

Summary of Product Specification of Japanese GIs

I . Name of the Geographical Indication

山梨 (Yamanashi)

II . Product Category

Seishu (sake) – Article 3, Item 7 of Liquor Tax Act

III . Petitioner

Yamanashi Sake and Shochu Makers Association
4-15-5 Kokubo, Kofu-City, Yamanashi Prefecture

IV . Date of Protection in Japan

28, April, 2021

V . Product Description

(a) Raw Material and Production Method (See Annex 1&2)

(1) Raw materials

- i) Only domestically produced rice (limited to rice with a rating of grade 3 or higher) is used for rice and rice koji.
- ii) Water for use must be collected only from any of the water systems at the foot of the Southern Alps, Yatsugatake mountains, Chichibu mountains, north of Mt. Fuji, Fuji and Misaka, or north of Misaka mountains in Yamanashi Prefecture.
- iii) Ingredients for “Sake” with the provision of Article 3, Item 7 of the Liquor Tax Act are used, provided that, among the ingredients for sake with the provision of Article 2 of the Enforcement Order of the Liquor Tax Act, ingredients other than alcohol (limited to the case in which, among ingredients, the weight of alcohol does not exceed 10% of the weight of rice (including rice for koji)) shall not be used.

(2) Production method

- i) Sake shall produce in Yamanashi Prefecture in accordance with the production method of sake with the provision of Article 3, Item 7 of the Liquor Tax Act.
- ii) Liquors must be stored in Yamanashi Prefecture, if needed in the producing process.
- iii) In the case of bottling in containers to be shipped to customers, liquors must be bottled in Yamanashi Prefecture.

(b) Characteristic

Seishu (refined sake) of Yamanashi generally has a gentle, clear and pure taste.

When sake comes close to your mouth, its smells gently reminding you of fruits, and when it comes into your mouth, the aroma spreads in your mouth. At the same time, the umami and body reminding you of grains gradually spread over your tongue, bringing a gentle, clear and pure taste.

Such sake having a gentle and pure taste goes well with salty dishes, and the beautiful combination of sake and dishes will make them more tasteful.

VI. Description of the Geographical Area

Yamanashi Prefecture

VII. Link with the Geographical Area

(a) Natural factor

Yamanashi Prefecture is surrounded by mountains of at least 2,000 m and 3,000 m such as Mt. Fuji and the mountains of the Southern Alps, Yatsugatake and Okuchichibu, and about 78% of the prefectural land is forested. The Kofu Basin surrounded by those mountains has an average altitude of about 300 m, which is relatively high, and the difference of altitude is large between its areas including surrounding mountains.

High mountains block moist wind from the sea, resulting in little rain and snow and long hours of sunlight throughout a year. Summer days are sometimes very hot with the maximum temperature exceeding 30°C, and on the other hand, winter days are sometimes “chilling to the bone” with the minimum temperature below zero.

Rains and snowfall in Mt. Fuji and other high mountains provide water to forest areas and are naturally filtered over the years through granite, basalt, andesite, and other strata underlying the foot of mountains, and then become infiltrated water that adequately contains minerals, formulating multiple water systems. Each water system generates abundant and good-quality water, which has slightly different ingredients depending on each water system, but is generally light soft water.

The use of this soft water for preparation and mild fermentation under the low temperature chilling to the bone during the brewing season in winter enabled people to create gentle, clear and pure sake that has a moderate aroma and umami but little miscellaneous tastes.

(b) Human factor

Yamanashi Prefecture does not face the sea, and therefore it relied on neighboring prefectures such as Shizuoka and Kanagawa to obtain salt and seafood and often transported them to Yamanashi in a form of salted fish or dried fish for preservation. They say that Shingen Takeda who ruled this region in the Sengoku Period (Warring States Period) promoted the production of miso (soybean paste). Koshu miso, which is characterized by combination of barley

koji and rice koji, is used in a major local dish “Hoto” and many other dishes. Based on the above matters, it is considered that residents of Yamanashi have developed their sense of taste and preference for salty dishes.

Yamanashi was developed as a region directly controlled by the Edo Shogunate, and the “Koshu Kaido,” which was one of the five major roads (Gokaido) of military and logistics importance, passed in Yamanashi. In addition, it was popular for people in the Edo Period to climb Mt. Fuji as an object of worship or visit Kuonji, which was the head temple of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism and was located in Mt. Minobu. Summer was hot and winter was cold in the region, and people had to climb about 800 m across the Sasago-toge Pass in the Koshu Kaido. It is considered that people travelling in this road going up and down under such a severe climate felt salty dishes really delicious.

When eating those dishes, people have been drinking sake produced in Yamanashi. In 1796, there were at least three types of sake breweries, namely village breweries, town breweries and post-town breweries, in the prefecture. This historical background is considered to have developed sake brewing that produces gentle and pure sake that goes well and are beautifully combined with salty dishes.

VIII. Control Body

In order to use "Yamanashi," the liquor that uses "Yamanashi" is required to be confirmed by the following control body pursuant to guidelines for work implementation, prepared by the organization.

Yamanashi Sake and Shochu Makers Association
4-15-5 Kokubo, Kofu-City, Yamanashi Prefecture

(Annex1)

Liquor Tax Act(excerpt)

(Definitions of other terms)

Article 3

(7) “Seishu” means the following liquors of less than 22 percent alcohol content:

- a. Liquors made by fermenting rice, rice koji and water as the raw materials and filtering the resultant fermented substance;
- b. Liquors made by fermenting rice, rice koji, water, seishu lees and any other substance provided for by Cabinet Order as the raw materials and filtering the resultant fermented substance (limited to the case where the total weight of the substance provided for by such Cabinet Order does not exceed fifty hundredths of the weight of rice (including rice for koji preparation)); and
- c. Liquors made by adding seishu lees to seishu and filtering the resultant substance.

Enforcement Ordinance of Liquor Tax Act(excerpt)

(Raw materials of sake)

Article 2.

The substances provided for by Cabinet Order as the raw materials of sake as stated in Article 3, Item 7, b. of the shall be alcohol (including liquors conforming to the provisions of Article 3, Item 9 (excluding the provisions for alcohol content) (excluding the liquors to which any substance other than water is added) whose alcohol content is 36 percent or more but no more than 45 percent; the same shall apply hereinafter), shochu (continuous distilled shochu or single distilled shochu, excluding shochu to which any substance other than water is added; the same shall apply hereinafter), grape sugar or any other saccharide provided for by an ordinance of the Ministry of Finance, organic acid, amino-acid salt or sake.

(Annex2) flowchart of making Seishu

