Lacto Japan | 3139 |

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On July 13, 2020, Lacto Japan Co., Ltd. announced earnings results for 1H FY11/20.

		Sales	YoY	Operating profit	YoY	Ordinary income	YoY	Net income	YoY	EPS	BPS	ROA	ROE
		(JPYmn)		(JPYmn)		(JPYmn)		(JPYmn)		(JPY)	(JPY)	(OI-based)	
FY11/14	Cons.	96,550	27.1%	1,532	118.8%	1,653	-1.0%	988	-1.9%	127.79	1,165.58	4.5%	12.2%
FY11/15	Cons.	98,001	1.5%	720	-53.0%	1,343	-18.8%	831	-15.9%	98.94	1,062.54	3.3%	8.5%
FY11/16	Cons.	88,679	-9.5%	3,349	365.1%	1,434	6.8%	946	13.8%	96.79	1,167.72	3.7%	8.7%
FY11/17	Cons.	101,335	14.3%	1,924	-42.6%	2,523	75.9%	1,755	85.5%	179.48	1,302.98	6.0%	14.5%
FY11/18	Cons.	115,441	13.9%	3,009	56.4%	2,613	3.6%	1,784	1.7%	182.31	1,462.35	5.5%	13.2%
FY11/19	Cons.	116,794	1.2%	3,144	4.5%	2,747	5.1%	1,963	10.0%	200.11	1,618.31	5.7%	13.0%
FY11/20	Est. Cons.	130,000	11.3%	-	-	3,000	9.2%	2,100	7.0%	213.62	-	-	-

Source: Shared Research based on company data

Note: Figures rounded to the nearest million yen (amounts less than JPY1mn are rounded down in materials released by the company).

1H FY11/20 earnings results

Summary

- In 1H FY11/20, Lacto Japan posted consolidated sales of JPY57.9bn (+0.3% YoY), operating profit of JPY1.6bn (-1.7% YoY), ordinary income of JPY1.4bn (+14.5% YoY), and net income attributable to parent company shareholders of JPY1.0bn (+17.2% YoY).
- Consolidated sales in 1H reached 93.4% of the company's 1H FY11/20 forecast, with ordinary income at 102.4%, and net income at 106.2%. Consolidated sales in 1H reached 44.5% of the company's full-year FY11/20 forecast (1H FY11/19 sales were at 49.4% of FY11/19 results), with ordinary income at 47.8% (45.6%), and net income at 49.5% (45.2%). The company maintained its full-year FY11/20 forecast.
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly noticeable from April 2020. In the food industry, demand for commercial foodstuffs fell, particularly for restaurants, as people refrained from going out amid the COVID-19 outbreak. On the other hand, demand trends changed significantly with rapid demand growth in foodstuffs for home-cooked meals and prepared meals, otherwise referred to as "stay-at-home consumption." On the supply side, the demand–supply imbalance of dairy ingredients triggered by sluggish demand for commercial foodstuffs led to a fall in prices globally. Meanwhile, in Japan there were changes in the business environment, such as an increase in dairy product inventories mainly due to the suspension of school lunches.
- Against this backdrop, Lacto Japan worked closely with its overseas bases and suppliers to respond quickly and appropriately to fluctuating demand and to ensure a stable supply of ingredients. As a result, despite fluctuations in demand by product and end-market, sales volumes were down only slightly YoY, as sales of ingredients for homecooked and prepared meals, which expanded rapidly both in Japan and overseas, offset the slump in sales to restaurants.
- Sales up 0.3% YoY: In addition to the decline in sales volume due to the COVID-19 pandemic, results were affected by the strong yen and lower selling prices driven by falling global dairy market prices. Meanwhile, the company managed to keep sales flat YoY thanks to progress in its Asia Business as well as its offering of competitively priced products by



leveraging the group's procurement capabilities. Sales fell 6.4% YoY for the Dairy Ingredients and Cheese category, but were flat YoY for the Meat Products category and up 33.0% YoY for the Asia Business and other businesses.

- Operating profit down 1.7% YoY: The gross profit margin improved by 0.1pp YoY to 5.9% as the company proactively supplied competitively priced products leveraging its strength in procurement. SG&A-to-sales ratio rose 0.2pp YoY to 3.2% and the operating profit margin fell 0.1pp YoY to 2.7%.
- Ordinary income up 14.5% YoY: Ordinary income increased YoY as foreign exchange losses* narrowed from JPY185mn in 1H FY11/19 to JPY39mn in 1H FY11/20.

