

Snow

Kohei Nishi
President and CEO
Snow Brand
13 Honshio-cho, Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo 160-8575, Japan
Tel: +81 3 3226 2158
Fax: +81 3 3226 2150
URL: www.snowbrand.co.jp

Products include:

FORMULA:

Snow Brand A1, Snow Brand F, Snow Brand F2, Snow Brand F Plus, Snow Brand P7L Beta, Smart Baby 1, Smart Baby 2.

Logos & Icons:

Snow products and materials bear the same Snow logo. Bunny and Bear icons appear on labels of some products and promotional materials.



Founded in 1925, Snow Brand is one of Japan's major baby milk companies. It produces a wide range of products, from dairy to alcoholic beverages and livestock feed. Snow does biotech research and is reported to have cloned a calf from its mother's milk.

Snow uses its company name as a brand name on most of its products, promoting brand recognition every time the company name is used. It introduced the Smart Baby and Smart Kid brands to capitalise on parents' desire for smart children.

Snow has been involved in a record number of Japan's food scandals. In 2000, thousands suffered food poisoning from Snow Brand milk which caused a huge public outcry and was Japan's worst contamination case for over 30 years. In 2001 Snow was discovered to have purchased 13.8 tonnes of Australian beef, repackaged it as Japanese beef and then claimed compensation from the Japanese government for having excess beef that could not be sold. In 2002 the company admitted fiddling with the expiry dates on 760 tonnes of frozen butter. No wonder that many supermarkets pulled all Snow products from their shelves.

In an attempt to regain consumer confidence, Snow is said to have joined forces with Nestlé Japan to produce baby foods. In 2002, Snow was still in financial trouble and reported to seek additional loans from the Norinchukin Bank. By 2003, the market was 'up' again. Snow Brand bought Bean Stalk from a pharmaceutical company and was doing well selling Bean Stalk Pocar baby isotonic drinks. Clever marketing convinces mothers that their babies need such re-hydration drinks to replace electrolytes lost during perspiration!

Promotion in health facilities

- ▶ *WHA Resolution 47.5 (1994) urges an end to free or subsidised donations of products to all parts of the health care system.*
- ▶ *Article 7.4 allows samples to health workers but only for research purposes. Health workers may not pass on any samples.*
- ▶ *Article 6.3 prohibits the display of products, placards and posters or the distribution of company materials unless requested or approved by government.*

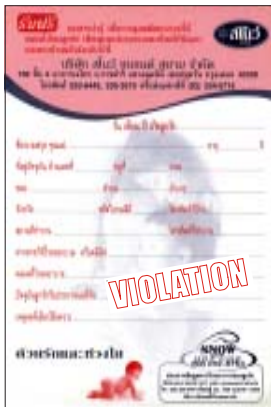
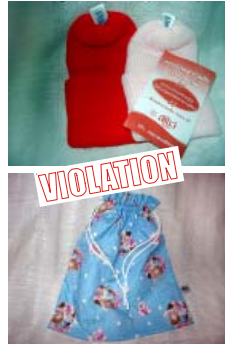
- Snow gives health workers in Thailand gifts such as clocks, calendars, pens and notepads featuring the **Snow Brand** company and brand name.▶



- Health facilities in Thailand display **Snow Brand** posters and other promotional materials.◀
- In Thailand Snow donates supplies of **Snow Brand P7L Beta** to health facilities, both on request and unsolicited.



- Snow seeks direct contact with mothers at health facilities in Thailand to recommend **Snow Brand** products and to give samples and gifts. Typical gift pouches contain a tin of **Snow Brand P7L Beta**, a baby's bonnet, and a booklet titled *7 interesting topics for your beloved child*, reinforcing the "7" in the brand name.



- Snow gives health workers in Thailand sign-up sheets to distribute among mothers, enabling the company to contact them directly with future promotions. ◀
- Company representatives in Thailand give health workers **Snow Brand F** and **Snow Brand P7L Beta** samples that are passed on to mothers.

▶ **Article 7.3** provides that there should be no financial or material inducement, to promote products within the scope of the Code.

- Snow gives cash grants to health facilities in Thailand and pushes its products and promotional materials at professional meetings. ▶



Promotion to the public

▶ **Article 5.1** of the Code prohibits advertising and all other forms of promotion of products under the scope of the Code.

▶ **Article 5.3** of the Code bans promotional devices at the retail level.



- In Hong Kong a discount on Snow's **Smart Baby 2** is advertised in the local *Ming Pao* newspaper. ◀
- In Thailand Snow provides shops with baby gloves and baby socks to give out when customers buy Snow products.

Misleading text and pictures which violate the Code

▶ **Article 4.2** requires all information material to advocate for breastfeeding and not contain pictures or text which idealises the use of breastmilk substitutes.

▶ For health professionals, **Article 7.2** of the Code only allows product information which is factual and scientific.

- Promotional materials in Thailand compare Snow products to breastmilk, such as this booklet that claims the composition of **Snow Brand P7L Beta** is based on research on the breastmilk of Japanese mothers. Another booklet compares its ratio of omega 3 and 6 with that of breastmilk. ▶



- Several brochures in Thailand claim **Snow Brand P7L Beta** encourages good bowel movements with the addition of oligosaccharide. This example tells mothers "Don't let your baby get constipation" and shows a packshot of **Snow Brand P7L Beta**. ◀

- Promotional materials in Thailand contain messages that undermine breastfeeding like "when formula is necessary", "when a mother cannot breastfeed" and advice on supplementing breastfeeding with bottle feeding.

- Bad advice in a booklet entitled *Hello Baby* in Thailand claims that weight gain slows when baby is one month old and mothers should know that their milk is not enough and start giving formula.

- A leaflet in Hong Kong features on the front page the cartoon teddy bears from Snow's **Smart Baby 1** label and the slogan "Especially for newborn". It also shows a packshot and a mother and baby and outlines the product's nutrient composition.

