

# Research and Development

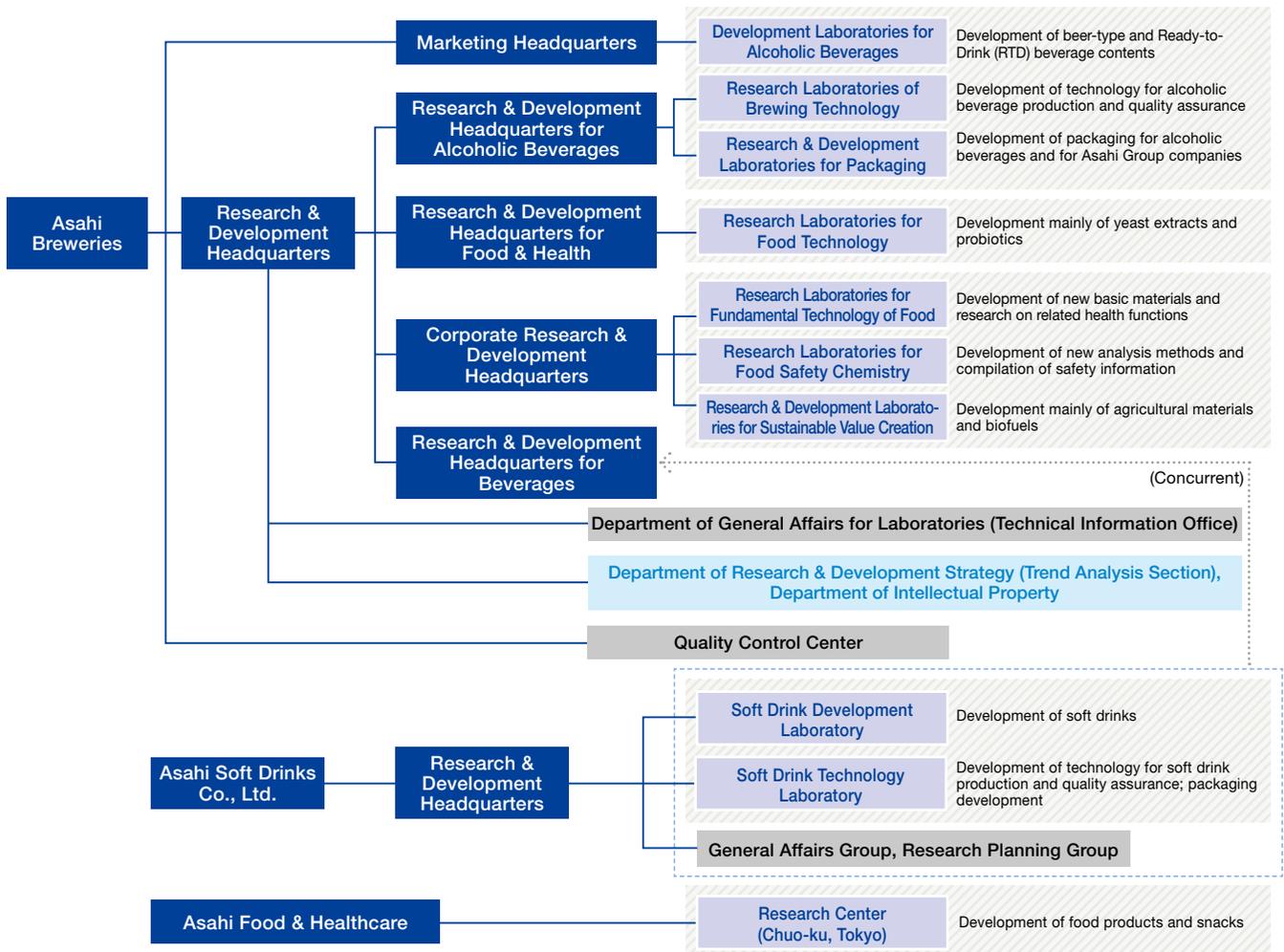
Research and development at the Asahi Group is guided by the Group’s Long-Term Vision 2015 of striving to transform the bounty of nature into the “Kando” of food while becoming a trusted company with global quality.

