed products tailored to the needs of consumers in each country and region. Beyond simply modifying existing products, we strive to understand the unique regional living environments and needs to provide optimum solutions. The Ajinomoto Group continues to expand our e-commerce business and the use of digital data to offer products optimized for the specific needs of users in each country and region, helping consumers purchase products anytime, anywhere. At the same time, we provide a fine-tuned supply through our own delivery network and direct cash sales model in areas with underdeveloped distribution networks.

We also focus on making our products affordable and convenient, offering a minimum standard size of our umami seasoning AJI-NO-MOTO® for 500 rupiah in Indonesia and 4 pesos in the Philippines. The Group will continue to leverage digital and direct dialogue to improve product availability and accessibility of our products.

> Group Shared Policy on Product Accessibility

Framework for nutrition management

Governance

The Sustainability Committee formulates nutrition-related policies and strategies, follows up on business unit activities, and collects related information from these units in the same manner as environmental and human rights initiatives. The committee reports this information to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors oversees Company efforts and progress in addressing the risks and opportunities (including on nutrition) identified based on Materiality for the Ajinomoto Group.

Roadmap to one billion people

Strategy and Results

The Ajinomoto Group pursues initiatives for nutrition improvement to help extend the healthy life expectancy of one billion people by 2030. In fiscal 2025, we created touchpoints for deliciousness and health with 960 million people when combining the number of people provided with umami seasonings with those provided with low-sodium products or products that support protein intake. Going forward, we will continue to contribute to extending the healthy life expectancy of one billion people by promoting delicious salt reduction through umami and providing products and information that are useful for health.

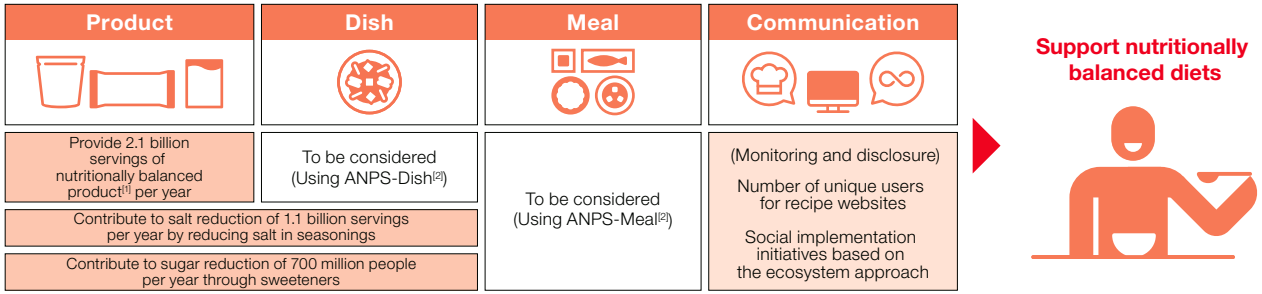
Targets and KPIs for nutrition

Framework / Performance

The Ajinomoto Group updated our targets and KPIs for nutrition to further accelerate nutrition improvement through our business, in line with our Purpose and Material Theme of achieving well-being through food.

The Ajinomoto Group provides products and services that meet the dietary culture and nutritional challenges of various regions, including Asia, where seasonings are used for cooking in the home or restaurants, Europe and the United States, where products are widely incorporated into diets as-is, and South America. Considering our diverse regional presence and broad product portfolio, we conduct nutritional assessments appropriate for each product, dish, and meal to support consumers' nutritionally balanced diets and added indicators for communication that contribute to nutrition improvement.

Updated targets and KPIs for achieving well-being through food (implemented in FY2025; target for FY2030)



- **For products consumed as-is, the Health Star Rating (HSR), which is used globally and provides a comprehensive assessment of nutritional value, is used for evaluation.**
- **Since dishes and meals are greatly influenced by food culture and combinations, appropriate evaluation methods will be considered for each country/region.**
- **Provide recipes, services, and systems to make it easier for consumers to practice nutritionally balanced diets.**

[1] Products with HSR rating 3.5 or above. Includes products that can be consumed as-is, by adding water, by heating, or through other simple preparation (e.g., soups, beverages, frozen foods, instant noodles).
[2] The Ajinomoto Group Nutrient Profiling System. NPS developed by the Ajinomoto Group. ANPS-Dish is for dish evaluation, and ANPS-Meal is for meal evaluation.

Targets/KPIs	FY25 (Results)	FY30 (Targets)
Provide nutritionally balanced products (HSR ≥3.5)	1.6 billion servings/year[3]	2.1 billion servings/year
Contribute to salt reduction by reducing salt in seasonings	930 million servings/year	1.1 billion servings/year
Contribute to sugar reduction through sweeteners	570 million people/year	700 million people/year
Number of unique users of recipe websites	41 million people/year	-
Number of social implementation initiatives based on the ecosystem approach	33	-
Availability of products utilizing the physiological and nutritional functions of amino acids (vs. FY2020)	1.11 times	2 times

[3] Ratio of sales value to products in the same category:25% (equals products with HSR rank 3.5 or above).

[Methods of Measuring Targets/KPIs]

Provide nutritionally balanced products

Products other than seasonings that can be consumed as-is, by adding water, by heating, or through other simple preparation (e.g., soups, beverages, frozen foods, instant noodles). Calculate the number of meals served per year based on the annual sales volume and weight per serving, etc., for products with HSR rank 3.5 or above among the products covered.

Contribute by reducing salt in seasonings

This category covers low-sodium type sauces and seasonings, as well as sauces and seasonings that have been reformulated since fiscal 2020. We calculate the annual amount of salt reduction based on a salt reduction ratio and annual sales volume. Then we use this number to represent the number of servings contributed, converted into the equivalent number of servings providing a one gram reduction in salt per serving.

Contribute to sugar reduction through sweeteners

We calculate the annual amount of sugar reduction for our main sweeteners based on the annual volume and the level of sweetness. We convert this value to the number of people benefiting from sugar reduction based on the WHO sugar intake guidelines.

Number of unique users of recipe websites

Websites that provide recipe information as primary content. We count the number of unique users per year across the entire Ajinomoto Group.

Number of social implementation initiatives based on the ecosystem approach

The number of initiatives across the Ajinomoto Group related to nutrition improvement that meet certain requirements (continuity, increased impact through collaboration with local governments, academia, etc.)

Availability of products utilizing the physiological and nutritional functions of amino acids

The number of opportunities for use per year related to foods and supplements containing amino acids based on annual sales volume, using fiscal 2020 as the base figure.

> Nutrition > III. Targets and KPIs

Specific initiatives for six key approaches based on Nutrition Without Compromise (Ajinomoto Group approach to nutrition)

Framework / Performance

The Ajinomoto Group defines six key approaches to Nutrition Without Compromise: (1) Delicious salt reduction; (2) Protein intake optimization; (3) Delicious sugar and fat reduction; (4) Vegetables and fruits intake promotion; (5) Protein intake promotion from a variety of sources; and (6) Workforce nutrition improvement. We aim to achieve the new targets and KPIs for nutrition, through the pursuit of these six key approaches.

Delicious Salt Reduction

The Ajinomoto Group aims to help extend the healthy life expectancy of one billion people by 2030. One of our key initiatives is to respond to excessive salt intake, a nutritional challenge globally. The Group works with various stakeholders to promote "delicious salt reduction" using “AminoScience” as we use various media to encourage customers to reduce their salt intake.

