

Summary of Specification



1. Name of the GI + transcription in Latin alphabet or in international phonetic alphabet
山形セルリー (transcription: Yamagata Celery), Yamagata Celery

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

Class 1 : Agricultural product (Celery)

3. Applicant – name and address

Yamagata City Agricultural Cooperative (JA Yamagata City)

18-20 Saiwai Town, Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture 990-0038, JAPAN

4. Date of first Protection in the country of origin

April 9, 2018

5. Description of product

Yamagata Celery has a totally neat shape with not-too-thick and non-stringy outer stalks. Crunchy and juicy, it has characteristics of less bitterness and even mild taste different from others.

Seeds used for cultivation are produced from flowers of postharvest lateral buds of individual celery selected based on excellent character. Such continuous transgenerational selection and seed production has improved the genetic property. As part of efforts to maintain the genetic property, the selection and seed production is entrusted only to those whom JA Yamagata City recognized as having ability to do that.

Producers of Yamagata Celery conducted research into cultivation methods that take advantage of the climate, soil and other locational conditions of the production area and built a double-harvesting system to harvest celeries in spring and autumn. Yamagata City is now known as the largest celery producer in the Tohoku region.

Market players highly appreciate Yamagata Celery.

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

Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture

(2) Selection and seed production

Skilled producers, who are appointed by the group of producers, select parents with an excellent look when harvesting fall-harvest Yamagata Celery grown in greenhouses, transplant them to greenhouse for seeding, let them bolt, and collect seeds.

(3) Cultivation method

Conduct double-harvesting with greenhouse cultivation for spring harvest (generally between early May and early July) and greenhouse cultivation for fall harvest (generally between early October and early December).

(4) Shipment standard

Ship celeries with no outstanding disease and insect damage or other type of damage.

7. Link with the Geographical Area

The basic cultivation method was introduced in Yamagata City between the late 1960s and the early 1970s. But it was difficult. Initially, bolting occurred frequently so that the use of edible part did not go as expected. Producers pinned down the cause: low temperature and poor sunshine between November and March. So, they built a unique temperature management method and finally succeed in growing quality celery.

Although single-harvesting used to be the common practice in celery cultivation, the producers also developed a unique double-harvesting system with greenhouse cultivation for spring harvest and fall harvest, which allows production and shipping in response to market demand. Thus, they established Yamagata City as the producer of high-quality celery.

Yamagata Celery of today has excellent character after the selections using techniques including unique seed production that suits the climate in Yamagata City, i.e., skilled producers produce seeds from flowers of lateral bud, which takes advantage of celery's sensitivity to low temperature during winter.

Required water sources for Yamagata Celery are secured with the use of "Yamagata Goseki" (literally, "five weirs in Yamagata"), agricultural waterways as historic assets that run through central Yamagata City, the use of abundant subsoil water from Zao mountain range pumped up from around 100 m underground, and other advantaged geographical conditions. Tile drainage is effectively used to improve the cultivation environment in the farmland with excellent drainage, which is suitable for celery cultivation.

8. History / confirmations of on-going production

The history of celery cultivation in Yamagata City started when young farmers focused on celery and tried its cultivation in 1968. The young producers studied under Nintaro Ito, the pioneer in celery cultivation, to acquire cultivation techniques, and started celery cultivation in Yamagata City in the following year. They made efforts despite initial difficulties, and became able to cultivate high-quality celery in several years.

Later, the producers established the production techniques and worked with the Yamagata City Agricultural Cooperative on production through market sales strategy. They established Yamagata Celery as a brand product highly appreciated by the markets and consumers. Yamagata City has continued celery cultivation for over 45 years to present.

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 JA Yamagata City.

In addition, MAFF regularly monitors the condition of quality control in the process of production, through the examination of annual report submitted by JA Yamagata City .

11. Outline of the quality control plan

JA Yamagata City will check (1) producing area, (2) seeds, (3) cultivation method, (4) shipment standard and final product. If the producer in the group fails to abide by the specification, JA Yamagata City will issue a warning and request a correction of his/her production. In case the producer does not follow the warning, JA Yamagata City may prohibit the shipment of the product as “Yamagata Celery” and/or the distribution of Yamagata Celery’s seeds and for a given time, or expel the producer from the producer’s group. In addition, JA Yamagata City 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