

# Ecoinno Japan

## Environmentally considerate manufacturer in Hong Kong promoting a global environmental standard throughout Japan starting with Yokohama

Ecoinno Japan is the Japanese subsidiary of Ecoinno (H.K.) Limited, an environmentally considerate manufacturer based in the Science Park in the Hong Kong Special Administrative District. Ecoinno was established in 2011 and engages in manufacturing environmentally considerate containers comprised mainly of cellulose and develops manufacturing equipment. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, in the food and beverage industry, takeout and delivery services grew rapidly, leading to an explosive increase in the use of plastic containers. During this period, Ecoinno Japan expanded their business to Yokohama in November 2020 with the support of Kanagawa Prefecture and JETRO Yokohama. "Our goal is to spread Western standards in Japan," said Representative Tawei Liu. Based on this, he is looking to expand nationwide.



Speaker: Tawei Liu, President



Containers using GCM developed by Ecoinno Japan

### ■ GCM, an environmentally friendly material, as an alternative to plastic containers

Ecoinno Japan manufactures its own unique food containers using GCM (Green Composite Material), a self-developed biodegradable material, as an environmentally considerate alternative to disposable plastic containers, and sells them on the market under the name Ecoinno. The containers can be used as is in a wide variety of cooking methods such as microwave ovens, ovens, and steamers. They feature oil resistance in addition to cold and heat resistance ranging from  $-196^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $+220^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Moreover, these containers decompose in soil within approximately 75 days, returning to the earth. This makes them an environmentally friendly material that can be disposed of as compost, contributing to a sustainable approach to the earth.

### ■ Aiming to promote containers focusing on major companies with strong environmental awareness.

For the environmentally considerate pulp containers we offer as alternatives to plastic products on the market, we utilize bagasse, squeezed residue from saccharum. To enhance durability, many companies incorporate a process of lamination or the addition of fluorine-based agents. Those products are often not suitable for heating because harmful substances that are detrimental to the human body and natural environment may be generated, and there is a risk of the lamination melting.

While using bagasse as our raw material, we have developed

containers with GCM that do not require lamination processing or the addition of fluorine-based agents. These containers maintain the same thickness, light weight, and high strength as conventional products, and are capable of being heated. The manufacturing of GCM involves the use of in-house developed equipment, for which we have obtained patents in Japan.

Currently, we have received inquiries from overseas supermarkets and a coffee manufacturer in Italy. Domestically, vegan food companies have shown interest. In Japan, our focus is on promoting that major companies adopt high environmental awareness in sectors such as frozen foods, in-flight catering, and catering-related services.

### ■ Spreading environmentally considerate products throughout the nation from Yokohama

Our container manufacturing facility has obtained ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications. Furthermore, our products have obtained environmental certifications from Europe and the United States. While still uncommon in Japan, our products have also obtained international certifications for biodegradability.

In a global context, Japan is known for its meticulous food packaging, which can be considered overpackaging. The materials we manufacture are common overseas, however, in Japan, plastic containers are still commonly used. Anticipating that more Japanese companies will be compelled to address this issue in the future, we are currently focusing on promotion.

When we participated in the trade show held in Tokyo in September 2023 as part of our promotional efforts, we utilized the Subsidy for



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Foreign-Affiliated Companies Exhibiting at Domestic Trade Shows program offered by IDEC Yokohama. We were able to receive a partial subsidy for exhibition expenses. Attending the exhibition led to the acquisition of new business opportunities and potential clients. In February 2024, we have plans to participate in another trade show.

We consider Yokohama as a crucial hub due to its convenient transportation not only from the metropolitan area but also nationwide. Additionally, Kanagawa Prefecture is actively promoting environmental initiatives, making it a region with high environmental awareness on a national scale. We will expand our business nationwide by promoting green technology materials, including GCM, from Yokohama.

Furthermore, while heightening the level of awareness of GCM and Ecoinno, we aim to conduct demonstration experiments on the circulation cycles both within and outside the prefecture. We would like to explore this direction for future expansion in Japan.

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