> Delicious Salt Reduction

■ Smart Salt® Project initiatives

In July 2020, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. launched the Smart Salt® Project to address the issue of excessive salt intake among the Japanese population. We work with government agencies, universities, and other companies to encourage the use of umami and dashi (broth) to practice "delicious salt reduction" among people of all ages. We also work to leverage our strengths in the Smart Salt® Project in Japan to engage in activities overseas that encourage delicious salt reduction. We market numerous salt-reduction products across the world, utilizing owned media and advertisements during new product launches to raise awareness of the importance of salt-reduction diets and propose salt-reduction recipes. Furthermore, we collaborate with KOL and outside organizations to hold study sessions and lectures on salt reduction and continue to raise awareness on delicious salt reduction among consumers in various countries.

In fiscal 2025, the Ajinomoto Group created and distributed 30,000 booklets to 500 locations across Japan to support dietitians in providing nutritional guidance. We also developed reduced-salt recipes tailored to the taste preferences and salt-reduction needs of pregnant women and parents with young children.

> Products That Help Delicious Salt Reduction (Japanese only)
> Smart Salt® Recipe Site | Ajinomoto Park (Japanese only)

■ Overseas initiatives (Thailand)

In Thailand, we launched RosDee® Less Sodium, a low-sodium version of RosDee®, in March 2021 in response to growing demand for low-sodium products among health-conscious consumers. This product contains 50% less sodium than the regular RosDee® product while delivering a rich, flavorful taste and appeals to middle-aged and older consumers who are conscious of their health and sodium intake. We renewed product packaging for RosDee® Less Sodium and stepped up online communications with consumers in November 2025 to better appeal to the target consumer segment. Consumer awareness has increased year by year through our continued efforts to communicate the benefits of sodium reduction, reaching 48% as of the end of fiscal 2025.

■ Overseas initiatives (U.S.)

Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America, Inc. is expanding its Salt Answer™ line for the commercial market in North America. Studies show that Americans consume 50% more sodium than recommended, with nearly 70% of intake coming from packaged and restaurant foods. Salt Answer™ reduces sodium content by up to 30% without compromising taste and flavor. Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America develops customized products for use in various applications, including soups, snacks, and dressings. The company will continue to expand its portfolio of low-sodium solutions globally while addressing the specific needs of the North American market.

> Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America

■ Quantifying salt reduction using umami

The Ajinomoto Group collaborated with academic institutions on the U20 Healthy Umami Research Project, aiming to pursue our proposal of using umami for delicious salt reduction. This project is a study to estimate the extent to which umami can reduce salt intake at the national level. Using research data for countries with different food cultures derived from Japan, the U.S., and the U.K., the U20 Healthy Umami Research Project found that an additional 13% to 22% of delicious salt reduction is possible per day in processed foods. Using this knowledge, we plan on engaging in activities to raise awareness and spread the value of delicious salt reduction through umami.

> Nature Forum Reducing Salt in Our Diets

Protein intake optimization

Protein is an important nutrient that not only provides the body with raw materials, but also regulates body functions in a variety of ways. Dietary protein is digested and converted to amino acids, which are absorbed and used to synthesize the proteins the body needs. However, certain amino acids that make up protein cannot be

synthesized by the body, making it important to ensure that protein is obtained from the diet.

The Ajinomoto Group strives to increase protein intake by enhancing the flavor of protein-rich meals with seasonings, offering soups and other products that provide convenient sources of protein, while supplying amino acids that improve the quality of the protein consumed. We also share recipe information on our website and social media.

■ Developing technology to evaluate the nutritional value of protein

Recently, in the interest of sustainability and reducing environmental impact, it has become increasingly important to consume protein from a variety of sources, not just from animals but plants as well. However, plant protein is generally known to be less digestible and absorbable than animal protein. Developing precise technologies to evaluate and improve digestibility is crucial to increasing the nutritional value of plant protein.

In 2013, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) proposed a new indicator, the Digestible Indispensable Amino Acid Score (DIAAS). This indicator can more accurately assess the nutritional value of protein (protein quality) by taking into account the balance of essential amino acids absorbed from food and the digestibility and absorption rates of protein. Under these circumstances, the Ajinomoto Group focuses not only on the quantity of protein but also on quality and digestibility. We are also engaged in research to evaluate and improve DIAAS levels through the utilization of amino acids and food processing technologies. We gave an oral presentation at the 8th International Conference on Food Digestion (Portugal) on the results of our research into rapid and precise DIAAS prediction technology that accounts for changes in digestibility due to food processing and cooking processes. The results were also accepted for publication in the journal *Current Research in Biotechnology*. We also introduced a digestibility test method using artificial intestinal fluid (INFOGEST protocol) and are conducting nutritional epidemiology research focusing on DIAAS in a socially cooperative course with the University of Tokyo.

Through these efforts, we advance further research and development to expand the value of highly digestible proteins worldwide. Going forward, we will develop our products and provide services to contribute to people around the world at higher levels, encouraging the consumption of needed nutrients from a variety of food sources and fostering healthy and nutritious dietary habits in consideration of the global environment.

> Development of in silico prediction model for standardized ileal digestibility of amino acids from protein sources

■ Developing products that provide easy access to high-quality protein (Japan)

The importance of protein has become a focus amid increasing health consciousness in recent years. While protein is an important nutrient that makes up the body, including muscles, organs, and skin, it is not easy to consume the necessary amount of protein in one's diet. As a result, demand is rising for foods and beverages that provide easy access to protein, and the market is growing year by year. Over the six-year period from 2018 to 2024, the market for protein and high-protein products grew by approximately 250%.

In response to these market trends, Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc. launched the Delicious Protein From Meals series in 2025. In June, the company launched its first product, one-kilogram sized bags of protein-packed pork gyoza and pork shumai. In February 2026, one-kilogram sized bags of protein-packed fried chicken thighs were added to the lineup. All of these products have been developed to provide a rich protein intake through the convenience of frozen food, without compromising on satisfying and delicious taste.

Delicious Sugar and Fat Reduction

The Ajinomoto Group is focusing on developing alternative sweeteners and kokumi substances, and improving the taste of our products and those of our business customers with enhanced ingredients and formulation technologies.

■ Sugar reduction (Thailand)

Market research shows a growing demand for less sweet and sugar-free products in Thailand stemming from increased health awareness. In response to these needs, Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd. launched Birdy® 3in1 Rich Blend, the first sugar-free powdered milk coffee in the Thai coffee market, in 2023. This launch was followed by Birdy® Robusta Zero, the first sugar-free canned milk coffee, in 2024, and Birdy® Espresso Zero, a sugar-free canned milk coffee with a moderate bitterness, in 2025. Sales of the sugar-free series, along with Birdy® Black Zero, the existing sugar-free black coffee, grew to 130% in fiscal 2025 year on year, outpacing the market. Ajinomoto Thailand strives to combine rich flavor with health benefits to help Thai consumers reduce sugar intake.

■ Controlling sugar absorption (Japan)

Markets for products that suppress sugar absorption are expanding in Japan. This trend reflects growing concerns about excessive sugar intake, even with white rice, a staple food in the country, resulting in more consumers turning to brown rice, reduced-sugar rice, and other alternatives. Internal research shows that consumers are dissatisfied with these substitutes. Common concerns include inferior taste and texture compared to white rice, the added effort of cooking them separately for certain family members, and reduced flexibility when the entire household must eat the same rice regardless of dietary needs. In response to these concerns, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. launched Hakumai Dozo in March 2024 as Japan's first rice cooker seasoning that helps prepare white rice with a gentler sugar absorption profile.

Hakumai Dozo uses a patented proprietary technology developed through over 30 years of enzyme research. Adding

Hakumai Dozo when cooking rice modifies the starch structure to slow down digestion, allowing white rice to be prepared with a glycemic index (GI)[1] comparable to that of brown rice. A survey of 1,000 dietitians found that 97% of respondents believe Hakumai Dozo helps support the dietary management of individuals who need to monitor their sugar intake. According to internal research, customer feedback indicates that consumers appreciate being able to manage their health without making special adjustments to family meals, and they report no noticeable difference in the taste or texture of the rice.

