

Kewpie Corporation

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## Kewpie's Unique Ingredient *G. hansenii* GK-1 Completes GRAS Determination in the United States

**Tokyo, Japan (February 6, 2026)**—Kewpie Corporation (“Kewpie”) has completed a self-affirmed GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) determination for its *Gluconacetobacter hansenii* GK-1, a food ingredient created through the company’s proprietary research and development. GRAS is the safety assessment standard used for the sale of food ingredients in the United States. This status means that *G. hansenii* GK-1 can now be rolled out into the U.S. market as an ingredient that offers both safety and functionality. Kewpie now aims to begin raw material sales in overseas markets, including the health-conscious United States, from fiscal 2026.

*G. hansenii* GK-1 is known for interacting with the immune cells, using a mechanism that is different from normal fermentation bacteria. Past clinical trials have reported the results of research on immune-related symptoms including colds, hay fever, itchy skin, and fatigue. The Kewpie Group has always paid particular attention to vinegar, the deciding factor in how mayonnaise tastes, which is why it has been researching acetic acid bacteria and fermentation for over 60 years. The results of this research led to the selection of *G. hansenii* GK-1 due to its superior action. Kewpie is the first company in the world to successfully mass produce cloudy vinegar (“Nigori Vinegar”) containing a high proportion of acetic acid bacteria, which are considered hard to grow. They retain their functionality even when heat-killed, allowing them to be used in a wide range of foods.

Following this GRAS determination, Kewpie aims to develop and expand businesses that address wellness issues not only in Japan but worldwide.



Acetic acid bacteria  
(under microscope)



*G. hansenii* GK-1 sold as raw material  
(powdered type for ease of combining with processed foods)

### Overview of ingredient

This ingredient is to be sold to other corporations as a B2B product.

Formal name	<i>Gluconacetobacter hansenii</i> GK-1 strain
Safety assessment	Self-affirmed GRAS
Form	Powder
Main uses	Supplements, beverages, confectionery, and processed foods such as condiments
Overseas rollout	Scheduled to start sales overseas, mainly in the United States, from fiscal 2026.

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