

March 26, 2020
Starzen Co., Ltd.
Otsuka Foods Co., Ltd.

**Starzen and Otsuka Foods to Release
“Zero Meat Ham for Commercial Use”
Ham Becomes the Third Product in the “Zero Meat” Series of
Meat-free Products Made from Soybeans and Intended for
Restaurants and Home Meal Providers
Available from April 1, 2020**

TOKYO, Japan, March 26, 2020—Starzen Co., Ltd. (Head Office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; President: Tsuyoshi Nakatsuhama) and Otsuka Foods Co., Ltd. (Head Office: Chuo Ward, Osaka; President: Koichi Shiraishi) announced today that they will start selling “Zero Meat Ham for Commercial Use” in the “Zero Meat” series of meat-free products made from soybeans.* The new product is intended for restaurants and home meal providers and will be available starting on April 1, 2020.

In recent years, demand for meat substitute foods made from vegetable protein has increased around the world, including in Europe and the United States. A variety of reasons are thought to be behind this trend, including concerns about supply shortages due to the growing demand for meat resulting from global population growth, consideration of the environmental impact of livestock production, and growing numbers of people becoming vegetarians, vegans, and low-carb diet followers for health reasons or due to ethical reasons such as animal welfare.

The new “Zero Meat Ham for Commercial Use” takes the “Zero Meat Ham” sold in stores from March 23 and repackages the product into a standard that is easy to use in restaurants and by home meal providers making bento lunch boxes, sandwiches, and prepared side dishes.

The same as with the Zero Meat products sold in stores, the Zero Meat for Commercial Use products offer a rich lineup, with this new ham product joining hamburgers and sausages. As in the Western meat substitute market, menu items featuring meat substitute products made from soybeans and other vegetable ingredients are increasing in the restaurant industry in Japan. Accordingly, Starzen and Otsuka Foods will expand their lineup and strengthen their menu offerings. Product development was carried out jointly by the two companies, and Starzen will handle sales.

Zero Meat brand products are made with no meat at all. Soybeans are used to create the flavor, texture, and aroma of meat. Starzen and Otsuka Foods plan to continue promoting delicious and healthy eating habits by developing a variety of meat substitute foods.

* This product is made with a soy-based processed food.