Consumers have responded positively to the innovative ability of Hakumai Dozo to maintain the taste and texture of white rice while moderating sugar absorption, and demand has continued to grow since launch.

[1] Glycemic Index (GI): An indicator of how easily the sugar in a food is digested and absorbed by the body.

■ Fat reduction (Thailand)

In Southeast Asia, where fried foods are widely consumed, the Ajinomoto Group produces and sells seasoning for fried foods that reduces oil absorption, as more people look for ways to enjoy these dishes while maintaining their health.

Thailand: Launched in August 2024

Encouraging vegetable and fruit intake

■ The Love Vege project

The Ajinomoto Group uses seasonings and frozen foods to promote behavioral change and overcome the social issue of insufficient intake of vegetables.

For example, our product packaging displays recipes that encourage consumers to eat more vegetables and fruits.

In Japan, we promote the Love Vege project to encourage vegetable intake as a way to support the recommendation by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare to consume at least 350 grams of vegetables per day. We launched this project in 2015 at the Nagoya branch to encourage people to eat more vegetables in Aichi Prefecture, which ranked lowest in vegetable intake in Japan. We began expanding the project nationwide in 2020, establishing 14 ecosystems nationwide in 2025 in collaboration with various parties in industry, government, academia, and other sectors. Here, we developed recipe booklets unique to each region that include menus using locally produced vegetables to increase vegetable consumption. Booklets are distributed through the produce sections at mass retailers to raise awareness. Furthermore, we hold in-store events that use vegetable consumption measurement devices and promote interest in vegetables and natural eating habits for vegetables among children and young adults through our website and social media. The Ajinomoto Group collaborated with the six prefectures, three ordinance-designated cities, and three distribution companies in the Kinki[1] region to implement awareness activities at supermarkets as part of our fiscal 2025 initiatives. These activities included distributing Love Vege® menu booklets, hosting vegetable quizzes, and using vegetable intake measurement devices in June 2025. In March 2026, the Ajinomoto Group held a vegetable harvesting and cooking event in collaboration with Nagasaki Prefecture, local organizations, and retailers. The Ajinomoto Group will continue to collaborate with our partners to develop Love Vege activities in various contexts and work together with the community to solve nutritional issues.

[1] Osaka Prefecture, Osaka City, Hyogo Prefecture, Kobe City, Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Shiga Prefecture, Nara Prefecture, Wakayama Prefecture.

Love Vege in-store event

Love Vege event (vegetable harvest and cooking) in collaboration with Nagasaki Prefecture

Protein intake promotion from a variety of sources

Amid concerns over the growing demand for animal protein and the increasing environmental burden caused by population growth and dietary changes, the Ajinomoto Group pursues the use of diverse protein sources, including protein derived from plants and microorganisms. For example, we are developing products that utilize vegetable protein, including Knorr® Beans and Vegetables with Potage series by Ajinomoto Co., Inc. and the Delicious Protein From Meals series by Ajinomoto Frozen Foods Co., Inc.

We have also invested in v2 Food, an Australian company developing the next generation of sustainable food products using plant-based proteins. By combining the technology and expertise of v2 Food with Ajinomoto Group *Deliciousness Technology* and global business foundation, we pursue development and distribution of food products that have a low environmental impact.

Through these initiatives, we seek sustainable and diverse foods, together with solutions to global nutrition and environmental issues.

Workforce nutrition improvement

The Ajinomoto Group believes that employee health is one of our most important foundations. We are focused on improving employee nutrition in the workplace and nutrition literacy.

■ Workforce Nutrition Alliance

In March 2022, the Ajinomoto Group became the first Japanese company to join the Workforce Nutrition Alliance (WNA). This organization was launched by the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF),

an international organization that brings together consumer goods retailers and manufacturers, and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), an international nutrition improvement NGO, to promote workforce nutrition improvement. To date, a total of 17 Group companies[1] in Japan and overseas have conducted self-assessments based on company-specific guidelines on Group assessment criteria. Each of these companies conducts nutritional improvements in the workplace with regard to four important points (healthy food at work, nutrition education, nutrition-focused health checks, and breastfeeding support) through the self-assessments, applying the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle and collaborating with Ajinomoto Co., Inc.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. supports efforts to improve workforce nutrition by suggesting countermeasures for shared issues identified from the self-assessment results of the Group companies and the Ajinomoto Group Engagement survey (the category of Health and Well-being), as well as by providing each company with the Group's best practices, tools developed by the WNA, and examples of initiatives by WNA membership companies.

[1] The 14 companies at the time of joining the WNA were Ajinomoto Co., Inc., Ajinomoto AGF, Inc., Ajinomoto Food Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Ajinomoto Fine-Techno Co., Inc., Ajinomoto Frozen Foods, Co., Inc., Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd., AJINOMOTO SALES (THAILAND) COMPANY LIMITED, PT Ajinomoto Indonesia, P.T. AJINOMOTO SALES INDONESIA, Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd., Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America, Inc., Ajinomoto Foods North America, Inc., Ajinomoto do Brasil Indústria e Comércio de Alimentos Ltda., S.A. Ajinomoto OmniChem N.V., and three companies (Ajinomoto del Perú S.A., AJINOMOTO POLAND Sp. z.o.o., and Agro2Agri, S.L.,), resulting in a total of 17 companies and approximately 70% of the Group's total employees.

> WNA CASE STUDY BOOKLET
> Nutrition Without Compromise: The Ajinomoto Group Case Study
> Progress Report of Ajinomoto Group's Commitment to Workforce Nutrition - The Consumer Goods Forum
> Nutrition Without Compromise: The Ajinomoto Group Case Study - The Consumer Goods Forum

■ Initiatives to support breastfeeding (Vietnam, Belgium)

Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd., encourages all female employees to engage in the company breastfeeding support program. The company provides nursing employees with private spaces and designated break times for breastfeeding or pumping. The company has also offered special training under the Mother & Children Project since fiscal 2021 to support the health and well-being of pregnant and nursing mothers and mothers with children under five. In fiscal 2024, the program began incorporating guidance based on WHO breastfeeding guidelines.

S.A. Ajinomoto OmniChem N.V. enhanced company policies from a DE&I perspective by extending the legally mandated maternity leave period, allowing employees to take up to six months of childcare leave in total. Company employees also formed a working group to improve nursing room facilities and raise internal awareness.

■ Joyful Workplace initiative (Thailand)

Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd., works to create a joyful workplace through a range of initiatives, including programs aligned with the pillars advocated by the Workforce Nutrition Alliance (WNA): Healthy food at work, nutrition education, nutrition-focused health checks, and breastfeeding support.

Specifically, the company supports physical and mental health management through the use of the i-LiveWell app[2], health checkups, nutrition education, and the provision of healthy menus at workplaces. In fiscal 2025, Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd., provided opportunities for all employees to support healthy weight management and promote better overall health care and well-being through the New You Better You Project, while also supporting mental health through the Clear Mind Better You Project, including on-site mental health and other workshops, programs for daily stress management, mindfulness, exercise, and professional counseling.