*In order to avoid taking on exchange rate risk in the course of regular business transactions, as a rule the company enters into forward exchange contracts to cover the cost of the purchases made in foreign currencies at the time the contract is signed. Meanwhile, regarding the accounting treatment of the purchase transaction, procurement (purchase) is recorded at the time of shipment, which creates a lag from the point in time the purchase contract is signed. If the yen strengthens during that timeframe, the exchange rate will be lower than the forward rate at purchase and the actual cost of the goods will be lower than the cost based on forward exchange rate secured at the time the contract was concluded. Lacto Japan calculates its gross profit using the cost of goods sold based on the forward exchange rate at the time the goods were purchased, and records a forex hedging loss under non-operating expenses as a foreign exchange loss.

Breakdown by business category

Dairy Ingredients and Cheese: Sales JPY39.9bn (-6.4% YoY)

- In the dairy ingredients business, domestic inventories of skim milk powder and butter, which were already at a high level, further increased due to a surplus of drinking milk caused by the suspension of milk supply for school lunches and a significant decline in commercial demand for restaurants and gift confectioneries. As a result, sales of imported dairy ingredients to major dairy companies were sluggish. On the other hand, sales of dairy ingredients for home-cooked meals to non-dairy food and confectionery manufacturers as well as beverage manufacturers were steady, while sales to feed manufacturers were also strong. As a result, both sales volume and sales declined only slightly YoY despite the challenging business environment.
- In the cheese business, despite the rising demand for home-cooked meals, both sales volume and sales fell YoY as the decline in demand for restaurants had a more pronounced effect on cheese than for other dairy ingredients, and lower tariffs resulted in lower selling prices.
- ► Sales volume fell 1.8% YoY to 98,294 tons.
- The company's outlook for the business environment is as follows:
 - While the demand-supply balance of drinking milk may be tightened due to shorter summer holidays of elementary and junior high schools as well as hot summer weather, there is still uncertainty in domestic demand due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and the domestic demand-supply balance for raw milk remains unstable.
 - > As a result of the above, domestic skim milk powder inventories may be consumed slower than initially forecast.
 - The company expects to see the effects of the demand–supply mitigation program starting in 2H FY11/20. The program was initiated by Agriculture & Livestock Industries Corporation in in response to the suspension of milk supply for school lunches. However, there is steady demand for imported dairy ingredients, which are more price-competitive, and the company plans to leverage its procurement capabilities to grow sales in this area.



Special demand such as for hoarding by individuals and stay-at-home consumption slowed down, but the company expects restaurant and commercial demand to partially recover.

Meat Products: Sales JPY6.1bn (+0.0% YoY)

- Sales of the company's mainstay pork and pork-based products were strong, owing to growth in demand for home-cooked meals in Japan. In addition to the increase in sales of chilled pork for home-cooked meals, sales of pork-based products that are used as ingredients for hams and sausages grew significantly. In late April 2020, several US pork manufacturers were forced to shut down plants due to the COVID-19 outbreak, spreading concerns over reduced supplies. However, the company was able to fully meet domestic demand as its key US manufacturer and supplier managed to continue deliveries without any disruptions.
- Sales of meat products, such as dry-cured ham and salami, which are in high demand from the restaurant industry, were sluggish.
- The meat products business as a whole saw a YoY increase in sales volume, supported by strong sales of mainstay products, but sales were up only slightly YoY due to a decline in selling prices.
- ► Sales volume rose 9.0% YoY to 11,453 tons.
- The company's outlook for the business environment is as follows:
 - Although the plants of major US pork manufacturers have reopened, production efficiency declined due to labor shortages and social distance policies. As such, the impact on the imported pork market is a cause for concern.
 - The timing of demand recovery in the restaurant industry is dependent on developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the company expects continued demand for home-cooked and prepared meals.

Asia Business and other: Sales JPY11.9bn (+33.0% YoY)

Dairy ingredients: Sales JPY10.1bn (+38.8% YoY)

- Sales in the dairy ingredients category were strong. In the major sales regions of Singapore and the Philippines, restrictions on activities to prevent the spread of COVID-19 were tighter than in Japan. However, as a part of the social infrastructure supporting livelihoods, food manufacturers, which are the company's main customers, continued production. As a result, sales volume grew substantially, especially to food and beverage manufacturers catering to local demand for home-cooked meals. Sales growth in the Philippines and Thailand, where the company has stepped up sales activities, also contributed.
- Sales for the food service industry including restaurants were affected by weak demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the impact was limited as food service only accounts for a small portion of sales.
- As a whole, the Asia Business and other businesses saw a significant YoY increase in both sales volume and sales.
- ► Sales volume rose 25.2% YoY to 34,921 tons.
- The company's outlook for the business environment is as follows:



- Although global raw milk production is relatively stable, depending on the developments surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak, demand trends may be affected. This can trigger a demand–supply imbalance that may cause global market conditions to change significantly.
- > The company will focus on expanding sales by leveraging its ability to procure supplies from diverse sources.

