



Press release

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Hyakunousha collaborates with leading Japanese Creative Director Mr. Kashiwa Sato to launch new brand - OMUSUBI



(Hong Kong, 11 January, 2022)

Mr. Muneo Nishida, Managing Director,

This is a story that took place a long, long time ago.

This is the birth story of kind-to-people, kind-to-earth, and safe and assuring omusubi.



Hyakunousha's vision is "Creating the agriculture of the next hundred years". Our mission is to pass on the omusubi culture that we inherited, protect agriculture, and support the lives of our customers, farmers, employees, and partners, not only for our generation, but for the next generations to come. It has been about 10 years since we opened our first store in 2011. We have been working with our customers in Hong Kong to spread the omusubi culture throughout the city. Currently, we have more than 100 stores under our group. I believe that Hong Kong is the very first case where Japanese omusubi have become part of people's daily lives and have taken root as a food culture in a foreign place across the sea from Japan. Omusubi was born in Japan and has been nurtured by our predecessors, and today through the launch of our new brand, omusubi is reborn.

◆ What led to the launch of the new brand?

First, it is about our efforts to ensure omusubi is safe and assuring.

A few years ago, I met a female customer at Taikoo MTR station who said to me, "Today I bought omusubi for my 5 and 9 years old. My children have a weak stomach. I always want to make sure that they eat safe and assuring food". Hearing this, I was reminded of the value "safe and assuring" of omusubi. From this experience, we decided to go back to the starting point that omusubi should be kind to people. The Japanese rice used in the omusubi of the new brand will be purchased only from farmers who we really know their faces. We carefully select rice of the highest quality, with minimal use of pesticides and well-managed cultivation and production. By using safe and assuring rice, as a result, the rice of omusubi tastes better.

Secondly, I would like to talk about our environmental efforts.

Recent climate change and extreme weather have a serious impact on our rice farming areas. We decided to go back to the basics, that our omusubi, which are made from rice, a blessing from nature, should also be kind to the environment. For



the new brand, we decided to make a bold switch in product packaging and store design to something more environmentally friendly. In the process of rice cultivation, we have also worked together with the farming area to take more environmentally friendly measures, such as stop using of plastic-coated controlled release fertilizers and reducing the production of methane gas.

Thirdly, the global expansion of omusubi.

We would like to bring the food culture of omusubi to customers all over the world. To do this, we decided to re-evaluate brand name, product names, design, and communication from a global perspective so that everything will be well-accepted everywhere. Omusubi is by nature a food item free from boundaries, regardless of time, place, race, nationality, gender, or age. I believe that we can redefine and reinvest in the omusubi culture born in Japan and develop it into a globally accepted food culture because we are in Hong Kong, a city of diversity.

Safe and assuring, environmental conservation, and global expansion. We decided to launch the new brand with these three keywords. For the launch of our new brand, we were able to bring in a strong partner who shared our vision -- Mr. Kashiwa Sato, the leading creative director in Japan, who oversaw the branding and creative direction of the well-known UNIQLO.

◆ Mr. Kashiwa Sato

Over the past year, we have had a lot of discussions about the new brand. The first thing we decided on was the name of the new brand. As a food culture originating from Japan, sushi is already well known and familiar to people all over the world, but omusubi has yet to reach that level. We decided to name the new brand OMUSUBI itself to express the strong will to inherit the food culture of omusubi that was built by our predecessors and to spread it to the world.



Then came the logo design, which consists of a red triangle icon and the word OMUSUBI in a triangular logotype. The red brand colour expresses "the blessing of nature from the sun", and the warm heart that "omusubi should be kind to people and kind to the earth".

◆ Products and packaging

- Quality of omusubi

We are proud to offer carefully selected Japanese rice of the highest quality that is farmer-designated, pesticide-reduced, and environmentally friendly. The first brand of rice we will use is called "Hitomebore" from Misato Town, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan. Misato Town is located in Osaki Koudo, which was recognized as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Site in 2017 for its traditional water resources management and sustainable paddy field agriculture. Our new brand's website will tell you more details about the farming area and the farmers.

