

## Summary of Product Specification of Japanese GIs

### I . Name of the Geographical Indication

長野 (Nagano)

### II . Product Category

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

### III . Petitioner

Nagano Appellation Control Committee

692-2 Aza Habashita, Oaza Minami-Nagano, Nagano-city, Nagano c/o Japanese Sake and Wine Promotion Office

### IV . Date of Protection in Japan

30, June, 2021

### V . Product Description

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

(1) Raw materials

- i) Rice and rice koji for use must be polished rice (limited to rice whose rice bran is wholly or partially removed within Nagano Prefecture) that is processed from unpolished rice harvested within Nagano Prefecture (limited to unpolished rice rated as the third grade or above under the Agricultural Products Inspection Act [Act No. 144 of 1951]).
- ii) Water for use must be taken only within Nagano Prefecture.
- iii) Ingredients for use must be ones specified as raw materials for “seishu” by Article 3, item 7 of the Liquor Tax Act.

However, of raw materials for seishu specified by Article 2 of the Order of Enforcement of the Liquor Tax Act, no ingredients other than alcohol must be used (limited to the case of using alcohol when the weight of alcohol out of the ingredients does not exceed 50-100ths of the weight of rice (including koji rice)).

(2) Production method

- i) Sake must be one that was produced by the production methods of seishu stipulated by Article 3, item 7 (a) or (b) of the Liquor Tax Act within Nagano Prefecture.
- ii) In the process of production, sake must be stored within Nagano Prefecture.
- iii) Bottling must be completed within Nagano Prefecture with containers planned to be delivered to consumers.

(b) Characteristic

Sake of Nagano generally has a rich taste with little miscellaneous tastes, harmonizing with a beautiful, mild aroma.

The rich taste like concentrated umami of rice spreads in your mouth together with sweetness and acidity, and it is enhanced by lack of miscellaneous tastes, giving you satisfaction even when you drink seishu without dishes, but drinking it with dishes having a rich taste can deepen umami of the dishes.

In addition, a beautiful, mild aroma creates an environment in your mouth where you can concentrate on the taste without hindering the flavor of dishes, and gives a beautiful, mild aftertaste.

## VI. Description of the Geographical Area

Nagano Prefecture

## VII. Link with the Geographical Area

(a) Natural factor

Nagano Prefecture is located in the central part of Honshu and surrounded by high mountains with an altitude over 2,000 m and 3,000 m, namely the Hida Mountains (Northern Japan Alps) on the northwest and the Akaishi Mountains (Southern Japan Alps) on the southeast. Also the Kiso Mountains (Central Japan Alps) are in the central part of Nagano Prefecture, and the land is steep and complex with many mountains all over the prefecture. Most of the total area is covered by mountains and the average altitude is over 1,000 m.

Rainfall and snowfall in these high mountains formulate many rivers in this steep land. Particularly with respect to the Chikumagawa River and the Saigawa River flowing to the northeast and the Tenryugawa River originating from the Suwa Lake located in the central part of the prefecture and flowing to the south, many basins are formulated along the rivers and cities and farmland spread along those basins.

Due to the regions' inland climate and location at a high altitude, the regions have relatively long hours of daylight and high temperature from July to August, but the temperature tends to drop down at night, resulting a great temperature difference between day and night. This makes rice rich in starch, which is suitable for sake brewing.

In addition, the regions are surrounded by high mountains and therefore are little affected by typhoons and rainfall during the rice growing season; this fact and their cool climate tend to reduce the occurrence of diseases and pests and can suppress the use of agricultural chemicals for rice growing.

Because of this natural environment suitable for rice growing, the ratio of first-grade rice under the inspection standards provided in the Agricultural Products Inspection Act is very high with regard to unpolished rice harvested in Nagano Prefecture compared with those produced in other parts of the nation.

Such good-quality rice and clear water flowing from ones of the highest mountains in Japan

are used to brew seishu of Nagano, and it is a factor that generates a rich taste with little miscellaneous tastes, harmonizing with a beautiful, mild aroma.

(b) Human factor

Nagano Prefecture has heavy snowfall and are surrounded by high mountains, and therefore people had difficulty in obtaining food in winter and developed fermented foods such as miso and pickles as well as various other preserved foods from a long time ago. Dishes were often highly seasoned by using those preserved foods, and sake brewers aimed to create sake having a mild aroma and a rich taste.

In the Meiji era, it seems that sake was brewed by also employing chief brewers (Toji) in other prefectures who had good reputation of brewing high-quality sake, and later the Nagano Prefectural Government assigned full-time sake brewing technicians to the agriculture and commerce section and thereby started to provide guidance on brewing in 1917 and started to hold seminars to provide education to local chief brewers in 1919 with the aim to develop local chief brewers and improve brewing techniques for the promotion of local industry.

In 1941, the Nagano Prefectural Brewing Experiment Station was established to play a core role in developing brewing techniques and performed various activities such as the development of new yeast that contributed to the improvement of brewers in the prefecture. In recent years, the Nagano Prefecture General Industrial Technology Center in cooperation with the Nagano Sake Brewery Association provides new employees of breweries with the “licensed brewer development course” for the development of successors.

In 2002, the Nagano Prefectural Government established the Nagano Appellation Control. This system aims to differentiate agricultural products based on raw materials, growing methods, breeding methods, and sense of taste and promote the sale thereof to consumers with confidence and responsibilities, and also to promote the motivation for production for the purpose of branding agricultural products produced in Nagano Prefecture. Since 2003, it has given certification to seishu, contributing to clarifying the quality of seishu unique to Nagano.

As stated above, the characteristics have been maintained and improved through the implementation of measures to develop human resources and improve brewing techniques in cooperation between public sector, private sector and the community.

## **VIII. Control Body**

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

Nagano Appellation Control Committee

692-2 Aza Habashita, Oaza Minami-Nagano, Nagano-city, Nagano c/o Japanese Sake and Wine Promotion Office

(Annex1)

**Liquor Tax Act (excerpt)**

(Definitions of other terms)

Article 3

In this Act, the meanings of the terms listed in the following items are as prescribed respectively in those items:

(1) ~ (6) .....

(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.

(8) ~ (27) .....

**Order for the Enforcement 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 (sake)