[2] An app that helps users set health goals

■ Supporting employee health through Dietary Balance Check Program

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. developed Dietary Balance Check Program as part of our employee wellness efforts. This program supports healthier habits through self-monitoring of diet and physical activity. Dietary Balance Check Program consists of three main elements: providing model meals (Otehon Shokuji) with good nutritional balance, enabling users to record their meals in an app by checking recommended food groups they have consumed, and offering feedback based on the recorded data. Otehon Shokuji is a menu we designed featuring meals that include items from 10 recommended food groups. We designed this menu based on the public Guidelines for the Management of Obesity Disease and the Guidelines for Prevention of Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Diseases. The menu also incorporates Aete[3], our frozen ready-made meal combining rice and side dishes, which includes the aforementioned ten food groups. Dietary Balance Check Program brings together these three components to increase employee interest in nutrition, build understanding of improving health through food choices, and encourage improvements to daily habits.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is a member of the Health and Productivity Management Alliance[4]. As a member, we recognize key challenges facing Japanese industry, including improving employee health, ensuring the financial stability of health insurance unions, and controlling medical costs. We view Health Management not only as a way to enhance productivity and manage healthcare expenses but also as a core part of human capital management that values employees as key assets. The Ajinomoto Group considers the health of group employees and their families to be one of the most important management foundations, developing measures to improve workplace nutrition and maintain and improve self-care. Against this backdrop, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. developed Dietary Balance Check Program to support diverse work styles and raise employee awareness of poor dietary habits caused by irregular hours and increased dining out. We see behavioral changes among employees as essential to improving lifestyle habits and consider employee health as a key element in strengthening human capital.

We will enhance our health management efforts by positioning Dietary Balance Check Program as a behavior change program that supports the well-being of employees with diverse work styles.

Going forward, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. will leverage this program to deliver food and health solutions. We will also support the Health and Productivity Management Alliance and other companies committed to health-focused management to help people lead healthier, more comfortable lives.

Frozen stock rice Aete

[3] A complete meal of mixed rice topped with side dishes served in a frozen stock lunch box. Meals provide one-third of the daily recommended intake of Vegetables, salt equivalents, and dietary fiber (based on the Nutrition Labeling Standards (for adults, 2,200 kcal) and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Health Japan 21 goal of 350 grams of vegetables per day). Meals can be stored in the freezer and heated in the microwave in just six minutes, making it easy to enjoy delicious, well-balanced meals even on busy days.

[4] The Health and Productivity Management Alliance is managed by nine representative organizers committed to strengthening employee health as a way to revitalize Japanese businesses and ensure sustainable health insurance. Participating companies and organizations amounted to 525 as of April 30, 2026. These entities identify data-driven issues, implement solutions, and evaluate various measures through collaborative health care with companies and health insurers. The alliance aims to co-create solutions that shape health management and create results for cross-industry implementation.

■ Initiatives to improve nutritional literacy (nutrition education)

The Ajinomoto Group began engaging in initiatives to improve nutritional literacy in fiscal 2020. We began expanding nutrition education through e-learning and other means to the entire Group in fiscal 2021. By the end of fiscal 2025, a total of 155,000 employees had participated in the training, achieving our target of reaching 100,000 employees by fiscal 2025 one year ahead of schedule. Fiscal 2023–2025 Engagement Survey results showed improved scores not only in nutrition education and workplace nutrition improvement initiatives but also in contributions to healthy lifestyles. Starting in fiscal 2025, in addition to nutrition education that supports self-care, the Ajinomoto Group has launched learning initiatives that encourage employees to understand societal nutrition challenges and contribute to addressing them through their work and actions.

Main initiatives in fiscal 2025

- Began providing learning opportunities focused on societal nutrition issues and sustainable agrifood systems, encouraging employees to take action toward addressing these challenges in all domestic and overseas Group companies
- Began providing regular nutrition and health information to support self-care
- Shared best practices from two companies (AJINOMOTO POLAND Sp. z.o.o., S.A. Ajinomoto OmniChem N.V.) with the entire Group.
- Held a joint meeting with the Latin America Division (Ajinomoto do Brasil Indústria e Comércio de Alimentos Ltda., Ajinomoto del Perú S.A., Ajinomoto DE MEXICO, SOCIEDAD DE R. LTD. DE C.V.) and ASEAN Division (Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd., P.T.AJINOMOTO INDONESIA, Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd.) to advance initiatives and collaborations aligned with the Workforce Nutrition Alliance, an international initiative for employee nutrition.

Efforts to scientifically evaluate approaches to nutrition

The Ajinomoto Group pursues efforts to scientifically and quantitatively assess how our approach to nutrition through our business activities impacts human health.

Through this initiative, we visualize how the Group's businesses contribute to the extension of healthy life expectancy and more clearly demonstrate our value.

■ Use of nutrient profiling systems (NPS)

The Ajinomoto Group began operating the Ajinomoto Group Nutrient Profiling System for Products (ANPS-Product) in 2020 as a Group-wide basic tool. This system evaluates the amount of nutrients in a product using science and improves nutrition through new product development and product revisions. ANPS-Product is based on HSR.

As of March 2026, the system has been introduced in 16 Group companies in 13 countries, evaluating the nutritional value of close to 1,000 products. However, ANPS-Product and conventional NPS faced limitations in assessing seasonings and other products that are normally not eaten on their own as a self-standing food item. In response, we began developing an NPS to evaluate the nutritional value of dishes prepared with seasonings and other such products. We launched ANPS-Dish in December 2021 as the world's first NPS to take Japan's food culture and health issues into consideration, making it possible to assess the nutritional value of dishes prepared with seasoning products. We also developed ANPS-Meal, a NPS for meal assessments, to evaluate the nutritional value of actual Japanese meals, which are typically based on the ichiju-sansai (one soup, three dishes) structure. In May 2025, the results of the ANPS-Meal study were published in *Frontiers in Nutrition*, an international academic journal in the field of nutrition.

Conventional NPS systems were developed mainly for overnutrition in Europe and the U.S., preventing direct use of these systems in Asian regions, which face different nutritional challenges (e.g., undernutrition) and food cultures. Recognizing the need to develop an NPS suitable for local regions, the Group is first reaching out to academia and governments in the ASEAN region.

For example, sugar intake in Thailand is estimated to be about four times the WHO's recommended level, while salt intake in the country is approximately 1.6 times higher. To help address this issue, Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd. worked with the Institute of Nutrition at Mahidol University, a leading institution in nutrition research in Thailand, and the Thai Dietetic Association to develop a Nutrient Profiling System for Thai meal (NPS-M). In fiscal 2025, the company presented NPS-M at the Thailand Congress of Nutrition 2025: TCN2025, discussing how it helps reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). People in the ASEAN region often eat food prepared at home or at street stalls, resulting in a high level of interest in assessing the nutritional value of dishes to improve nutrition not seen in Europe and the U.S. In response, Ajinomoto Co., (Thailand) Ltd. introduced the Better Meal Campaign for food providers, including restaurants, to provide menu items along with NPS-M evaluations. The company also published printed and electronic versions of a collection of recipes suggesting healthy menu items. The development of an application that can automatically calculate nutrients is also underway to help more people

use NPS.

The Ajinomoto Group will continue to collaborate with academia to provide society with products and services that help make eating nutritionally balanced meals easier for consumers. In addition, the company plans to develop ANPS-Dish and ANPS-Meal in accordance with the food culture of each country, aiming to expand globally.

■ Scientific and quantitative research demonstrating the health value of protein intake optimization

The Ajinomoto Group continues research to scientifically and quantitatively evaluate the health value of protein intake optimization and visualize in an easy-to-understand manner how the Group's businesses can contribute to extending healthy life expectancies and solving social issues.

The research focuses on Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs), a global indicator that quantitatively assesses health losses due to illness, disability, and death. DALYs is a single measure of how much time spent in good health is lost, and is the index used by WHO and other international organizations.

