

Chikaranomoto and ENEOS Signed MOU to Upcycle Waste Cooking Oil for Sustainable Aviation Fuel Production



Chikaranomoto Holdings (Head Office: Chuo-ku, Fukuoka; President: Tomoyuki Yamane) and ENEOS Corporation (Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; President: Atsuharu Yamaguchi) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to utilize waste cooking oil as a raw material for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) production.

A streamlined process will be introduced to collect waste cooking oil from the restaurants, including the brands of “Ippudo”, “Inaba Udon”, and “Sobakura”, as well as from food factories. Both the restaurants and factories are managed by Chikaranomoto Company Co., Ltd and Watanabe Seimen Co., Ltd, wholly owned subsidiaries of Chikaranomoto Holdings. The collected waste cooking oil will then be recycled into SAF. Specifically, the waste oil will be used as a raw material at the SAF production plant being developed at ENEOS’ Wakayama Production Center in Arita City, Wakayama, which has a capacity of 400,000 kiloliters/year.

Meeting the Demands for SAF

SAF stands for Sustainable Aviation Fuel, which is produced from sources such as waste cooking oil, sugarcane, municipal waste, and waste plastic, unlike conventional jet fuel that is refined from crude oil. It is estimated that CO₂ emissions can be reduced by approximately 60-80% in SAF production compared to conventional jet fuel production. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) announced a target of no increase in total CO₂ emissions from international aviation after 2020, and aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. In Japan, a target has been set to replace 10% of the fuel used by the domestic aviation industry with SAF by 2030, which is equivalent to an estimated demand of 1.71 million kiloliters. The development and production of domestic SAF are being actively promoted.

Source: Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry; International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Flow from Waste Cooking Oil Collection to SAF Production

Waste cooking oil refers to used cooking oil after deep-frying or other cooking processes. In Japan, approximately 500,000 tons of waste cooking oils are discharged from food factories, restaurants, supermarkets, convenience stores, and households in the period from April 2021 to March 2022. While some of the waste cooking oil is recycled for animal feeds and other uses, some is disposed of or exported without being utilized domestically. Globally, SAF production utilizing such waste cooking oil is underway, and such efforts are expanding in Japan as well.

Source: UCO Japan

CSR Initiatives of Chikaranomoto

- Using rice produced through eco-friendly agriculture

Ippudo uses rice produced through eco-friendly agriculture, and uses pesticide-free and organic vegetables at selected restaurants. In eco-friendly agriculture, the amount of pesticides used is minimized through crop rotation, the use of organic materials, and by harnessing the power of nature itself. The vegetables are cultivated with consideration for not contaminating the soils or nearby oceans. Organic farming uses fertilizers that do not burden nature and eventually return to nature. By sourcing ingredients from farmers and agricultural cooperatives that use sustainable methods, we aim to ensure food safety and security while also promoting environmental conservation.



▲北海道の大自然の中で化学肥料を最小限に抑えながら生産している

- Waste and food loss reduction

At select restaurants, we have implemented eco-friendly chopsticks that are sanitized and reused, reducing waste by over 5 tons annually. Additionally, we make efforts to minimize food waste by initiatives such as sourcing ingredients packaged to have longer expiration dates, developing recipes using edge parts of chashu not used for toppings, and optimizing food portions by measuring leftovers.

About Chikaranomoto Holdings

The company is engaged in various food-related businesses, including operating restaurants in Japan and overseas, such as the ramen chain “Ippudo”, providing food development consultations, and managing food factories. Currently, the group operates a total of 287 restaurants (145 in Japan as at end-March 2024, and 142 overseas as at end-December 2023). The brand of Ippudo was founded in 1985 in Daimyo, Fukuoka, and currently operates in 15 countries and regions worldwide. It is popular for its tonkotsu (pork bone) ramen, which features a smooth, fragrant tonkotsu soup with thin, crispy noodles. The company has also been involved in food education activities, such as the “Child Kitchen”, hands-on cooking classes that convey gastronomic joy to children, and the participation in “Kodomo Shokudo” around Japan. The company is actively working towards the realization of a sustainable society, for example by developing 100% plant-derived ramen with a low environmental impact.

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Year of Establishment : 1986

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