



## **Morinaga Milk Achieves Self-Affirmed GRAS Status for LAC-Living+™, Expanding U.S. Opportunities for Its Postbiotic Ingredient**

*Clinical evidence-backed postbiotic supports mood and well-being with formulation flexibility for diverse applications*

TOKYO (July 07, 2026) — Morinaga Milk Industry Co., Ltd. (TOKYO:2264), a leading Japanese dairy and functional ingredient company, today announced that it has achieved **self-affirmed GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) status in the United States** for **LAC-Living+™ (*L. helveticus* MCC1848)**, its proprietary postbiotic ingredient. This milestone expands the commercial availability of LAC-Living+ in the U.S. market and enables its use in **dietary supplements, functional foods, and beverages**, supporting the development of products designed to address growing consumer demand for health and well-being solutions.

### **Growing Interest in Postbiotics and Mental Well-Being**

Consumer interest in proactive health management has expanded significantly in recent years, alongside increasing awareness of the connection between the **gut and the brain**, commonly referred to as the gut-brain axis. As a result, the global functional ingredient market is evolving beyond conventional probiotics to include **postbiotics**—non-viable microorganisms and/or their components that offer physiological benefits. Postbiotics are gaining attention due to their **stability, safety, and ease of formulation**, particularly in product formats that are challenging for live microorganisms. These advantages make them an attractive option for manufacturers seeking reliable, science-based ingredients.

Morinaga Milk has been at the forefront of postbiotic research and development. In 2018, the company achieved self-affirmed GRAS status for **LAC-Shield™ (*L. paracasei* MCC1849)**, its first postbiotic ingredient. Building on this experience, **LAC-Living+™ represents the company's second postbiotic innovation**, developed to address emerging consumer needs in the area of **mood and mental well-being**.

### **LAC-Living+™: Clinical Evidence Supporting Everyday Well-Being**

**LAC-Living+™ (*L. helveticus* MCC1848)** is a heat-treated postbiotic ingredient developed to combine **scientific credibility with formulation flexibility**. Its functionality has been evaluated in **human clinical studies**, which suggest that supplementation with LAC-Living+ may help support **mental well-being and quality of life**, particularly in individuals experiencing everyday stress. Reported outcomes have included improvements in indicators related to **mood and psychological state**, providing a scientific basis for its application in products targeting mental wellness. In Japan, *L. helveticus* MCC1848 has also been accepted as a functional ingredient under the Foods with Function Claims (FFC) system, with reported functionality to help maintain a positive mood (vitality) in situations involving temporary mental stress. While research into the gut-brain axis continues to evolve, such findings and achievements are contributing to a growing body of evidence supporting the role of microbiome-related ingredients in **holistic health approaches that integrate physical and mental well-being**.



### **Formulation Advantages for Broad Applications**

In addition to its scientific foundation, LAC-Living+™ offers important **technical advantages** for product development.

As a postbiotic ingredient, LAC-Living+™ is **non-viable**, which allows it to maintain stability under conditions that may compromise live microorganisms. This includes exposure to **heat processing, moisture, and extended shelf-life environments**, making it suitable for a wide variety of applications. These characteristics provide manufacturers with **greater flexibility in formulation and product design**, supporting its use across categories such as ready-to-drink beverages, powders, bars, gummies, dairy products, and supplements.

### **Supporting Innovation in the U.S. Market**

The attainment of self-affirmed GRAS status represents a key step in enabling broader adoption of LAC-Living+™ in the United States.

“Achieving self-affirmed GRAS status for LAC-Living+™ marks an important milestone for our postbiotic portfolio,” said **Masashi Kamiya, General Manager of Functional Food Ingredients Division** at Morinaga Milk Industry Co., Ltd. “With increasing interest in mental well-being and convenient health solutions, we believe LAC-Living+™ offers strong potential to support our partners in developing innovative products tailored to evolving consumer needs.”

Morinaga Milk remains committed to advancing its research and ingredient development efforts, with a focus on delivering **safe, scientifically supported, and application-friendly solutions** to the global market.

### **About Morinaga Milk Industry Co., Ltd.**

Morinaga Milk Industry Co., Ltd. is one of Japan’s leading dairy companies, with more than 100 years of experience in harnessing the nutritional value of dairy and functional ingredients.

The company is recognized globally for its expertise in **probiotics, postbiotics, and microbiome-related research**, supported by decades of scientific investigation into the safety, functionality, and mechanisms of action of beneficial microorganisms. Since the 1960s, Morinaga Milk has been advancing research into bifidobacteria and their role in human health, contributing to the development of high-quality, science-based solutions for a wide range of applications.

For more information about Morinaga probiotics and postbiotics, please visit:

<https://morinagamilk-ingredients.com/>