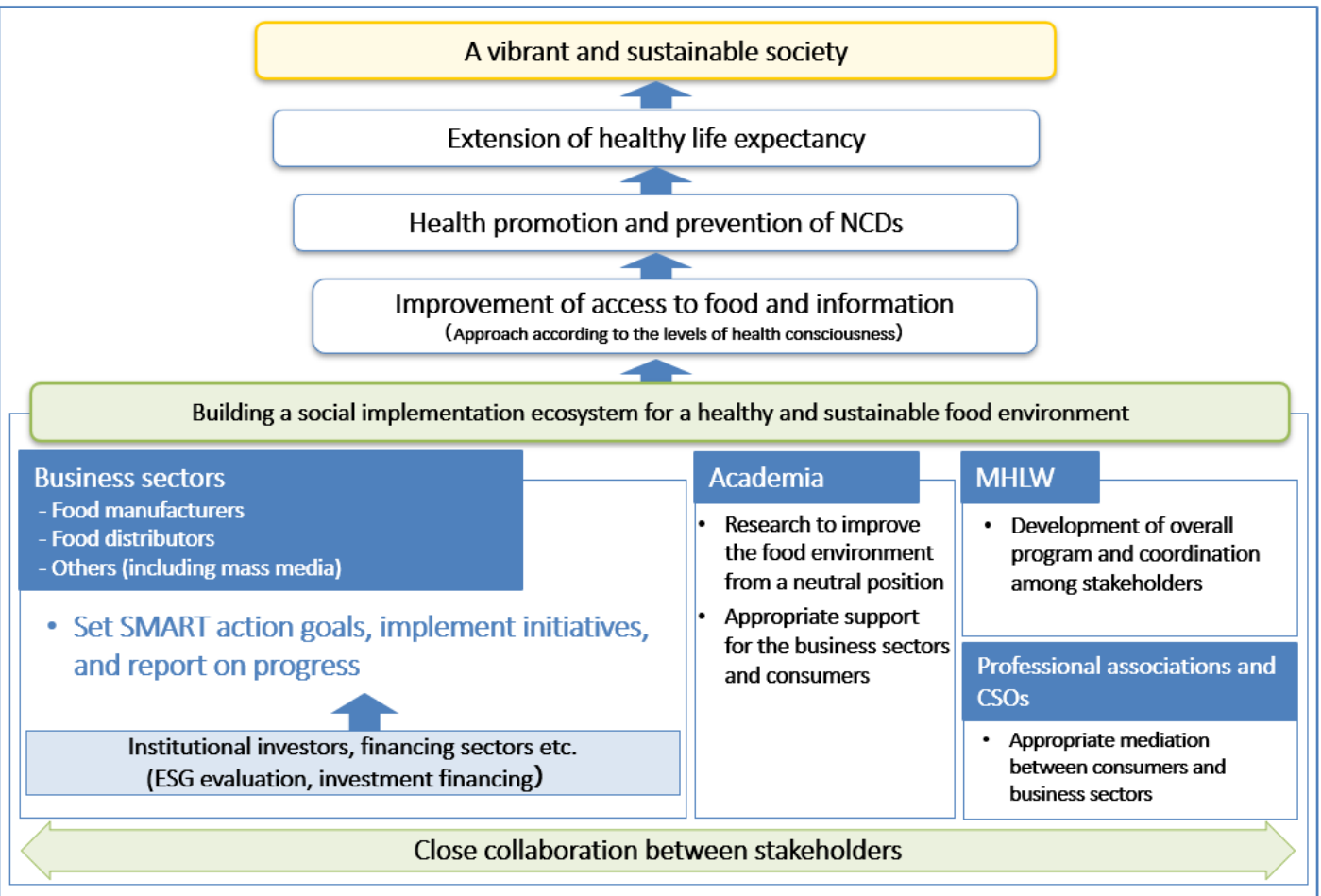


Introduction to the Strategic Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment and Its Activities in FY2023

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Government of Japan (As of March 2024)

- Based on the Expert Committee^{*1} Report (released in June 2021) and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (held in December 2021), the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) launched the “Strategic Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment” in March 2022 as a system to promote the creation of a food environment through collaboration between industry^{*2}, academia, government, professional associations, and civil society.
 - *1 Committee for the promotion of a sustainable food environment in which everyone can be naturally healthy
 - *2 The term "industry" encompasses a wide variety of industries, including food manufacturers, food distributors, media, etc.
- The Initiative recognizes nutritional issues such as “**excess sodium intake,**” “**underweight among young women,**” and “**nutritional disparities caused by economic conditions**” as well as “**environmental issues**” as critical social issues.
- Participating businesses set SMART^{*3} style action goals^{*4} and develop a food environment that is naturally healthy for everyone through multisectoral collaboration and cooperation. The goal is to extend the healthy life expectancy and realize a vibrant and sustainable society for people in Japan and around the world.
 - *3 Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound
 - *4 Each participating business is at least required to set an action goal that contributes to the improvement of "excess sodium intake."

