

Marutomo Co.,LTD., located in Lyo, Ehime prefecture, was established 90 years ago. It is a food manufacturer focusing on 3 main businesses: dried bonito related products, seafood soup related products, and seafood delicacy chilled products. Among those businesses, the production and sales of packed dried bonito “Hanakatsuo” is top level in Japan, and also it shows successful results in the basic research about application of fishery resource.



The challenges of sensory benchmarking

Recently, Marutomo has received many requests from big convenience chain stores to manufacture products similar in taste and flavor to the food materials used in famous restaurant. For instance, it is asked, “can you produce seasoning source modeled on that well-established famous soba noodle restaurant?” In the past, Marutomo tried to meet this kind of demands by using human nose and tongue to get closer to the target products. However, it could not yield sufficient results because there were variations, especially in evaluating odor coming from warmed source which “palatability” depends on. Also, only presenting the results from sensory evaluation data was not persuasive enough for proving that a new product that is better than the competitive one. There, what Marutomo found was FOX sensor array system made in Alpha M.O.S., France.

Objective sensory mapping thanks to FOX Electronic Nose

It is very bold to use the equipment, widely used to evaluate perfumes, for the development and production of traditional Japanese food products, but Marutomo decided to positively adopt the technology 10 years ago. Odors, once discriminated by human nose and intuition are now clearly discriminated in numerical terms by FOX. For example, how much sweet taste it has or how much smoky odor it has can be visually placed in numeric and graphs. By analyzing both the target product and a newly developed product using sensors, you can know clearly how it is closer to the target. Those objective results by FOX lead to powerful presentations to customers and to an increase of new orders.



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