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Products include:

FORMULA:

Meiji FM-T, Meiji FP-T, Meiji Hohoemi, Meiji Step, Meiji FU, Meiji Soft Curd.

Logos & Icons:

Meiji is one of several companies using its name as a brand name for most of its products.



Cartoon characters are on labels and in ads.



In China, Meiji has added a baby bear to its logo and promotes its products by offering door signs for paediatrician's offices and the like.

With annual sales of 732,368 billion Yen (USD 6.7 billion) in 2002, Meiji founded in 1917, is one of the largest Japanese manufacturers. The company's main business is dairy products, baby foods, and pharmaceuticals. It claims to make unceasing efforts to bring its infant formula "as near as possible to the functions of mother's milk."

Meiji's products include formula, complementary foods, beverages and snacks matched to baby's age. It supplies infant formula mainly in Japan, China, Thailand, Taiwan, Malaysia and Pakistan.

In August 2002, in Japan, the company mislabelled Meiji Step, its follow-on milk, with standard directions for Hohoemi infant formula, causing young babies to suffer diarrhoea and vomiting from consuming the wrong milk for their age. The public outrage reflected in the media resulted in a downturn in sales.

Meiji has engaged in a joint venture in Thailand with the CP Group, and in China it has established a joint venture with a state-run enterprise.

Promotion to the public

▶ Article 5.1 of the Code prohibits advertising and all other forms of promotion of products under the scope of the Code.

- A leaflet about the stages of pregnancy, distributed by Tokyo health authorities, contains an ad for Meiji **Hohoemi**.
- In Thailand Meiji mails free samples of **Meiji FM-T** to mothers.
- Meiji advertises **Meiji Step** for babies nine months and older, in a Japanese magazine, with the heading: 'We want to nurture babies and mothers across nations.'
- The Japanese Hohoemi website catalogue compares **Hohoemi** infant formula with breastmilk ("Getting gentler, getting closer to breastmilk") and promotes **Meiji** baby water for use from 2 months.



Promotion at point-of-sale

► **Article 5.3 of the Code bans promotional devices at the retail level.**

- In China, shelf-talkers in stores promote Meiji FM-T and Meiji FU. ►



VIOLATION



VIOLATION

- Meiji towels are offered as gifts with purchases of Meiji FM-T in a China supermarket. ◀

- Leaflets in shops and midwives' stations in Japan offer gifts to mothers when they purchase Meiji Hohoemi formula and submit a form with their personal particulars, enabling future direct contact. ►



VIOLATION



VIOLATION

- Mothers in Japan can collect stickers with purchases of Meiji's follow-up formulas to exchange for a storybook featuring their baby's name as the hero. A similar scheme is used for other Meiji products also. ◀

Promotion in health facilities

► **WHA Resolution 47.5 (1994) urges an end to free or subsidised donations of products to all parts of the health care system.**

► **Article 6.2 bans the promotion of products within the health care system.**

► **Article 6.3 prohibits the display of products, placards and posters or the distribution of company materials unless requested or approved by government.**

- Meiji gives health facilities in Thailand unsolicited supplies of Meiji FM-T and Meiji FU to pass on to mothers as samples. Meiji takes turns with seven other milk companies supplying formula to some health facilities. Meiji products and items are displayed in nurseries, nurses' stations and maternity wards.

- Company reps give mothers in Thai health facilities gift sets that include a Meiji FM-T sample, baby clothes, mittens and Meiji promotional materials.



VIOLATION



- Gifts such as incubator covers, bags, diaries and calendars with the Meiji logo and brand names are given to health workers in Thailand.



VIOLATION



VIOLATION



VIOLATION



- Meiji FM-T and Meiji FU leaflets are given to mothers outside health facilities in China. They contain promotional images and slogans like: "Brain Gold" and "Clever mum's choice" and "Raise an intelligent baby – Choose Meiji". One leaflet claims Meiji products are "suited to Oriental mothers and babies' nutritional needs". "Breastfeeding is best" is superimposed over Meiji FM-T packshots in all the leaflets in an attempt to disguise the promotion.



VIOLATION



- Mothers in Hong Kong health facilities receive card-shaped advertisements promoting Meiji FU with a drawing of a toddler wearing a graduation cap and packshots with a cute koala bear on the labels. The text says, “Brighter brain and brighter eyes” and promotes DHA as “Brain Gold”.

- Meiji ad in a Japanese magazine boasts about Meiji’s 80 years of study of breastmilk and pledges to continue producing nutritious and safe milk.



- Meiji gives health workers in Thailand mother booklets that recommend exclusive breastfeeding for only three months and complementary foods from four months. They also recommend formula if a mother cannot breastfeed due to work or insufficient or no milk. Text promotes Meiji FM-T and Meiji FU as “...complete formulas with nutritious value for good development of children at every age”.

- At a conference in Thailand, Meiji promotes its products in booths and displays.



- A large 2003 calendar with packshots on every page, leaflets and other materials promoting Meiji FM-T, Meiji FU and Mamilac milk for mothers are commonly on display in clinics and hospitals in Japan.



- A catalogue available at a midwife station in a Tokyo health facility advertises the entire line of Meiji formula, baby foods and several brands of feeding bottles and teats.

- Meiji representatives in Japan give health workers a booklet entitled ‘Maternity Textbook’ to give to mothers. It contains promotional material about Meiji Hohoemi, including a comparison with breastmilk.



- A large poster promoting Meiji FM-T from birth and claiming it is “Almost a Breastmilk” is found in an Egyptian hospital.