Strategic Initiative for a Healthy and Sustainable Food Environment



Details of Initiative and Expansion of Participating Businesses

Various new activities were carried out, including activities toward the start of participation by prefectures and other local governments from FY2024 (development and provision of support tools for local governments, studies for the Food Environment Alliance (tentative name), etc.), and preparation of educational materials and workshops promoting low-sodium intake for children. A summary of the initiative was also introduced in a WHO report published in September 2023.

The number of participating businesses increased to 38, coupled with facilitation for diversifying the industries of participating businesses, including food service-related businesses that provide take-out food and manufacturers of additives, as well as food manufacturers, food distributors, and the media.

Activities in FY2023

Exchange meetings among participating businesses, study sessions, and subcommittee meetings by volunteers were held, with the view to gradually developing the initiative.

The main activities are as follows:

Steering Committee

Held three times a year (June, October, February)

The Steering Committee comprises representatives of participating businesses, academics, SDG/ESG professionals, dietitians, civil society organizations, and others, as a body that examines and decides on policies for the initiative as a whole.

This year, the committee examined the annual report, labeling and advocacy related to the initiative's overall evaluation and action goals.

Subcommittee for Promoting Action Goals

Held two times a year (September, February)

The Subcommittee for Promoting Action Goals comprises academics, SDG/ESG professionals, dietitians, civil society organizations, and others, and is responsible for supporting the PDCA process in regard to SMART-style action goals for each participating business (making recommendations on the setting and progress status of action goals). Following on from last fiscal year, the subcommittee exchanged opinions with participating businesses and made constructive proposals regarding the setting of action goals.

Annual Plenary Meeting

Held once a year (December)

Annual Plenary Meeting is open to participation by the public in addition to those involved in the initiative (participating businesses and expert committee members). The results of the initiative (including positive cases related to the action goals of participating businesses) are to be shared and disseminated.

This year, lectures by academics and case studies by participating businesses were presented, drawing a total of approximately 300 participants, including businesses interested in participating in the initiative and the promotion of healthy food environments, local government officials, financial officials, and the media.

Study Sessions and Exchange Programs

In the Initiative, exchange meetings have been held among participating businesses to showcase examples of their efforts and to strengthen cooperation among participating businesses. In addition, to support participating businesses setting ambitious and effective action goals, individual consultations as well as meetings to exchange opinions with academics and SDG/ESG professionals, dietitians, and civil society have also been held. Furthermore, from this year, a subcommittee of experts and participating businesses will be held as a forum for analyzing bottlenecks for the spread of low-sodium intake behavior and examining pathways for promoting such actions.

The events held this fiscal year are as follows:

- Exchange meeting for participating businesses (June)
- Subcommittee Meetings (July, December, February)
- Special Seminars (exchange of opinions with ESG professionals) (February)
- Opinion Exchange Meeting and Exchange Meeting among Participating Businesses, Academics, and Other Related Parties (February)



Scene from Subcommittee Meeting

Participating businesses (in alphabetical order): 38 businesses *As of March 2024

•Participation in FY2021

ASAHIMATSU FOODS CO.,LTD., Ajinomoto Co., Inc., KAMEDA SEIKA CO.,LTD., Kikkoman Corporation, Kewpie Corporation, PUBLISHER KENGAKUSHA CO.,LTD., Pasco Shikishima Corporation, Nichirei Corporation, NISSIN FOODS HOLDINGS CO., LTD., Houken Corporation Healthup 21 Editorial Department, Mirutasu(Meal-plus) Corporation, Meiji Co., Ltd.

•Participation in FY2022

S&B FOODS INC., every, Inc., Oishi kenko Inc. Ocean Blue Bird Corporation, KOKUSAI SHOGYO Publishing Corp., SHIDAX CONTRACT FOOD SERVICE CORPORATION, DANONE INSTITUTE OF JAPAN FOUNDATION, NIPPON CORPORATION, Japan Airlines Co., Ltd., Maruha Nichiro Corporation, Maruyanagi Foods Inc., Muen.com Corporation, Locoguide Inc., Lawson, Inc.

•Participation in FY2023

Sunplaza co.,Ltd., SENIOR LIFE CREATE, ZENSHO HOLDINGS CO., LTD., Takohachi.Co.Ltd., Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union, JAPAN MEDICAL HERB ASSOCIATION (JAMHA), House Foods Group Inc., First Screening Co., Ltd., BASE FOOD Inc., Nutrition Association For Mother and Child, MARUTO CO., LTD., MORINAGA MILK INDUSTRY CO.,LTD.

