

Improvement of products quality

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Our Group sets the Quality Policy “Providing products and services that satisfy customers,” and based on this policy, we set medium-term quality targets and work on quality activities.

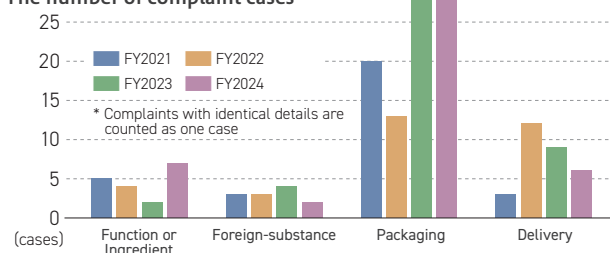
System

The quality assurance office at each plant, which is independent from the manufacturing divisions, inspects the quality of each product. In addition, the quality assurance division at the head office, which oversees the company-wide quality assurance activities, conducts quality audits at each plant and affiliated company. To promote quality assurance activities on a company-wide basis, the Quality Assurance Committee meets regularly to report the results of quality activities, the results of quality audits and the status of improvements, and complaints and status of corrective actions. The committee also discusses the quality assurance action policy for the following year, etc. The reports and contents of the discussions are reported to the Board of Directors, and we have put in place reliable quality management systems by working on further improvements under management review.

Indicators

The number of complaint cases was trending downward slightly from FY2020 to FY2022, but there was an increase in the number of complaint cases in FY2023. This is due to the increased sensitivity to complaint information within the company as a result of in-house training implemented when the customer's complaints management system was renewed in FY2023, which we believe has enabled us to respond to complaints even more appropriately. The percentage of complaint cases attributable to issues such as packaging and delivery remained high in FY2024. There was one serious complaint in FY2022, none in FY2023, and three in FY2024.

The number of complaint cases



Activities

Under the key themes of Quality (Q), Social (S), and Governance (G), we are promoting initiatives to realize our Quality Policy: providing products and services that satisfy our customers.

Internal Network of Product-quality Intelligence (Q, S)

We have established an internal network to promptly collect and evaluate customer feedback (complaint information) regarding

our products and to take necessary corrective action. Customer feedback is promptly communicated to each division to enable response to customers and quality improvements.

Prevention of Quality Fraud and Data Tampering (G)

In FY2020, we established and began implementing the guidelines aimed to prevent fraud and tampering regarding quality control. At each plant, we are working to develop a framework that is less likely to cause errors, fraud, or tampering by reducing manual operations and tasks, and enhancing the integrity of inspection data through the introduction of laboratory information management system (LIMS), etc. Even in the sites and departments that do not use LIMS, we have established a control system for issuing test results using an electronic signature system to obtain confirmation and approval logs, thereby preventing falsification of test data.

Fostering Quality Culture (S, G)

In FY2021, we established the “Quality Behavior Model” aiming to encourage individual behavior with an awareness of quality, and disseminated it as our top message.

In FY2023, we conducted in-house training on “Quality Behavior Model” for the whole company, and training on “Change Control” with the aim of reducing quality risks due to change for all our laboratories. In FY2024, we provided education on “Examples of Quality Fraud” that have occurred in society to departments involved in product quality. We will continue to implement company-wide in-house training on quality compliance.

Logistics and Supplier Management (Q, S)

We aim for total quality assurance, considering not only the quality of the manufactured products themselves, but also the packaging materials, transportation, attached documents, and demonstration of function at the customers, as part of our products.

A high percentage of our quality issues is attributable to packaging and transportation process, so we share our improvement targets with contract logistics suppliers and strive to improve. In addition, we have established internal guidelines for suppliers including contract manufacturers, and conduct evaluations through quality audits to maintain appropriate management.