Cheese manufacturing and sales: Sales |PY1.4bn (+5.3% YoY)

- In the cheese manufacturing and sales category, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic became apparent in Q2. In particular, sales to the food service industry including restaurants, which have been the driving force behind the category's sales growth, were down significantly. On the other hand, sales to food manufacturers were strong, and inquiries from China, where lockdowns were lifted, began to recover in the second half of April. As a result, both sales volume and sales grew YoY.
- During Q2, the company thoroughly implemented infection prevention measures for employees in its plants in Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia, and was able to continue production.
- Sales volume increased 9.9% YoY to 1,983 tons.
- The company's outlook for the business environment is as follows:
 - > The pace of recovery for restaurant demand is dependent on developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Lacto Japan expects cheese demand in Asia to remain strong in the medium to long term.
 - > The company expects to start new commercial foodstuffs transactions in 2H and anticipates future growth.
 - Despite increasing competition in the cheese manufacturing and sales category, the company's customer-tailored product development approach has proven successful, and contributed to profits as well as expanded business dealings.

Financial position

- Current assets of JPY48.2bn were up JPY2.4bn versus the end of FY11/19. Cash and deposits, notes and accounts receivable, inventories, and merchandise and finished goods increased. Fixed assets of JPY2.5bn were up JPY183mn versus the end of FY11/19, largely as a reflection of increases in tangible fixed assets and investment and other assets in line with the acquisition of leased assets.
- Current liabilities of JPY26.8bn were down JPY440mn versus the end of FY11/19. While accounts payable and short-term borrowings increased, current portion of long-term borrowings declined. Fixed liabilities of JPY7.2bn were up JPY2.2bn versus the end of FY11/19, due mainly to an increase in long-term borrowings.
- Net assets of JPY16.8bn were up JPY831mn versus the end of FY11/19, as increases in valuation differences on available-for-sale securities, deferred gains on hedges, and retained earnings offset a decline in the foreign currency translation adjustment.



