

Bakery Equipment Manufacturers

Rheon Automatic Machinery Co. Ltd.

With food production/processing systems developed in-house, Rheon is Japan's top food-processing machinery manufacturer. It is one of the few companies in the industry actively engaged overseas and has U.S. subsidiaries that run plants in California and West Germany. Rheon also has a strong interest in penetrating the Canadian market and is currently expanding its production capability and considering construction of a research lab in Italy.

Rheon maintains a pilot store on the first floor of its Tokyo office building, along with bakery product test facilities and a product showroom on the upper floors.

For the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989, sales increased 19 per cent over the previous year to ¥15 713 million, while net profits declined 9 per cent to ¥1 175 million. Facilities investment stood at ¥3 121 million.

As of September 1989, Rheon's estimated market shares were as follows: food processing machinery 42 per cent; food factory flexible manufacturing 8 per cent; food factory automation 26 per cent; repairs and others 11 per cent; and commodities 13 per cent. The export-to-sales ratio was 20 per cent.

Major shareholders include Torahiko Hayashi (8.4 per cent), Futaba Kikaku (6.8 per cent) and Rum Shoji (6 per cent).

Kitchen Equipment Manufacturers/Suppliers

Kitazawa Sangyo Co. Ltd.

With annual sales approaching ¥15 500 million (1987), Kitazawa is Japan's leading supplier of kitchen equipment systems for industrial and institutional applications. Established in 1951, the company is currently capitalized at ¥1 320 million. As of July 1988, it employed 528 workers.

Kitazawa has a nationwide network that spans more than 68 cities. Over the years, it has supplied kitchen equipment and systems to such major businesses as the Seibu, Tokyu and Odakyu department stores, Red Lobster and Denny's restaurants, Nisshin Flour Milling, Snow Brand, and Yamazaki Baking, as well as to schools and public/government institutions.

In addition to its own line of equipment, the company handles imported products from Hobart (U.S.) and Pazner (West Germany).

Food Suppliers

JC Foods

Founded in November 1964, JC Foods is a major food service industry supplier of cheese and pizza ingredients and also handles imported food items such as Sara Lee cakes and pastries from the U.S. and spaghetti noodles from Italy. The company has expanded sales to include pizza delivery chains — Domino's Pizza being one of their most prominent customers.

Trading Companies

Okura & Co. Ltd.

A medium-scale trading company, Okura was founded in 1873. The company, which specializes in steel products and machinery, including industrial plants, machine tools and aircraft, is expanding its operations to other sectors such as food processing machinery, foodstuffs and franchising.

For the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989, sales rose 17 per cent over the previous year to ¥409 750 million, while profits rose 885 per cent to ¥637 million.

As of September 1989, Okura's market shares were estimated as follows: machinery and construction 32 per cent; metals 41 per cent; commodities 9 per cent; chemicals 3 per cent; and foodstuffs 15 per cent.

Major shareholders include Okura Enterprises (15.2 per cent), Chiyoda Life Insurance (7.8 per cent) and Nippi Inc. (5 per cent).

Nissho Iwai

The nucleus of the Sanwa Bank group, Nissho Iwai is the sixth largest Japanese trading company. It was founded in 1968 as a result of the merger between Nissho and Iwai Sangyo. Its strength lies in steel products and machinery, including aircraft, ships and rolling stock and foodstuffs. At present, Nissho Iwai is trying to foster ties with Siberia and to develop machinery production facilities in Hungary and Poland through joint ventures.