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Meiji Holdings Co., Ltd.

February 9, 2024

Immediate release

Meiji Announces Additional Investment in California Cultured, Inc.
-Building a Sustainable Value Chain-

Meiji Holdings Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director, CEO: Kazuo Kawamura) is pleased to announce it has decided to invest in the cocoa cell culture startup California Cultured Inc. (Main Office: California, USA; CEO: Alan Perlstein). This represents our second investment in the company following our original investment in November 2021.

The Meiji Group cocoa business is shifting to a focus on high value-added cocoa and accelerating its global expansion.
Our R&D is boldly embracing the challenge of developing new cocoa products as we aim to become a global cocoa-tech company capable of skillfully manipulating cocoa.
We contribute to the health of the global population by providing unique, sustainability-friendly cocoa products for both the consumer and commercial markets.

Many cocoa farmers are unable to secure sufficient income as tree deterioration, pest infestation, difficulty obtaining agricultural materials, and a lack of knowledge related to cultivation technology have led to declining harvests.
In certain countries and regions, the industry also faces social issues such as child labor and deforestation, creating concerns about the depletion of cocoa resources.
To resolve these issues, since 2006 the Meiji Group has conducted Meiji Cocoa Support, our original program for supporting cocoa farmers.
Through this program, we directly visit producer sites and collaborate with various partners to provide technological support to improve cocoa bean quality while working to improve the lives of farmers and on the conservation and restoration of local environments.
Since 2022, we have started “Possibilities of Cocoa” project as part of our new endeavor to apply Meiji’s knowledge and experience towards increasing the added value of cocoa without causing additional burden on cocoa farmers.

This additional investment in California Cultured Inc. will serve to strengthen the co-creation efforts combining the advanced cell culture technology of California Cultured Inc. and the unique technology and knowledge of the Meiji Group.
Through our collaborations with California Cultured Inc., we are aiming to establish cocoa cell cultivation technology and build a sustainable cocoa value chain that resolves social issues and eliminates uncertainty in the supply of raw materials.
By developing unique products that use cell culture cocoa as a raw material, we will advance efforts to transform our cocoa business into a high value-added business.

The Meiji Group will always contribute to the creation and development of innovative technologies in the food production field to help build a more sustainable society.

World's first cell culture confection chocolate bar

Cacao Cells growing soon to be turned into chocolate

Company Overview

Company name:	California Cultured Inc.
Representative:	Alan Perlstein
Business domains:	Making a sustainable and ethical chocolate with their cell-culture technology
URL:	https://www.cacultured.com/

Reference

・Notice concerning Investment in US cocoa cell culture startup
https://www.meiji.com/global/news/2021/pdf/211118_01.pdf

・Meiji Cacao Support
https://www.meiji.com/global/sustainability/sustainable-sourcing.html#sourcing-cocoa

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