

Cool Japan Fund Inc.

Tokyo, November 12, 2019

Cool Japan Fund has sold its shares in Chikaranomoto Holdings Co., Ltd.

Cool Japan Fund (CJF) announces that it has sold all of its shares in Chikaranomoto Holdings Co., Ltd. (Chikaranomoto) on 1st section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

In December 2014, CJF invested in Chikaranomoto towards opening of Hakata Ippudo branches in major Western cities with the aim of spreading the appeal of Japanese food culture.

Since before CJF's investment, Chikaranomoto had committed to expanding overseas and spreading Japanese food around the world by offering ramen, side dishes, Japanese sake, and more. Their first overseas branch was in New York, opened in 2008, and they assertively expanded internationally with branches in Asia, their second branch in New York, one in London, and one in Sydney. On the other hand, the high costs and regulations of opening new branches in Europe are said to be a great hurdle for the Japanese restaurant industry, so during expansion, the high risk became an issue for fundraising.

Under those circumstances, Chikaranomoto used the CJF investment to speed up their overseas expansion and opened their second shop in London and two more shops in Sydney in 2015. In 2016, they opened their Louvre branch as their Paris flagship shop, and since then, all of their branches have been doing well. As of June 2019, there are six branches in Europe, including those in London and Paris; 11 branches in the United States, including those in New York and California; and 8 branches in Australia, including those in Sydney and Melbourne. They have established their position as a Japanese restaurant company that has succeeded with multiple branches in Europe, the United States, Australia, and Asia.

Chikaranomoto's overseas expansion in the West is on track and CJF has completed its role in contributing to the international spread of Japanese food, so both companies have discussed and agreed that CJF will sell all of its share. As of now, all of CJF's share in Chikaranomoto has been sold.

Reference) CJF announced its investment in Chikaranomoto on December 8, 2014.

https://www.cj-fund.co.jp/en/files/press_141208-2.pdf