

## Summary of Specification



**1. Name of the GI + transcription in Latin alphabet or in international phonetic alphabet**

富山干柿 (transcription : Toyama Hoshigaki), Toyama Hoshigaki

**2. Category of the product for which the name is protected**

Class 5: Processed agricultural product (Dried persimmon)

**3. Applicant – name and address**

Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives (Agricultural Producers' Cooperative Corporation)

1248 Takamiya, Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture 939-1741, Japan

**4. Date of first Protection in the country of origin**

August 19, 2020

**5. Description of product**

Toyama Hoshigaki refers to a dried persimmon using “Sanja,” a native variety in the area, as an ingredient, which has been grown for more than 300 years in the former Fukumitsu Town and Johana Town in the current Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture. Their major features are the amber bullet-like weighty appearance, their melting sweetness and chewy texture.

Some of the Toyama Hoshigaki weigh more than 100 g, with the average weight exceeding 70 g, which is about two to three times heavier than other dried persimmons produced elsewhere. Sanja contains a large amount of tannin, which brings about the astringency.

Meanwhile, carbohydrate such as glucose is high. Therefore, by repeating the drying and resting phases, the sweetness is condensed and the fruit develops into a very sweet dried persimmon.

The pulp of Sanja becomes chewy, as pectin is solubilized due to Sanja's high sugar content and by hand-rubbing them at two stages during the drying process. Furthermore, by drying persimmons in a traditional way using coal briquettes at the last phase (which must be handled with great care), emitted sulfur dioxide gas serves as antioxidant and relatively low humidity, which results in less browning persimmons, produces dried persimmons in the amber color.

Toyama Hoshigaki was registered as a Toyama Prefecture Certified Local Food in 2001, and Toyama Brand in 2011 due to the following reasons; Toyama Hoshigaki is a high-quality product that has been enjoyed as a specialty of Nanto region in Toyama Prefecture for more than 300 years, thorough production management including stabilization of quality and hygiene control is in place, has won popularity due to efforts, such as selection of a quality line of Sanja variety, a persimmon dedicated for dried persimmons, selection of scions and propagation of seedlings, and its high marketability and potential to growth.

In addition to the characteristics above, the area was among the first to introduce drying machine in the country when other producing areas relied on sun-drying. This enabled early shipment and stable production in the area. The product enjoys unrivaled popularity compared to dried persimmons produced in other producing areas, as a gift or for personal consumption both in the Kanto and Kansai markets. Given its high popularity as a gift, some markets expect five times as much production, proving its high reputation as a must item for New Year and year-end gifts.

## **6. Description/delimitation of the Geographical Area and of specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographic area**

### **(1) Producing area:**

Fukumitsu Town, Nishitonami County and Johana Town Higashitonami County of Toyama Prefecture (Part of the current Nanto City, Toyama Prefecture), administrative name of the area as of October 31, 2004)

### **(2) Production method:**

#### **① Variety**

Persimmon "Sanja" is used.

Persimmons are harvested at the appropriate timing based on the color chart (3.0 to 3.5). Green persimmons will not be harvested as they will turn into a hard, yellow fruit with rough peel and without any sweetness.

Those with broken stem ends, *hetasuki* (caylx-end fruit cracking), scale infestation, and damaged by disease are thrown on the field.

#### **② Processing method of dried persimmons**

##### **a. Pretreatment**

Peel the fruit in horizontal direction instead of vertical direction, so as not to leave strong vertical lines.

Right after persimmons are peeled, fumigation of sulfur dioxide gas must be applied to prevent browning of tannin caused by oxidization, in order to achieve the bright color, and prevent rotting.

##### **b. Initial stage of dehydration**

Dehydration of harvested persimmons will be done by either sun-drying or machine-drying.

The drying and resting processes will be repeated several times before the astringency disappears and the moisture evaporates more than 45%.

c. Hand-rubbing (First time)

Persimmons are hand-rubbed after the initial drying process. Peeled persimmons are hand-rubbed so that the moisture inside and outside is evenly spread to the entire fruit, which helps to develop the distinctive amber color of Toyama Hoshigaki, and achieve chewy texture.

d. Coal briquette dehydration (Other dehydration methods that can attain similar effects are allowed. The same applies hereinafter.)

Repeat the combination of dehydration and resting processes three to four times until the fruit becomes evenly soft to the core.

e. Hand-rubbing (Second time)

Persimmons are vigorously rubbed so that the stiff area around the stem end and the core are pushed towards the tip of the fruit. Through this, the firmness of the entire fruit is adjusted and shaped in a bullet-like appearance.

f. Coal-briquette dehydration (Finishing stage)

Repeat the drying and dehydration processes until the moisture of the peeled persimmons are dehydrated more than 30%.

③Shipping standard

Producers will carry out self-inspection of i) and ii) below and sort Toyama Hoshigaki by its level, before shipping them for inspection.

Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives (hereinafter, Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperative) inspects and rates the products based on the standard, i), ii), and iii) below.

i) Shipping standard by the degree of dehydration of dried persimmons with no foreign matters attached (bits of peels and stem ends, dirt) and no foreign odor

ii) Size criteria, indicating the size, weight, and the possible number of the product to be contained in a shipping box

iii) Sanja persimmon standardization table (for inspectors) indicating the color, shape and firmness of the product

## 7. Link with the Geographical Area

Sanja, the ingredient persimmon of Toyama Hoshigaki, is a native variety of the producing area. As a result of the selective breeding of a superior lineage at Tonami Horticultural Branch Station, Toyama Agricultural Experiment Station which started in 1955, Sanja was selected due to its superior size, yield rate of dried persimmons, and the high-quality flesh. Currently, Sanja seedlings are propagated from graft scions obtained from this superior lineage. (Source: Agricultural Technology Encyclopedia) When Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperative receives orders of seedling from its members, it delivers the required number of graft scions to a seed and plant suppliers, who will graft and breed the seedlings, and supply to the cooperative members. Since graft scions and seedling are not supplied to other producing areas, Sanja is exclusively grown in the producing area.