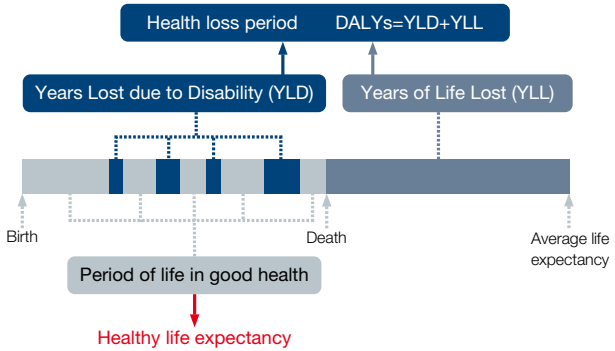
The Ajinomoto Group has statistically analyzed the relationship between nutritional intake and DALYs using official Japanese statistics and international databases. We have examined the effects of dietary changes, such as salt reduction using umami and improved vegetable intake on DALYs. In recent years, we have also studied the relationship between protein and amino acid intake and DALYs, publishing our findings in academic papers.

The results of these studies suggest that adequate protein and amino acid intake, as well as protein quality, contribute to maintaining and extending healthy life expectancy. For example, both analyses focusing on health loss due to Alzheimer's disease, as well as overall health losses not limited to specific diseases, have shown that protein and specific amino acid intake may be associated with reduced DALYs.

We will continue to apply the knowledge gained through research to product and business development, seeking dialogue with investors, customers, and other stakeholders.

> Analysis of the Association between Protein Intake and Disability-Adjusted Life Year Rates for Alzheimer's Disease in Japanese Aged over 60
> Associations of dietary protein and amino acid intakes with disability-adjusted life years for Alzheimer's disease in Japanese people
> Association of dietary protein and amino acid intakes with all-cause disability-adjusted life years: cross-sectional analysis of the national health and nutrition survey in Japan

Relationship between healthy life expectancy and DALYs



Initiatives to resolve nutritional issues

Results

The Ajinomoto Group aims to deepen our understanding of global nutritional issues through participation in international conferences and dialogue with leaders around the world. We also aim to help resolve nutritional issues by actively sharing our knowledge and expertise. We also aim to address nutritional challenges through global collaboration by offering delicious foods tailored to the dietary habits and preferences of each country and region. Our efforts here include providing highly nutritional foods that meet the diverse values of each individual regarding lifestyles and food and providing nutritious meals at schools and hospitals as part of our emphasis on a holistic approach to health.

■ Initiatives at CGF Japan HL

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. is a member of the Collaboration for Healthier Lives (HL), a CGF coalition of action and an international trade association for consumer goods. As co-chair of CGF Japan HL, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. works with like-minded companies to lead specific activities to solve health issues in Japan. In our efforts to reduce salt intake, we continue to uphold our agreement with Chiba City and are working together to spread awareness about salt reduction. Our initiatives for healthy aging help deepen knowledge in consumers about preventing frailty, helping them improve their own and their family members' dietary habits, especially through optimized protein intake.

■ Seminars for nutritionists and dietitians

The Ajinomoto Group has conducted the on-demand Food and Health Seminar in Japan for over 20 years. The seminar consists of overviews of Ajinomoto Group initiatives and expert presentations for registered dietitians and licensed nutritionists who support consumer health through food. The seminar aims to build trust with nutrition professionals, expand awareness and increase the fan base for our products and services, and foster partnerships that help advance Ajinomoto Group Creating Shared Value (ASV).

The fiscal 2025 seminar focused on sleep, attracting approximately 1,400 viewers. The practical content on the relationship between sleep and nutrition and behavior change motivated viewers to apply the program to their own work. A post-seminar survey indicated that about 90% of respondents said the content was useful, and around 80% expressed expectations for Ajinomoto Group initiatives to solve food and health issues.

We will continue raising awareness of the importance of salt reduction and balanced diets by sharing information with key opinion leaders—including dietitians and registered dietitians—and strengthening relationships with them, contributing to the extension of healthy life expectancy.

■ Co-creating healthy food environments through industry-academia-government collaboration

The Ajinomoto Group works with various stakeholders aiming to create societies where healthy food is available to all. In Japan, we pursue initiatives through collaborations among industry, academia, and government.

In 2025, Ajinomoto Co., Inc., in collaboration with the Graduate School of the International University of Health and Welfare and Meiji Co., Ltd., established an industry–academia collaborative program to identify evidence-based approaches to healthy eating and nutrition that reflect Japan's food culture and health challenges. The collaboration also aims to translate the findings into practical applications in society. In this program, we contribute to the development of scientific evidence in line with Japan's nutritional challenges and food culture. In 2026, we also began to train personnel through systematic lectures and research guidance in nutritional epidemiology and public nutrition.

In addition, as part of a collaboration with government, the company participates in the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Strategic Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment. In 2021, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare held an industry-academia-government study group on promoting the creation of a naturally healthy and sustainable food environment. This group was tasked with identifying nutrition issues that Japan needs to address and discussing how to solve them in the public and private sectors. Results from these discussions were included in the Japanese government's commitment at the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021. Here, creating a food environment refers to the interrelated development of both access to food (ingredients, food preparation, and meals) and access to information so that people can enjoy healthier diets. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. participates in this initiative as a business entity, engaging in activities toward creating better food environments. The company also participates in the National Institute of Health and Nutrition's Joint Industry–Academia–Government Research Project to Promote the Development of Healthier Food Environments, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' Sustainable Food System Platform. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. will continue efforts through industry-academia-government collaboration to improve the food environment—a task that is difficult to achieve as an individual company.

> Graduate School of the International University of Health and Welfare "Food, Nutrition and Health" Social Collaboration Course
> Strategic Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment (HSFE)

■ Addressing maternal and child nutrition (Vietnam)

In December 2020, Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. launched the Mothers & Children Project with the Ministry of Health of Vietnam to improve the nutrition of mothers and children. The company rolls this project out nationwide.

As a part of the project, the company developed project software that provides nutritionally balanced recipes, containing more than 1,300 dishes for mothers and more than 700 dishes for children. The nutritionally balanced recipes were developed based on the nutritional standards of the National Institute of Nutrition–Ministry of Health. We deployed the project software through a nationwide medical and healthcare network, the Vietnam Women's Union, online and offline communications activities, and the media, and provided training to health officials and mothers. The software is also equipped with functions that include a dietary habit checking tool and a quick health monitoring tool. As of March 2026, the Mothers & Children Project expanded to a total of 34 provinces and cities[1], with approximately 2.2 million mothers and health officials using the software. Looking ahead, we will continue to support the improvement of maternal and child nutrition in Vietnam.

[1] On July 1, 2025, Vietnam's administrative divisions were reorganized from 63 provinces and cities to 34 provinces and cities.

■ Addressing nutritional issues in childhood and adolescence through school meals (Vietnam)

Many children in Vietnam suffer from stunted growth or low body weight, especially in rural areas. At the same time, a growing number of children in urban areas are overweight or obese. Ajinomoto Vietnam Co., Ltd. launched the School Meal Project in 2012 in collaboration with central government ministries, including the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Health. Together, the company engages in various activities to deploy the project nationwide to provide nutritionally balanced menu development software, food nutrition education materials, and model kitchens for primary boarding schools. As of March 2026, School Meal Project activities have expanded across 34 provinces/cities and 4,460 primary boarding schools.