Quarterly (cumulative) earnings

Cumulative	FY11/18					FY11,					L1/20	
(JPYmn)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Sales	Cons. 29,462	Cons. 59,165	Cons. 87,943	Cons. 115,441	Cons. 27,886	Cons. 57,712	Cons. 87,536	Cons. 116,794	Cons. 28,222	Cons. 57,912	Cons.	Cons.
YoY	35.3%	27.3%	20.7%	13.9%	-5.3%	-2.5%	-0.5%	110,794	1.2%	0.3%		
Dairy Ingredients and Cheese	21,972	43,812	65,668	85,290	21,109	42,675	64,795	85,206	20,061	39,927		
YoY	61.9%	46.4%	33.5%	21.8%	-3.9%	-2.6%	-1.3%	-0.1%	-5.0%	-6.4%		
% of sales	74.6%	74.1%	74.7%	73.9%	75.7%	73.9%	74.0%	73.0%	71.1%	68.9%		
Meat Products	3,337	6,616	9,607	12,576	2,941	6,104	9,291	12,280	2,900	6,107		
YoY	-22.4%	-21.1%	-19.3%	-17.6%	-11.8%	-7.7%	-3.3%	-2.4%	-1.4%	0.0%		
% of sales	11.3%	11.2%	10.9%	10.9%	10.5%	10.6%	10.6%	10.5%	10.3%	10.5%		
Asia Business and other	4,151	8,735	12,667	17,574	3,834	8,932	13,449	19,308	5,259	11,876		
YoY % of sales	6.4%	6.9%	7.9% 14.4%	9.4%	-7.6%	2.3%	6.2%	9.9%	37.2%	33.0% 20.5%		
Dairy ingredients	14.1% 3,436	14.8% 7,302	10,431	15.2% 14,578	13.7% 2,992	15.5% 7,303	15.4% 11,013	16.5% 16,026	18.6% 4,411	10,138		
YoY	5.6%	6.1%	6.7%	9.2%	-12.9%	0.0%	5.6%	9.9%	47.4%	38.8%		
% of sales	11.7%	12.3%	11.9%	12.6%	10.7%	12.7%	12.6%	13.7%	15.6%	17.5%		
Cheese	499	997	1,552	2,116	658	1,284	1,963	2,651	680	1,352		
YoY	10.0%	12.1%	13.1%	10.3%	31.9%	28.8%	26.5%	25.3%	3.3%	5.3%		
% of sales	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	2.4%	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%	2.4%	2.3%		
Other	216	436	684	880	184	345	473	630	168	386		
YoY	9.6%	9.5%	15.5%	10.8%	-14.8%	-20.9%	-30.8%	-28.4%	-8.7%	11.9%		
% of sales	0.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%		
< Sales volume (tons)>	F2 F00	104 100	154 217	100 445	40 704	100 100	153.053	204 105	40 412	00 204		
Dairy Ingredients and Cheese YoY	53,509	104,168 37.9%	154,317	198,445	49,784	100,139 -3.9%	152,953	204,105 2.9%	49,413	98,294		
Meat Products	49.6% 5,789	11,366	25.2% 16,505	14.8% 21,595	-7.0% 4,985	10,511	-0.9% 16,317	2.9%	-0.7% 5,220	-1.8% 11,453		
YoY	-22.7%	-22.0%	-19.9%	-18.0%	-13.9%	-7.5%	-1.1%	-0.3%	4.7%	9.0%		
Asia Business: dairy ingredients	11,977	26,431	38,409	52,822	11,298	27,892	41,746	59,925	14,676	34,921		
YoY	10.4%	14.4%	15.8%	17.3%	-5.7%	5.5%	8.7%	13.4%	29.9%	25.2%		
Asia Business: cheese	643	1,289	1,950	2,668	874	1,804	2,732	3,737	1,014	1,983		
YoY	4.6%	9.8%	8.0%	6.3%	35.8%	40.0%	40.1%	40.1%	16.0%	9.9%		
< Unit price (JPY/kg) >												
Dairy Ingredients and Cheese	411	421	426	430	424	426	424	417	406	406		
YoY	8.2%	6.2%	6.6%	6.1%	3.3%	1.3%	-0.4%	-2.9%	-4.3%	-4.7%		
Meat Products	576	582	582	582	590	581	569	570	556	533		
YoY	0.4%	1.2%	0.7%	0.6%	2.3%	-0.2%	-2.2%	-2.1%	-5.8%	-8.2%		
Asia Business: dairy ingredients	287	276	272	276	265	262	264	267	301	290		
YoY	-4.3%	-7.2%	-7.8%	-6.9%	-7.7%	-5.2%	-2.9%	-3.1%	13.5%	10.9%		
Asia Business: cheese	776	773	796	793	753	712	719	709	671	682		
YoY CoGS	5.4%	2.1%	4.8%	3.7%	-3.0%	-8.0%	-9.7%	-10.6%	-10.9%	-4.2%		
YoY	27,942 38.1%	56,028 28.4%	83,001 20.7%	108,930 13.5%	26,319 -5.8%	54,347 -3.0%	82,387 -0.7%	109,994 1.0%	26,535 0.8%	54,505 0.3%		
CoGS ratio	94.8%	20.4 <i>%</i> 94.7%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	94.2%	94.1%	94.2%	94.0%	94.1%		
Gross profit	1,519	3,137	4,942	6,511	1,567	3,365	5,149	6,801	1,686	3,407		
YoY	-1.3%	9.7%	21.9%	20.9%	3.1%	7.3%	4.2%	4.4%	7.6%	1.2%		
GPM	5.2%	5.3%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	5.8%	5.9%	5.8%	6.0%	5.9%		
SG&A expenses	752	1,657	2,568	3,502	831	1,757	2,660	3,656	922	1,826		
YoY	-1.3%	3.7%	6.7%	1.1%	10.4%	6.0%	3.6%	4.4%	10.9%	3.9%		
SG&A ratio	2.6%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.1%	3.3%	3.2%		
Operating profit	767	1,480	2,374	3,009	736	1,608	2,490	3,144	764	1,581		
YoY OPM	-1.4% 2.6%	17.2% 2.5%	44.0% 2.7%	56.4% 2.6%	-4.0% 2.6%	8.7% 2.8%	4.9% 2.8%	4.5% 2.7%	3.8% 2.7%	-1.7% 2.7%		
Gains (losses) on foreign exchange	38	-219	-256	-135	-116	-185	-186	-114	2.7%	-39		
YoY	-93.8%	- 215	- 250	-		- 105	- 100	-	-	-		
% of sales	0.1%	-0.4%	-0.3%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.3%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.1%	-0.1%		
OP + Gains (losses) on forex	805	1,261	2,118	2,874	620	1,423	2,303	3,030	780	1,542		
YoY	-42.1%	-35.9%	-17.7%	-6.8%	-22.9%	12.8%	8.8%	5.4%	25.7%	8.4%		
% of sales	2.7%	2.1%	2.4%	2.5%	2.2%	2.5%	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	2.7%		
Ordinary income	746	1,133	1,924	2,613	536	1,253	2,087	2,747	753	1,434		
YoY	-41.4%	-36.1%	-17.1%	3.6%	-28.2%	10.5%	8.4%	5.1%	40.6%	14.5%		
Profit margin	2.5%	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%		
Net income	493	736	1,291	1,784	376	888	1,490	1,963	546	1,040		
YoY Net margin	-42.5% 1.7%	-38.7%	-17.9%	1.7%	-23.8%	20.5%	15.4%	10.0%	45.3% 1.9%	17.2%		
Net margin Foreign exchange	1./%	1.2%	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	1.8%		
USD/JPY	110.61	109.18	109.73	110.47	110.62	110.78	109.71	109.33	109.53	108.55		
EUR/JPY	134.17	132.52		130.91	125.89	125.30	109.71	122.63	120.87			
LONUTI	104.1/	102.02	131.34	120.91	123.09	123.30	123.73	122.03	120.07	119.33		