Until around the 1960s, persimmons were suspended on poles with a simple thatched roof established on the rice fields after the harvest season. In this way, persimmons were dehydrated by the strong west wind blowing from Mt. Iouzen that lies to the west of Nanto City. During the peak harvest season of persimmons, covering the fruit from a sudden rain was a painstaking task. However, around the 1970s, with the construction of the steel-framed, glass walled sun-drying facility, the task was drastically reduced, and also led to the stable production of dried persimmons that is not affected by the weather conditions, in addition to prevention of fungi.

Sanja persimmons are extremely astringent. For this, remaining astringency was a problem in the years when cold temperature prolonged during the drying stage. Furthermore, early shipment was another issue in order to meet the demand of dried persimmons as a gift. Prompted by these factors, the development and adoption of electric dryers accelerated in around 1980.

Until then, sun-drying was the only method, and each farmer had their own way of doing it. Now, with the spread of the dryers, drying techniques are being standardized in a manual with the aim of sharing the advanced skills among the farmers.

Sanja is also extremely vulnerable to anthrax, which tends to occur on the soil with high nitrogen level. For this reason, Sanja is considered a variety not suitable for cultivation in other areas. However, thanks to the infertile red soil rich in iron oxide of the producing area, cultivation of Sanja became popular in the producing area. Being a tall-growing tree is another reason why the trees have thrived to this day. As main branches emerge from the higher part of the trunk, they are insulated from snow damage including broken branches, in the heavy snow area.

In efforts to produce high-quality dried persimmons, harvesting, processing, and pruning training sessions, and processing review sessions are being held every year to develop members' cultivation skills. Upon request from the producers, training sessions are provided for less experienced producers who will lead the production of dried persimmons in the future.

## 8. History / confirmations of on-going production

Production method of dried persimmon was reportedly introduced from Mino Province (the current Gifu Prefecture) to Fukumitsu. MAEDA Toshiie (1594-1658), the third lord of the Kaga Domain, favored the taste of dried persimmons made in Fukumitsu and encouraged its production. In this way, dried persimmon production took root in this area.

It is said that the history of dried persimmons date back to the Keicho Period (1596 to 1615). It first appears in a document written during 1691-1693, "Genroku Period, Record on Works During Agricultural Off-Seasons"; It tells about *kushigaki* (skewered persimmons) in Saishoji Village (current Nanto City), is located in the former Fukumitsu Town. Production of dried persimmons originated here as *kushigaki*, and eventually the cultivation skills developed as *tsurushi-gaki* (current dried persimmons) and the production expanded.

It was not until in 1935, that dries persimmons were sold as Toyama Hoshigaki.

At the time, supply of dried persimmons was unstable due to varying crop yields as a result of biennial bearing, and others. To address this, Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperative, comprising dried persimmon producers was established in 1939 with the aim of achieving profitable sales through cooperative shipping in the area as a whole. As a result, a system whereby farmers engage in collection, selection and sales of the fruit was organized. In the same year, shipment to the Kansai market began. In 1946, shipment to the Kanto market began. In 2016, the products were distributed to four companies in the Hokuriku market, five companies in the Tokai market, six companies in the Kansai market, and ten companies in the Kanto market.

The average yearly shipping volume of Toyama Hoshigaki is 300 to 400 tons, with roughly 380 tons in 1986, 370 tons in 1996, and 324 tons in 2006.

In 1995, upon requests from the market, automatic packaging machines were introduced for the first time in Japan. This enabled automatic packaging of dried persimmons in a separate airtight package with a freshness-retaining, in place of wrapping the products in cellophane. This enabled to keep freshness of the product over the long term and reduced the time required for packaging. As a result, the shipping volume and the price of Toyama Hoshigaki were stabilized.

In an effort to preserve dried persimmons as a local treasure, initiatives including Persimmon

Festival, an annual event is held, and dried persimmon production workshops at two elementary schools in the producing area inviting Toyama Hoshigaki producers are conducted. Through this, the entire area is endeavoring to create opportunities for local people to know more about dried persimmons and allow them to rediscover the appeal of Toyama Hoshigaki as an important local asset.

**9. Specific rules concerning labelling and using, if any**

N/A

**10. Control body / control authority responsible for checking the respect of the product specifications**

Control body is Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives.

In addition, MAFF regularly monitors the condition of quality control in the process of production, through the examination of annual report submitted by Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives.

**11. Outline of the quality control plan**

Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives will check (1)producing area, (2)variety and cultivation method of raw material, (3)processing method, (4)shipment standard and final products. If a producer fails to abide by the specification, Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives will issue a warning and request a correction of his/her production. If the producer does not follow the warning, Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives may expel the producer from the cooperatives. In addition, Federation of Toyama Hoshigaki Shipping Cooperatives will prepare an annual performance report and submit it to the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

**12. Information of registered trademark(s) identical or similar to the GI (if applied by the GI holder in other Party's territory)**

N/A