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January 27, 2021

Company Name: YUKIGUNI MAITAKE CO., LTD.
Representative: Iwao Ashikaga, President and CEO,
Representative Director
(Tokyo Stock Exchange, First Section:1375)
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(Chief Financial Officer)
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Next-Generation Cutting and Packaging Line Development Agreement with ROBIT Inc.

We, YUKIGUNI MAITAKE CO., LTD., (hereinafter “the Company”) are pleased to announce that we have succeeded in developing an automation technology for the cutting process of maitake mushrooms together with ROBIT Inc. (Representative Director and CEO: Masahiro Arai, headquarters: Itabashi, Tokyo, hereinafter “ROBIT”), which implements Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in robotics to solve various social issues. The Company and ROBIT have agreed to develop next-generation cutting and packaging line for the Company.

In the medium-term business plan of the Company from Fiscal Year Ended March 2020 to Fiscal Year Ending March 2023, we aim to further improve our profitability through the continuous development of our own production technology and product development capabilities in addition to top-line growth. Improving productivity through the pursuit of Agritech is one of our growth strategies.

We use our unique technology to produce large maitake roots that weigh more than 900 grams, which is similar to natural grown ones, and sell a whole maitake root and multiple package lineups ranging from 50 grams to 500 grams. In the cutting and packaging process, we are committed to our unique technique, not only adjusting the weight, but also packaging different tastes and textures of each maitake part in a well-balanced and good-looking pack. Therefore, among the production processes that we are trying to automate, the cutting and packaging process particularly requires a large number of personnel.



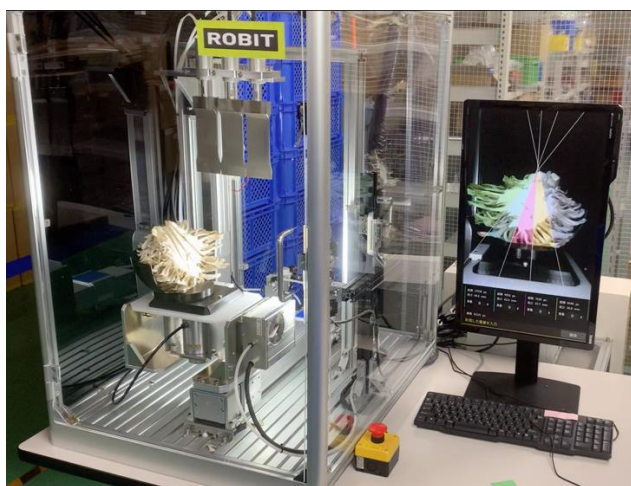
Maitake Root



Maitake Pack

Maitake mushrooms are the most difficult crops to achieve weight accuracy due to different shapes and stems, and there is a two to three times difference in work efficiency between skilled staff and inexperienced staff. Therefore, earlier automation of the cutting and packaging process is indispensable in order to secure future personnel and to take various measures to prevent COVID-19 infections in our factories.

Since 2019, we have been working with ROBIT to develop an AI algorithm that achieves both our unique cutting technique and a high level of weight accuracy, and an automatic cutting robot that implements the AI algorithm. This time around, we have succeeded in developing an automatic cutting robot equipped with the AI algorithm that can cut at the same level as our most excellent skilled staff.



AI Automatic Cut Robot



Cut Instruction by AI Algorithm

Based on the above results, the Company and ROBIT have agreed to proceed with the development of next-generation cutting and packaging line aiming to implement AI and robotics before and after the cutting process, with an automatic cutting robot equipped with the AI algorithm at its core.

Company Profile of ROBIT Inc.

Location: 4-26-13 Azusawa, Itabashi-ku, Tokyo
Representative: Masahiro Arai, Representative Director and CEO
Established: June 2014
Business: Design, manufacture, and sales of AI powered robots, precision equipment, related hardware, parts and software
URL: <https://robit.co.jp/about>

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