- Omusubi packaging

By using paper for a part of the package, we have reduced the amount of plastic film used.

- Soups

The soups, which we consider to be the best partner for omusubi, are based on the theme of "dashi (soup stock)" made from natural Japanese ingredients and contains plenty of umami (flavour). We are not using any chemical seasonings. Also, the package is made of environmentally friendly paper.



- Drinks

Hojicha, green tea, and coffee are all made in Japan. The package uses aluminium can, which is easily recyclable. The other two juices are made in Hong Kong. The package is made of 100% recycled plastic, except for the cap.

- ◆ Store design

11 January 2022 we opened our first store at ifc mall. The three main materials are white cloth for noren, brass, and white wood. Being environmentally friendly is also one of its features. By using more natural and recyclable materials, we have reduced the amount of plastic used by over 70% compared to our conventional stores of the same scale.

- ◆ Hyakunousha's vision and future plans

Our long-term plan up to 2030 is to open 10,000 stores under the new OMUSUBI brand around the world. Our mid-term plan is to open 2,000 OMUSUBI stores by 2025, mainly in Asia. One of the milestones for the realization of the mid-term plan is the construction of the OMUSUBI Giga Factory. Construction will begin in 2023 in Hong Kong.

Finally, we summarize what can be accomplished by achieving the 2030 long-term plan.

First of all, the maximum annual use of Japanese rice on brown rice basis is 140,000 tons. This accounts for about 2% of the total production of rice as a staple food in Japan. In addition, approximately 50,000 jobs will be directly created by the multi-store expansion. The maximum daily production volume will be 10 million pieces of omusubi. Then, in 2030, we will target to achieve carbon neutrality for the entire group.



Photos:



The new brand name OMUSUBI is to express the strong will to inherit the food culture of omusubi and to spread it to the world. The new brand logo consists of a red triangle icon and the word OMUSUBI in a triangular logotype. The OMUSUBI-shaped icon gives people around the world an instant image of the product while the red brand colour expresses the blessing of nature from the sun and a warm heart.



Designed by world-renowned creative director Mr. Kashiwa Sato, the first store of OMUSUBI is located at ifc mall in Central, Hong Kong. The store is based on the concept of simple, warm and contemporary Japanese style; using white cloth (noren), brass and white wood as basic materials to establish a highly iconic identity that can be expanded globally.



Mr. Muneo Nishida, Managing Director and Founder of Hyakunousha International Limited participates in the ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the grand opening of OMUSUBI's first store at ifc mall in Central, Hong Kong.

Product Overview:



The menu of OMUSUBI features over 20 flavours, including three brand new ones – Sea Urchin Sauce with Red Snow Crab omusubi, Kinpira Renkon omusubi and Premium Kishu Pickled Plum omusubi.



Green Tea - OMUSUBI's new, eco-friendly bottled drinks uses aluminium cans while juices bottle uses 100% recycled plastic, reducing the usage of petroleum derived plastics.



Ishikari-style Salmon Trout Miso Soup – A selection of carefully curated Japanese soups made with fresh ingredients are featured in OMUSUBI's new menu.

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About Hyakunousha International Limited ("Hyakunousha")

Founded in Hong Kong in 2010 by Mr. Muneo Nishida, Hyakunousha was born out of a desire to reverse a decline in Japan’s agricultural production and create the agriculture of the next hundred years. Since launching hana-musubi’s first store in Hong Kong in 2011, the company now has over 100 stores in Hong Kong, and a central food factory that houses its offices and Hyakunousha Academy (education centre) and employs over 600 people. Having successfully established the Japanese omusubi culture in Hong Kong, the company launched the OMUSUBI brand in 2022 to take the omusubi culture and authentic taste of Japan to the world. Dedicated to delivering high-quality products to its customers, Hyakunousha maintains stringent control over its production processes and agricultural practices.

Stay tune for more information on OMUSUBI's official social media platforms

Instagram: [@omusubi.store](https://www.instagram.com/omusubi.store)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/omusubi.store>

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