Perceived well-being through the joy of cooking and sharing meals

Performance

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. worked with the U.K.'s University of Oxford to conduct additional research based on findings from the global survey *Wellbeing Through Cooking*, conducted by Gallup, Inc., a U.S. research firm. This research has deepened understanding of the relationship between cooking enjoyment, sharing meals and well-being. Our findings appear in the food-related chapter, introduced for the first time in the *World Happiness Report 2025*, published in March 2025. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. also launched a partnership in April 2025 with the OECD Centre on Well-Being, Inclusion, Sustainability and Equal Opportunity (WISE). These efforts, together with our research and existing academic studies, show that cooking and sharing meals help strengthen social connections. Ajinomoto Co., Inc. works to further raise global awareness of the role of cooking and sharing meals in supporting well-being. Through collaboration with companies participating in the Japan Well-being Initiative*, we aim to encourage the inclusion of food-related measures in well-being indices and surveys around the world.

Ajinomoto Foods North America, Inc. launched the Well-Being Effect campaign in November 2025, drawing on insights from the *World Happiness Report 2025*. The campaign reflects the company's purpose of making every meal a happy experience and aims to facilitate 10 million shared-meal experiences over the next five years across dining tables, lunch gatherings, community spaces, cultural celebrations, and other settings. The campaign creates opportunities for people to come together and share meals through shareable foods, including Japanese-style gyoza. As participants share those experiences on social media, the campaign helps expand the well-being benefits of sharing meals.

We will continue to deepen our understanding of how food contributes to well-being, expand products that contribute to well-being, and foster human connections through the joy of cooking and sharing meals. Through these efforts, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. aims to create a more positive impact on society.

* Established by Nikkei Inc. and the Well-being for Planet Earth Foundation with the aim of advancing well-being management and advocating globally for well-being indicators that complement traditional measures of economic growth, such as GDP.

Survey Result Excerpts

Those who enjoy cooking and sharing meals experience a stronger sense of well-being

● Cooking Enjoyment and Subjective Well-being

People who said they enjoyed cooking in the past seven days were 1.2 times more likely to thrive than people who did not enjoy cooking or had not cooked during that time.

[Cooking enjoyment and subjective well-being]

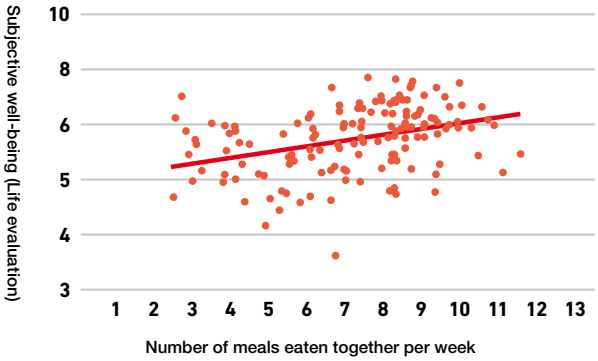
(When the feeling of well-being of people who did not enjoy cooking/did not cook is set to 1)

Source: Wellbeing Through Cooking

● Correlation Between Sharing Meals and Thriving

Survey results found that, around the world, people who share meals more frequently are more likely to report higher levels of subjective well-being.

[Correlation between sharing meals and thriving]



Source: World Happiness Report 2025

> Wellbeing Through Cooking
> World Happiness Report 2025
> Promoting Social Connectedness Through Food

Evolution of treatment and prevention

Medical foods for fulfilling special nutritional needs

Performance

The Ajinomoto Group leverages expertise in "AminoScience" to improve quality of life by balancing medical nutritional requirements with good taste. Ajinomoto Cambrooke, Inc. develops and manufactures medical foods to meet the particular and advanced nutritional needs related to diseases including disorders of amino acid metabolism. The company markets its products in approximately 27 countries worldwide, mainly in North America and Europe. Nualtra Ltd. develops oral nutritional supplements (ONS) for people who are unable to obtain adequate nutrition from their normal diet due to illness or aging. The company also develops foods to replace entire meals to help treat type 2 diabetes (TDR) and special powdered foods (Dysphagia Powder) for patients who have difficulty swallowing. The company markets these products in the UK and Ireland. Approximately 40% of cancer patients are estimated to be malnourished. Cancer cachexia, which is characterized by a loss of skeletal muscle mass, has been reported in 50% to 80% of patients with advanced cancer. Cancer cachexia is difficult to improve through nutritional therapy alone and is known to cause loss of appetite, weight loss, fatigue, and anemia. Cancer cachexia can also reduce treatment tolerance, hinder treatment continuation, and impair immune function. The Ajinomoto Group expands and markets a range of medical foods to support the treatment of these patients and contribute to their health and well-being.

Nualtra is also developing products not only for traditional patients, but also for a wider range of conditions, including allergies, stunted growth, and liver disease. The company also works to improve the quality of life of more patients by emphasizing not only recovery and improved health through nutritional support, but also the enjoyment of every bite of food and a better quality of daily life.

The company launched its first pediatric food products, Altrini®, in the United Kingdom in 2025. In addition to product quality, the company contributes to brighter, more positive daily lives for children through appealing package designs and games featuring product characters. Incidentally, Nualtra has been the fastest-growing medical food company in the UK and Ireland medical food market for nine consecutive years.

The Ajinomoto Group continues to offer innovative solutions and better value to healthcare professionals, and a better medical nutrition experience for patients. These offerings help us co-create social and economic value.

* Source: *Nutritional Challenges for Cancer Patients*, Nualtra

> Malnutrition in Ireland

Altrini® pediatric food product

Making regenerative medicine[1] a reality

Commercial cell culture media[2] for regenerative medicine

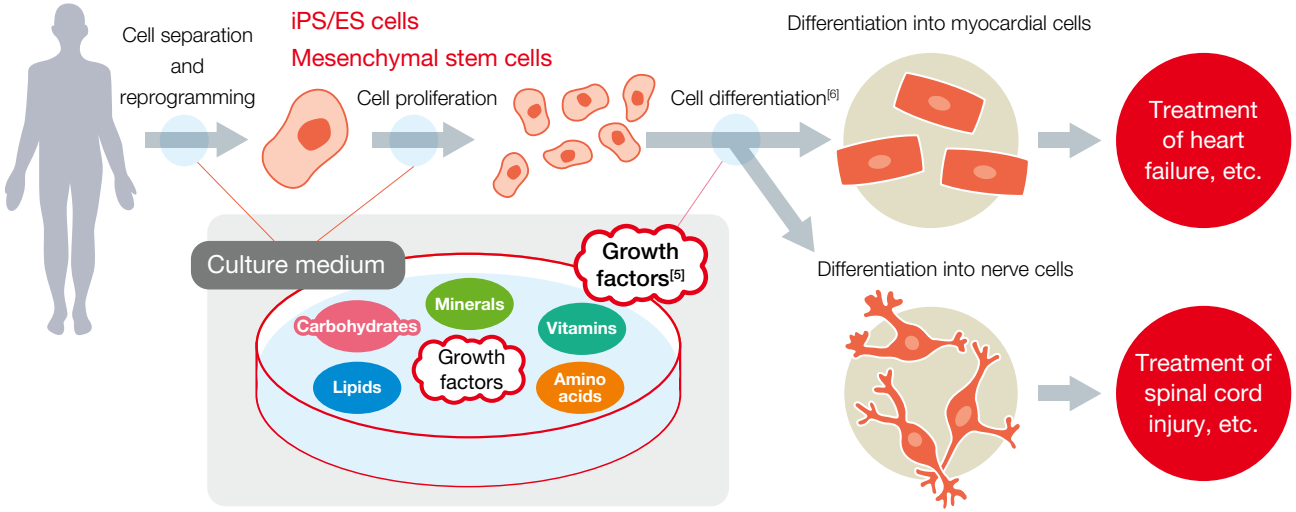
Results

Today, scientists around the world are researching regenerative medicine as a curative therapy for solving problems in organ transplantation. The Ajinomoto Group supplies pharmaceutical-grade amino acids, which are a key ingredient in cell culture media. In 2014, the Group developed an iPS[3]/ES[4] cell culture medium composed exclusively of chemically defined, animal-origin-free medium, and began launching related products beginning in 2016.

