

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***Curél* Unveils ‘Moist Barrier Oil Serum’ for Rough, Tight Skin Caused by Extreme Dryness**

Kao Is Further Accelerating Its Global Expansion Through Business Development in Europe

Kao Corporation announced the launch of a new product from *Curél*, Japan’s No. 1*¹ brand for sensitive skin, specifically designed for dry, sensitive skin. This launch marks a step in Kao’s strategy to expand its presence in the European market.

The new product, “*Curél* Moist Barrier Oil Serum,” will be available from September 5, 2026. This product is a new solution for dry, sensitive skin prone to recurring flakiness, roughness, tightness and irritation in extremely dry environments such as those created by winter air as well as air conditioning and heating. In a first for *Curél*, the product combines an oil-based formula with signature Ceramide Care*² technology, producing



an oil serum which adheres closely to the skin, replenishing oils essential to the skin and locking in moisture.

Building on its Ceramide Care*² technology developed primarily in Japan, *Curél* is addressing the diverse needs of those with dry, sensitive skin across different regions in global markets where both climate and skincare habits differ from those of Japan. As part of this initiative, *Curél* will launch this product in Japan first, followed by a gradual rollout to regions such as Europe, where many people struggle with skin problems caused by particularly harsh, dry conditions. *Curél* will enhance its presence in the global market for dry, sensitive skin and drive growth in Kao’s cosmetics business.

*1 INTAGE SRI+ Sensitive Skin Cosmetics Market, January–December 2025, value share by product series

*2 Supports the function of ceramides and provides moisture.

In pursuit of its Global Sharp Top strategy, Kao has positioned *Curél* as one of its Six Focus Brands for driving global growth within its cosmetics business, and will continue to invest strategically in the brand and to accelerate its expansion.

Background

Since its inception, *Curél* has been dedicated to dermatological research, with a specific focus on the role of ceramides. The brand remains committed to providing skincare solutions that improve the quality of life for individuals with dry, sensitive skin.

The Japanese market for sensitive skin care products continues to expand, and within this market, *Curél* is driving growth as the brand ranked No. 1 in sales for 11 consecutive years*³. Globally, the sensitive skin cosmetics market is expanding, and is further growing at a rate that exceeds that of the overall skincare market*⁴.

Against this backdrop, in Japan, among those with dry, sensitive skin, approximately 30% suffer specifically from dry skin prone to recurring roughness, tightness, flakiness, and irritation in extremely dry environments such as those created by winter air as well as air conditioning and heating*⁵. Meanwhile, outside Japan, particularly in Europe, the air is extremely dry and temperature fluctuations can be severe. Approximately 50% of people living in this area suffer from dry, sensitive skin*⁶. Skincare habits in Europe also differ from Japan, such as low toner usage rates and high numbers of scrub users. Given this, Europeans often perceive their skin as rough and tight, with a tendency for the skin's barrier function to become compromised, indicating a strong need for moisturizing care*⁷.

Drawing on years of dermatological research, *Curél* has developed this oil serum that mimics the natural barrier of human skin*⁸. Combining an oil-based formula with Ceramide Care*² technology, it is designed for those whose skin is prone to becoming rough and tight in harsh, dry environments.

Going forward, *Curél* will continue to take a global perspective while understanding the variety of skin issues caused by different environments and lifestyles, and will strengthen its brand presence by offering products tailored to address the needs of those with dry, sensitive skin.

*2 Supports the function of ceramides and provides moisture

*3 INTAGE SRI+ Sensitive Skin Cosmetics Market, January 2015–December 2025, value share by product series

*4 Euromonitor data for fiscal 2025

*5 Kao survey: Benchmark survey conducted November 2025 (N=3,000)

*6 Kao survey: Survey on the state of the cosmetics market in Europe and the Americas (April 2025, ages 18–49, N=3,700)

*7 Kao survey: Survey of European beauty habits (April 2025, ages 25–65, N=1,104)

*8 The sebum film barrier that maintains moisture on the skin's surface

Product features

“*Curél* Moist Barrier Oil Serum” is an oil serum designed for those with dry, sensitive skin prone to recurring roughness, tightness and irritation caused by harsh, dry conditions such as dry air and air conditioning. Formulated with active ingredients to prevent roughness and irritation, it adheres closely to the skin, replenishing oils essential to the skin and locking in moisture, helping achieve fine skin that is supple, firm and hydrated.

This product features High-Adhesion Ceramide Care*² Technology, a first for *Curél*. This low-viscosity oil, containing fine ceramide functional capsules in oil*⁹, evenly coats the skin and adheres smoothly even to dry, rough skin. With a moisturizing ceramide-functioning ingredient*¹⁰, the oil serum penetrates throughout the stratum corneum to boost moisture levels.