Our R&D organization includes headquarters specific to each of the Group’s businesses—alcoholic beverages, food and soft drinks—that develop applicable products and technologies. The Corporate Research & Development Headquarters, meanwhile, promotes technological developments and R&D leading to the creation of new businesses across the entire Group.

In conducting R&D activities, we actively promote joint research opportunities with universities and other public institutions in and outside of Japan, as well as with other corporations. This cooperative approach enables the Group to consistently pursue state-of-the-art R&D activities, particularly through the adoption of cutting-edge technologies. We are also striving for greater selectivity and focus in R&D, both to clarify accountability in the selection of research themes and to move forward with important themes faster.

## Asahi Group R&D Structure

In fiscal 2009, we sought to enhance product development efficiency by moving functions to the Development Laboratories for Alcoholic Beverages. As a follow up, in September 2010, we took steps to do the same in the food business by transferring the functions of the Development Laboratories for Food Products to the Research & Development Headquarters under Asahi Food & Healthcare Co., Ltd.



## Recent Topics

### Nikka Whisky Taketsuru 21 Years Old Wins Third Title—Named World’s Best for Second Consecutive Year

*Taketsuru 21 Years Old*, a Nikka brand whisky produced by Asahi Group company The Nikka Whisky Distilling Co., Ltd., was recognized as the “World’s Best Blended Malt Whisky” at the World Whiskies Awards (WWA) 2010, an internationally recognized whisky competition.

*Taketsuru 21 Years Old* was similarly recognized as the world’s best whisky in its category in 2007 and 2009, winning the coveted title three times and twice consecutively. This feat marks the first time in WWA history that the same product has been recognized as the world’s best on three separate occasions.

These multiple wins, based on judgment by an international panel of experts, are raising appreciation of the high quality of *Taketsuru 21 Years Old* overseas, and export volumes continue to grow year by year.



The Nikka Whisky Distilling Co., Ltd.  
Chief Blender  
Tetsuji Hisamitsu

In a repeat of 2009, *Taketsuru 21 Years Old* was named the world’s best blended malt whisky. As someone intimately involved in its creation, I am

delighted and greatly encouraged by this tremendous honor. This award would not have been possible without all of those who have worked hard to preserve the *Taketsuru* spirit and maintain and improve the quality. I am also extremely grateful for the support that so many others have given. Above all else, I hope that everyone who loves and supports Nikka will share in the satisfaction of this recognition.

### Development of Process for Combined Production of Sugar and Ethanol

Asahi Breweries, Ltd. and KONARC (National Agricultural Research Center for Kyushu Okinawa Region) have developed a new process for combined production of sugar and ethanol that will enable the low-cost production of large volumes of ethanol while maintaining adequate sugar production. The key process is the use of high-yielding sugarcane, new sugarcane with roughly 1.5 times the biomass compared to the conventional variety.

Field experiments were carried out at a pilot plant in Ie Island, Okinawa (Japan). The new process showed that bagasse residue obtained after crushing cane can be used to supply all of the energy needed for every aspect of production, resulting in a carbon neutral process.

The achievements were selected as Japan’s MAFF “10 Major Topics in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Research in 2010.” Our promising process is highly expected to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



### Development of Eco-Conscious Universal Design Bottle

In packaging technologies, Asahi Soft Drinks Co., Ltd. has developed an eco-conscious universal design bottle. Using 24% fewer resources and weighing less than conventional products, the bottle also features an easier-to-twist cap and a shape designed to enhance stability when drinking. In this way, the bottle reduces environmental impact and is more consumer friendly. Plans call for a successive roll out of the new bottle for *Asahi Juroku-cha* and other tea beverages in fiscal 2011, helping to reduce both raw materials used in packaging and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

