

Special Topic 2

# To Provide Safer Food

## Taking Into Account Opinions Given by Food Safety Advisors



With the philosophy of “providing products that your loved ones want to eat,” the JT Group is strengthening safety control measures to manufacture and provide safe and reliable food products. As part of these measures, the food safety advisors, which consists of outside experts, holds regular meetings to review and discuss JT’s approaches to food safety. In fact, the advisors toured and inspected the group’s factories and customer service centers in 2008 and 2009, coming up with many suggestions.

### Factories and Customer Service Centers Inspected

**Sunburg Co., Ltd. (Ibaraki), July 2008**

- Hamburger and bakery production lines

**Hokkaido Katokichi Co. Ltd. (Hokkaido), September 2008**

- Croquette and frozen noodle production lines

**The Niigata Uonuma Factory of TableMark Co., Ltd. (Niigata), December 2008**

- Wheat noodle and packaged rice production lines

**TableMark Co., Ltd. Customer Service Center (Tokyo), February 2009**

- Processed food customer service center

**The Chuo Factory, the Yamamoto Factory and the Shikoku Quality Control Center of TableMark Co., Ltd. (Kagawa), August 2009**

- Frozen noodle and rice production lines and the inspection department of the center

Weihai Weidongri Comprehensive Foodstuff Co., Ltd., Weihai JK Foods Co., Ltd., Qingdao Aska Food Co., Ltd., Qingdao Katokichi Foods Co., Ltd., contract farms and the China Quality Control Center (Qindao, China), September 2009

- Frozen processed food production lines of the JT Group companies in China, contract farms and inspection divisions

TableMark Co., Ltd. the Food Development Center, the Tokyo Quality Control Center (Tokyo), December 2009

- R&D and inspection divisions



### Approaches to Reducing Risks

#### Opinions put forward

**Food defense**

Approaches to food hygiene and food defense should be defined and categorized. A sense of responsibility among staff members, meanwhile, is a key to improving food defense (Advisor Morita).

**Strengthening inspection systems**

The focus should be on raw material and process control rather than on lot inspections to assure the quality of finished products. At the same time, it is recommended that inspections be based on appropriate risk information (Advisor Isshiki).

#### JT’s response

**Food defense**

Food defense programs are in place at all factories (including contract factories) and major warehouses, with focus on the software as well as the hardware aspects of the practice. They are all based on activities designed to require each employee to understand and be committed to food defense.

**Strengthening inspection systems**

While efforts are underway to further strengthen the basis of manufacturing, simultaneously classifying risk information to establish inspection systems based on a scientific basis.

### Improving Customer Services

#### Opinions put forward

**Taking into account consumers’ opinions on products and services**

It is imperative that the Customer Service Center briefs the management on the consumers’ opinions it gathers. At the same time, all divisions concerned should work together to reflect them in products and quality improvement (Advisor Hiwasa).

**Addressing risk management**

Those who first receive risk information should disseminate it throughout the organization without fail (Advisor Morita).

**Offering factory tours**

While factory tours provide consumers with a sense of trust, it is recommended that the details of quality control be summarized for visitors (Advisor Hiwasa).

#### JT’s response

**Taking into account consumers’ opinions on products and services**

The Customer Service Center regularly communicates consumers’ opinions to the management and all divisions concerned, while they are taken into account in improving products and services.

**Addressing risk management**

The Risk Management Guidelines for Food Safety Control are in place along with procedures for reporting and analyzing health hazards. Measures are also in progress to keep all relevant employees informed about the guidelines to establish foolproof procedures for communicating the very first report to management.

**Offering factory tours**

New factories such as the Niigata Uonuma Factory 2 will be equipped with tour facilities for the convenience of visitors.

### Strengthening Safety Control and Its System

#### Opinions put forward

**Training employees**

As employee training is a key to food safety, it’s very important to step up training of incoming employees, helping them understand critical points in each process and developing an awareness of food safety. It is therefore recommended that workshops be held to help them develop a consumer-oriented mindset, if it takes certain time (shared opinion).

#### JT’s response

**Training employees**

Efforts are underway to promote the JT Group Way among employees, while programs such as “Food Safety Week” and “compliance training” are in place to help employees develop an awareness of food safety. Such food safety training programs will be further improved.

### Food safety advisors



**Kunio Morita**  
Executive Director  
Japanese Association of Fermented Milks and Fermented Milk Drinks



**Kenji Isshiki**  
Professor  
Laboratory of Marine Biosafety Science and Technology  
Graduate School of Fishery Sciences  
Hokkaido University



**Nobuko Hiwasa**  
Outside Director  
MEGMILK SNOWBRAND Co., Ltd.  
Member of the Consumer Commission of the Cabinet Office  
Director, the Yokohama Consumer’s Association

#### With the opinions in mind

We called in three food safety advisors in 2008, which have toured and inspected the JT Group’s factories in Japan and China as well as quality control divisions. They provide objective opinions on our approaches to food safety, while pointing out major challenges to be addressed. We take all these inputs seriously to further improve our food safety control system so that we will continue to be valued by consumers.

**Minoru Oyama**  
Executive Director  
TableMark Co., Ltd.