*2 Supports the function of ceramides and provides moisture

*9 A vesicle structure composed of the following oil-based ingredients: ceramide-functioning ingredient (Cetyl-PG Hydroxyethyl Palmitamide: moisturizing), cholesterol (moisturizing) and phytosphingosine (moisturizing)

*10 Cetyl-PG Hydroxyethyl Palmitamide (moisturizing)

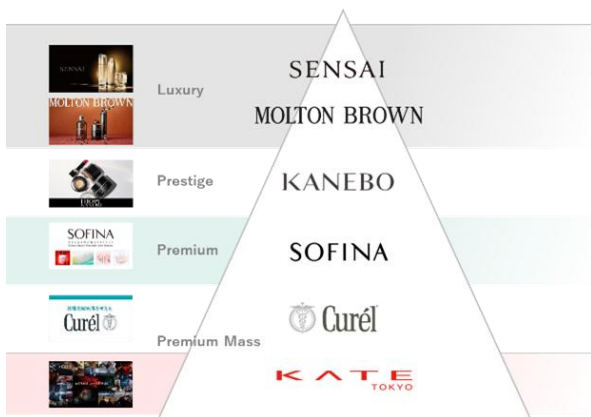
Future global expansion

Kao's cosmetics business is strengthening its efforts to accelerate global growth through the three business models of "Japan-Origin Model," "Europe-Origin Model" and "Asia Model," centered on its Six Focus Brands, including *Curél*.

As part of the "Japan-Origin Model" business model, *Curél* is expanding its global presence by leveraging the quality and technology it has cultivated as the No. 1*¹ brand in sales of cosmetics for sensitive skin, as well as the strengths of the Kao Group's extensive global sales network. In 2025, *Curél* launched in Germany, France and Canada, and in May 2026, it expanded into the Netherlands and other markets. *Curél* currently operates in 16 countries and regions. Going forward, *Curél* will continue to expand its global operations with a focus on Europe, including the Nordic region, to further enhance its brand presence.

*1 INTAGE SRI+ Sensitive Skin Cosmetics Market, January–December 2025, value share by product series

Reference: Kao Cosmetics Business: Six Focus Brands for Driving Global Growth




Liu Hsiu Ping, President, Masstige Brand Business, Cosmetic Business, commented:

I view the further expansion into the global market as both a major challenge and a historic turning point for *Curél*. Our mission is to make *Curél*'s sincere approach to dry, sensitive skin recognized and trusted by consumers around the world, while addressing the unique consumer insights, regulatory environments and competitive landscapes of each market.

As *Curél* expands globally, it will not stop at simply growing market share. *Curél* is committed to making significant strides toward improving the quality of life for as many people as possible who suffer from dry, sensitive skin.

Product overview

Note: No manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) will be set.

Product name	Curél Moist Barrier Oil Serum
Content	30 ml
Product features	<p>For dry, sensitive skin prone to recurring roughness, tightness, flakiness and irritation in extremely dry environments.</p> <p>Adheres closely to the skin, replenishing oils essential to the skin and locking in moisture. An oil serum that supports the function of ceramides to help achieve fine skin that is supple, firm and hydrated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High-Adhesion Ceramide Care*² Technology ● Contains fine ceramide functional capsules in oil*⁹ Oil-based serum containing moisturizing ceramide-functioning ingredient*¹⁰ that adheres evenly to the skin to boost moisture levels in the stratum corneum. ● Formulated with plant-derived oils Gentle and pleasing feel even on skin prone to recurring dryness; leaves it looking radiant. ● Reduces the appearance of fine lines caused by dryness* *Efficacy evaluated ● Contains anti-inflammatory agent (active ingredient) to prevent skin irritation ● Formulated with Chamomile ET to inhibit melanin production and prevent dark spots and freckles <p>*² Supports the function of ceramides and provides moisture *⁹ A vesicle structure composed of the following oil-based ingredients: ceramide-functioning ingredient (Cetyl-PG Hydroxyethyl Palmitamide: moisturizing), cholesterol (moisturizing) and phytosphingosine (moisturizing) *¹⁰ Cetyl-PG Hydroxyethyl Palmitamide (moisturizing ingredient)</p> <p>Formulated to be gentle on dry, sensitive skin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fragrance-free ● Colorant-free ● Alcohol-free (no ethyl alcohol added) ● Allergy-tested* ● Patch-tested with the cooperation of individuals with dry, sensitive skin* ● Formulated to minimize the risk of acne breakouts; non-comedogenic-tested* <p>*Please note that some users may still experience allergies or skin irritation, or develop comedones (the precursors to acne).</p> 

Availability

Japan: From September 5, 2026

A subsequent rollout will follow in *Curél* markets, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

Note: Product name in Europe is “Curél Double Barrier Repair Oil Serum.”

Related Information

[Curél brand website](#) (Japanese language only)

About Kao

Kao, a Japan-based manufacturer of cosmetics, personal care and household products, as well as specialty chemicals, creates high-value-added products and services that provide care and enrichment for the life of all people and the planet. Through its brands such as *Curél*, *SENSAI*, and *MOLTON BROWN* cosmetics, *Bioré* and *Jergens* skin care products, *Oribe* hair care products, *Attack* laundry detergent, and *Laurier* sanitary products, Kao is part of the everyday lives of people across Asia, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Combined with its chemical business, which contributes to a wide range of industries, Kao generates about 1,690 billion yen in annual sales. Kao employs about 31,500 people worldwide and has more than 130 years of history in innovation.

Please visit [the Kao Group website](#) for additional information.

Media inquiries should be directed to:

Public Relations

Kao Corporation

corporate_pr@kao.com