At present, several academic institutions and pharmaceutical companies are using our StemFit® cell culture media in initiatives spanning regenerative medicine research and development, clinical trials, and ultimately commercialization and implementation in society. For example, our StemFit® cell culture media are increasingly being adopted in certain manufacturing processes and clinical development programs, including regenerative cardiac therapies using iPS cells.

We will enhance our presence in the field of regenerative medicine in Japan by utilizing our high-quality amino acids, expertise in amino acids, fermentation technology, formulation technology, and other advantages. We will also aim to expand our business in cell culture media for regenerative medicine in North America and other regions overseas, contributing to the early realization of innovative therapies.

Role of cell culture media in regenerative medicine



[1] Medical treatment of dysfunctional, non-functional or defective tissues. Artificially reproduced functional cells or tissues are transplanted to regenerate tissue and replicate function.
[2] A nutrient solution that contains a balanced mixture of amino acids, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, minerals and growth factors required for cell growth.
[3] Induced pluripotent stem cells generated from human body cells by adding several types of factors. These stem cells exhibit pluripotency (ability to differentiate into various tissues and organs) and an almost limitless capacity for proliferation.
[4] Embryonic stem cells created using inner cell mass from human blastocysts. These cells exhibit the ability to differentiate into various human tissues and organs.
[5] Proteins that promote the proliferation and differentiation of specific cells in human and animal bodies.
[6] The conversion of iPS/ES cells into cells of different tissues and organs that make up the body.

Accelerating growth of gene therapy

Results

In December 2023, the Ajinomoto Group made Forge Biologics ("Forge"), a U.S.-based gene therapy CDMO[7], a wholly owned subsidiary to evolve the Group business model in the healthcare field. We are now working to build a robust platform in advanced medical care by combining our respective strengths in technology development.

[7] Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization

Forge Biologics

Forge Biologics is a gene therapy CDMO founded in 2020 that specializes in the development and manufacturing of AAV vector-based gene therapies. Backed by experienced specialists, the company has a strong track record of regulatory compliance through good manufacturing practice (GMP) manufacturing of gene therapy products for clinical use and extensive experience across dozens of customer programs.

Next-generation gene therapy

In our medium-term ASV initiatives 2030 Roadmap, the Ajinomoto Group has set four growth areas that leverage the strengths of "AminoScience," one of which is the Healthcare area. In this area, in addition to steady growth in existing businesses such as amino acid and small molecule pharmaceutical CDMO, the Group expects accelerated growth from businesses such as oligo nucleotide/biopharmaceutical CDMO, regenerative medicine/antibody cell culture media, and medical food. On the other hand, we set gene therapy CDMOs as one of our next-generation strategic businesses as a stepping stone toward the growth of cutting-edge modalities from a longer-term perspective.

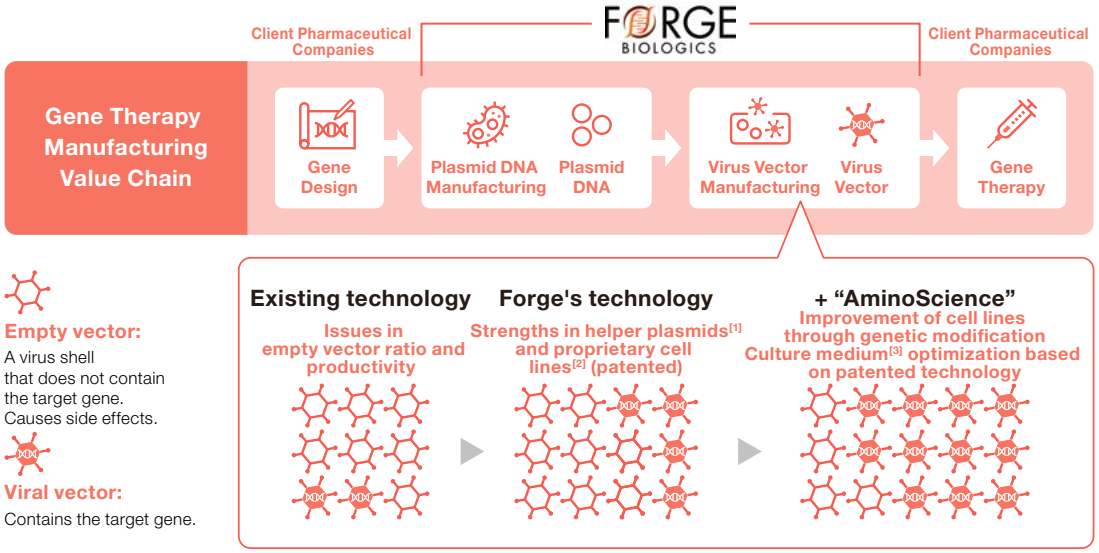
Genetic disorders are caused by faulty genes that prevent the body from producing proteins with the necessary functions. Gene therapy addresses these conditions by repairing or supplementing the genes within cells to correct the underlying genetic defects. Adeno-associated virus (AAV) vectors commonly serve as carriers (viral vectors) to introduce genes designed and manufactured to produce necessary proteins into target cells in the body. Gene therapies primarily target hereditary diseases difficult to treat adequately with existing therapies and offer the potential for long-term benefits from a single treatment. Development of AAV vector-based therapies has focused primarily on treating rare diseases. More than 100 clinical trials are currently underway, primarily in the U.S., and nine new drugs have already been approved. The CDMO market for gene therapy drugs is likely to expand due to the application of gene therapies beyond rare diseases, an increase in the number of clinical trials, and the resulting increase in the number of approved drugs. Pharmaceutical needs in gene therapy are also likely to continue growing. AAV vector manufacturing also requires advanced process design technologies and manufacturing expertise, rigorous quality control, regulatory science expertise, and dedicated manufacturing facilities.

As a result, this market offers opportunities for technological differentiation, and the Ajinomoto Group aims to establish a distinct and competitive position in this next-generation gene therapy field.

Building a strong platform through the evolution of "AminoScience"

The Ajinomoto Group works closely with Forge to develop cell culture media optimized for Forge platform technologies and advance research and development in AAV manufacturing.

Forge is a gene therapy CDMO with an integrated gene therapy manufacturing value chain and proprietary technology for producing high-purity, high-yield AAV vectors. Forge has already produced products in accordance with GMP for the clinical trials of a number of biotech companies. By building up a solid manufacturing track record, the company has grown and expanded rapidly over the past few years and is expected to continue to grow in the future. Forge also operates one of the world's largest manufacturing facilities capable of commercial-scale production and has secured additional space within the facility for future expansion, with plans to further expand manufacturing capacity as its business grows.