Source: Shared Research based on company data Note: Figures rounded to the nearest million yen (amounts less than JPY1mn are rounded down in materials released by the company).



Quarterly earnings (three months)

Quarterly		FY11/	18	Ì		FY11,	/19		FY11/20			
(JPYmn)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Cons.	Cons.	Cons.	Cons.								
Sales	29,462	29,703	28,778	27,498	27,886	29,826	29,824	29,258	28,222	29,690		
YoY	35.3%	20.3%	9.1%	-3.5%	-5.3%	0.4%	3.6%	6.4%	1.2%	-0.5%		
CoGS	27,942	28,085	26,974	25,929	26,319	28,028	28,040	27,607	26,535	27,969		
YoY	38.1%	20.1%	7.2%	-4.5%	-5.8%	-0.2%	4.0%	6.5%	0.8%	-0.2%		
CoGS ratio	94.8%	94.6%	93.7%	94.3%	94.4%	94.0%	94.0%	94.4%	94.0%	94.2%		
Gross profit	1,519	1,618	1,805	1,569	1,567	1,798	1,784	1,651	1,686	1,721		
YoY	-1.3%	22.6%	51.0%	17.8%	3.1%	11.1%	-1.1%	5.2%	7.6%	-4.3%		
GPM	5.2%	5.4%	6.3%	5.7%	5.6%	6.0%	6.0%	5.6%	6.0%	5.8%		
SG&A expenses	752	905	910	934	831	926	903	997	922	904		
YoY	-1.3%	8.4%	12.7%	-11.7%	10.4%	2.3%	-0.9%	6.7%	10.9%	-2.4%		
SG&A ratio	2.6%	3.0%	3.2%	3.4%	3.0%	3.1%	3.0%	3.4%	3.3%	3.0%		
Operating profit	767	713	894	635	736	872	882	655	764	817		
YoY	-1.4%	47.1%	131.1%	131.2%	-4.0%	22.3%	-1.4%	3.1%	3.8%	-6.3%		
OPM	2.6%	2.4%	3.1%	2.3%	2.6%	2.9%	3.0%	2.2%	2.7%	2.8%		
Gains (losses) on foreign exchange	38	-257	-37	121	-116	-69	-1	72	15	-54		
YoY	-93.8%	-	-	-48.3%	-	-	-	-40.3%	-	-		
% of sales	0.1%	-0.9%	-0.1%	0.4%	-0.4%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	-0.2%		
OP + Gains (losses) on forex	805	456	857	756	620	802	881	727	780	762		
YoY	-42.1%	-21.2%	41.3%	48.7%	-22.9%	75.9%	2.7%	-3.9%	25.7%	-5.0%		
% of sales	2.7%	1.5%	3.0%	2.7%	2.2%	2.7%	3.0%	2.5%	2.8%	2.6%		
Ordinary income	746	388	791	688	536	717	834	660	753	680		
YoY	-41.4%	-22.6%	44.5%	240.7%	-28.2%	84.9%	5.5%	-4.1%	40.6%	-5.1%		
Profit margin	2.5%	1.3%	2.7%	2.5%	1.9%	2.4%	2.8%	2.3%	2.7%	2.3%		
Net income	493	243	555	493	376	512	602	473	546	495		
YoY	-42.5%	-29.2%	48.9%	170.8%	-23.8%	110.6%	8.6%	-4.0%	45.3%	-3.4%		
Net margin	1.7%	0.8%	1.9%	1.8%	1.3%	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%	1.9%	1.7%		

Source: Shared Research based on company data

Note: Figures rounded to the nearest million yen (amounts less than JPY1mn are rounded down in materials released by the company).

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