

Summary of Specification



1. Name of the GI + transcription in Latin alphabet or in international phonetic alphabet
いぶりがっこ (transcription: Iburigakko)、Iburigakko

2. Category of the product for which the name is protected
Class 5 : Processed agricultural product (pickled Japanese white radish)

3. Applicant – name and address
Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association
To the attention of Akita Federation of Small Business Associations
5F, 1-47, Kyokuhokunishiki Town, Akita City, Akita Prefecture, 010-0923, Japan

4. Date of first Protection in the country of origin
May 8, 2019

5. Description of product

Iburigakko is a pickled radish made by a manufacturing method unique to Akita Prefecture where radishes are smoked for drying.

Pickling a radish after mildly smoking at low temperature enables the unique smoke-roasted flavor of smoking and crunchy texture to be enjoyed.

When a radish is smoked at low temperature, smoke goes through the radish properly and the entire radish dries evenly. By pickling this radish in a bed of salted rice brans for 40 days or more and causing it to develop lactic acid fermentation slowly in the chillness of mid-winter, the palatable taste of salted rice brans penetrates enough into the inside of the radish and maximizes the inherent sweetness of radishes. Iburigakko, having a unique taste created by a combination of smoke-roasted flavor and the sweetness of a radish, is regarded as preserved food in Akita Prefecture. This type of food made by smoking and pickling is rare not only in Japan but also in the world.

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:
Akita Prefecture

(2) Production method:

①Raw materials

Domestic radishes are used.

②Manufacturing method or process

- i) Radishes are smoked day and night for two days or more, using broad-leafed trees that make a good flavor and color such as oaks or cherry blossom trees and others.
- ii) After smoking of the radishes, the radishes are pickled in a bed of salted rice brans for 40 days or more and fermented and ripened at a low temperature for a long time.
- iii) Food additives used for preparation are basically natural in origin. The following food additives are not used: saccharin and its salts as sweeteners, Food Yellow No. 4 (Tartrazine) and Food Yellow No. 4 (Aluminum Lake) as colorants, and sorbic acid and its salts as preservatives.

7. Link with the Geographical Area

Iburigakko is a traditional food unique to Akita Prefecture, nurtured in the harsh climate as preserved food for winter of Akita Prefecture accompanied by a long period subject to continuous snow cover, during which food cannot be produced.

Ordinary pickled radishes are pickled after being dried in the sun or by other methods. On the other hand, in Akita Prefecture, which located in Tohoku district facing the Sea of Japan, it is difficult to dry radishes because of high humidity. Also, since the prefecture often experiences a snowfall from late autumn to early winter when radishes are to be harvested, the radishes are not only unable to be dried in the sun, but also might freeze. Because of this, a unique method has been established to dry up radishes by hanging them on indoor beams and using smokes in the irori fireplace and then pickle them. The production method has been handed on from generation to generation among farmers in Akita Prefecture and it was called “Iburi daikon duke” (“Iburi” means smoked, “daikon” means radish and “duke” means pickles).

In the late 1960s, the commercialization was attempted by the manufacturers of pickles in the prefecture. In Akita dialect, Japanese pickles are called “gakko,” and the commercialized “Iburi daikon duke” began to be marketed under the name of “Iburigakko”.

Professional expertise has been handed on in the region, to adjust heat levels depending on radish quality, temperature, humidity, etc. and to change the position of radishes or firewood from time to time in order to smoke the whole radish evenly. Even now, Iburigakko is being produced by utilizing the professional expertise.

8. History / confirmations of on-going production

The “Iburi daikon duke” dried in irori fireplaces had been widely made for home use in Akita Prefecture since prewar periods. It was in 1967 that manufacturers of pickles in the prefecture started to market “Iburi daikon duke” under the trade name of Iburigakko for

the first time. Since then, the pickles have been continuously produced as traditional food of Akita Prefecture for about 50 years up to the present.

The amount of production is increasing year by year and so is the number of manufactures. According to the survey by Akita Prefecture, the number of major manufacturers was 14 in FY2014 to produce about 2.5 million radishes of Iburigakko, while in FY2017, 17 manufacturers produced 2.78 million. The production of Iburigakko is steadily increasing.

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 Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association.

In addition, MAFF regularly monitors the condition of quality control in the process of production, through the examination of annual report submitted by Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association.

11. Outline of the quality control plan

Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association will check (1) raw material, (2) manufacturing method or process and final products. If a producer fails to abide by the specification, Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association will issue a warning and request a correction of his/her production. In case the producer does not follow the warning, Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association will stop shipping and selling the his/her products as “Iburigakko”. In addition, Akita Iburigakko Promotion Cooperative Association 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