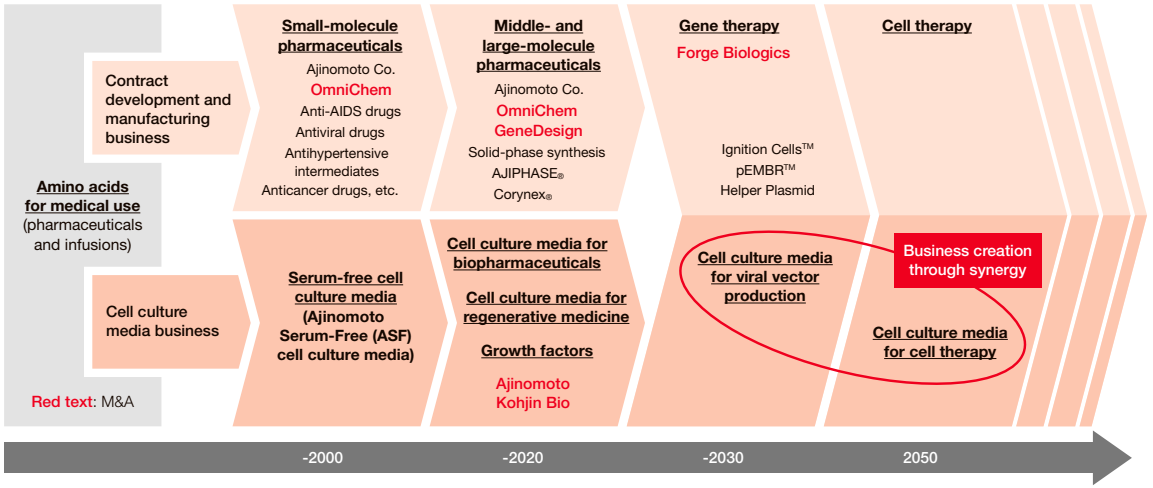


[1] DNA of a protein which is required to encapsulate a gene of interest into the virus shell.
[2] Special cells that are used to introduce the DNA (plasmid) of a gene of interest and a helper plasmid to produce a viral vector.
[3] Source of nutrients required to grow cells and produce a viral vector.

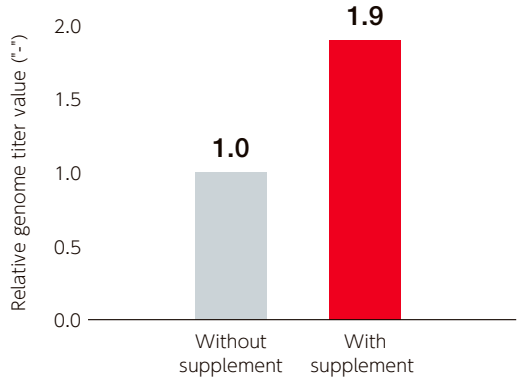
Establishing a value chain for cell therapy

The Ajinomoto Group possesses a strong technological foundation in the CDMO field, along with advanced formulation optimization and manufacturing expertise gained through years of cell culture media development. We generate significant synergies by combining these strengths with Forge expertise in AAV manufacturing and their proprietary platform technologies. We are also developing Ancillary Materials[1], including media optimized for specific cell types and media supplements that improve AAV vector production, as part of our efforts to build a global biopharma platform that includes Forge. Through these efforts, we are committed to further strengthening the foundation supporting the entire manufacturing value chain for cell and gene therapies.

[1] While not final therapeutic products themselves, these related materials support the research, development, and manufacturing of advanced medical treatments, including culture media, reagents, and purification materials. These materials play an important role in ensuring manufacturing quality and consistency.



Effect of supplement addition



Disseminating information on MSG safety and benefits

Activities to promote a correct understanding of MSG

Strategy

The Ajinomoto Group was the first company in the world to commercialize glutamic acid as a seasoning. Glutamic acid (a type of amino acid) is an ingredient in *umami* taste, and we have globally publicized its benefits. Monosodium glutamate (MSG), which is also known as umami seasoning, not only improves flavor but also reduces salt intake, helps simplify meal preparation, and reduces the cost of meals at schools and other facilities. These benefits generate various forms of value. Yet misconceptions persist among consumers that MSG is artificial and unhealthy. Food packaging with labeling indicating that a product has no added flavor enhancers or contains no MSG has been one of the factors behind this misunderstanding; however, the Consumer Affairs Agency in Japan has improved the situation with the formulation of the *Guideline on Non-use Labeling of Food Additives*.

However, misleading information continues to appear in expressions outside food packaging and across digital platforms. In an era when anyone can easily share information, fostering an accurate understanding of MSG remains a challenge.

With the aim of dispelling these misconceptions about MSG, the Group actively uses the internet and other channels to explain how MSG is produced and disseminate information about MSG based on scientific facts. We also communicate the broader social value of MSG, including its role in reducing sodium intake and improving nutrition by supporting adequate food consumption. The Group will continue to expand our contribution to sustainable food systems and health through the power of umami.

> P038

Umami and MSG promotions in the United States

The Umami Project, launched in 2018, has broadened the conversation around MSG in the U.S. What began as an effort to correct misconceptions has evolved into a broader discussion about MSG's place in contemporary culture, particularly among Generation Z, as well as the seasoning's value as a practical tool for improving public health. Studies in the food products industry show that the use of "No MSG" labels in the U.S. market declined by nearly 50% between 2018 and 2025. Outreach to mainstream media and the Know MSG communications on social media have helped reshape perceptions of MSG from an additive to avoid to an ingredient that enhances flavor and supports "delicious salt reduction."

Ajinomoto Group efforts extend beyond corporate and product communications to help shape the future of food culture in the U.S.

> Know MSG

Other communication activities

■ Japan

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. disseminates information utilizing science-based knowledge on food and amino acids to professionals working with food and in health. In fiscal 2025, we served low sodium boxed meals prepared with reduced sodium and umami seasonings at a luncheon seminar held during the 72nd Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Nutrition and Dietetics. Participants compared conventionally seasoned meals with low sodium alternatives and experienced firsthand how umami can help reduce sodium without compromising taste.

Our website Ajicollab provides information on "delicious salt reduction," which is a way of using umami seasoning to reduce salt in food without compromising taste; information on increasing the amount of food consumed by senior citizens who are cutting back on their salt intake; nutrition education programs; reports from seminars at various academic conferences, and more.

For consumers, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. has submitted a commitment to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment Initiative and continues to advance related activities. In fiscal 2025, Ajinomoto Co., Inc. published reduced-sodium recipes developed by popular food influencers on our website. These recipes were designed to be appealing and inspire consumers to choose reduced-sodium options and to help them put "delicious salt reduction" into practice using umami seasonings. The influencers explained sodium-reduction tips in their own words, providing information that consumers could easily understand and apply in their daily lives.

Ajinomoto Co., Inc. also shares information about umami through direct engagement with consumers, including factory tours and classroom outreach programs delivered by employees to elementary school students across Japan.

We participated in the 10th *Let's Use Umami Seasoning! Local Cuisine Cooking Contest*, held in 2025 by the Umami Manufacturers Association of Japan, of which we are a member. Through this initiative, we helped foster registered dietitians who can effectively use umami seasonings to put "delicious salt reduction" into practice and supported the transfer of culinary traditions to younger generations by showing how umami seasonings can make cooking easier.

> Ajicollab (Japanese only)

■ Thailand

The Ajinomoto Group supports the Thai Network for Sensory Science for Better Well-Being (SSBW), a network that aims to enhance well-being across society by sharing sensory science* expertise in Thailand and throughout ASEAN and by fostering healthier and more sustainable food environments. SSBW is the first organization in Thailand dedicated to exploring the relationship between food and well-being and helping people better understand the value of that relationship. The Ajinomoto Group participates in the network to help deepen understanding of the value that *umami* and *koku* bring to food. Since its establishment in April 2024, SSBW has hosted *Truth of Japan Taste* in Bangkok. The Truth of Japan Taste is an event that introduces participants to Japanese *dashi* culture and the appeal of Japanese taste. The event combines scientific lectures with tasting experiences to help participants deepen their understanding of *umami* and *koku*, the key elements behind flavorful Japanese cuisine, through both knowledge and firsthand experience. In fiscal 2025, the Ajinomoto Group also supported an international symposium organized by SSBW and information-sharing initiatives through Chulalongkorn University's website. Through these activities, we help broaden understanding of the value of well-being through food across local communities, contributing to a more sustainable future for food and health.

* A field of study that scientifically examines how people perceive and evaluate food through taste, aroma, texture, and other sensory experiences.