

## Summary of Specification



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

山形ラ・フランス (transcription : Yamagata La France), Yamagata La France

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

Class 1: Agricultural product (Pear)

### 3. Applicant – name and address

Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association  
2-8-1 Matsunami, Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture 990-8570, Japan

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

August 19, 2020

### 5. Description of product

Yamagata La France is a pear, produced in Yamagata Prefecture using a La France cultivar. Cultivation management thoroughly in place in the area including pruning and fruit thinning, shipping at an appropriate timing taking into account post harvest ripening has led to the production of pears with melting texture, ample juice, unique aroma and good eating quality. They also come in a similar size. The products' high quality and the stable supply system have earned high reputation from the market and retailers. In the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Wholesale Market, the share of Yamagata La France in terms of sales volume and value during November to January both exceeded 95% (2002-2018 average), proving Yamagata La France's status as an essential fruit in autumn.

## **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 Prefecture

(2) Production method

① Variety

La France

② Cultivation method

Trees are pruned so that they have less crossing main branches and more fruit bearing branches that are well exposed to the sunlight. To promote fruit development, excessive fruits are removed to leave only one or less fruit per cluster (A cluster usually carries five to six fruits if not thinned.)

③ Shipping method

a) Shipping standard

Pears should weigh more than 180 g without damage, or not markedly damaged, and not rotten.

Those that are not markedly bruised or rotten can be shipped for processing purposes regardless of the weight.

b) Start of shipping

Fruits that fully demonstrate the characteristics of Yamagata La France with little variations in quality are shipped on a date when the products are able to reach consumers on or after the base date designated by the producing area. Base date is the earliest day when consumers can purchase the fruit, taking into account a period for post harvest ripening at the producing area (hereinafter, producing area post harvest ripening). The base date is determined by the estimated harvest period based on the results of prefecture-wide fruit quality survey conducted by the prefecture and shipping groups, and the estimated number of days for the fruit firmness to drop to roughly 6-4 poundforce by producing area post harvest ripening.

## **7. Link with the Geographical Area**

The pulp of La France is prone to disease triggered by rain. Therefore, the fruit is best cultivated in a climate with less rain. Furthermore, the greater the temperature gap between night and day, the more improved the fruit quality. In this regard, Yamagata Prefecture has relatively little rain when compared to other producing areas during June and September, when the pear is most likely to be infected by a disease. Furthermore, diurnal temperature gap is significant in the prefecture during August to September at 9.4 to 10.3 celcius, when the fruit stores nutrients. These prove that Yamagata is a suitable area in Japan to grow La France.

In Yamagata Prefecture, cultivation of European pears began in 1875. The production took root in line with the increased demand for canned pears, and eventually the prefecture became a producing area. Although it was well known among farmers that La France was delicious when eaten fresh, given the time and cost required for production, the variety was only grown as pollinizers. From around 1964, the demand for canned pear decreased and instead demand for fresh eating pears grew. In around 1979, people began to take notice on the delicious taste of the fruit.

In the 1980, in an attempt to promote production of fresh eating La France pears, the prefecture, teaming up with private companies, worked for development of cultivation method. The wider adoption at the production area of the pruning and fruit thinning techniques developed in 1985 has served to stabilize the quality of La France pears.

In 1988, Yamagata Prefecture Horticultural Experimental Station (the current Yamagata

Integrated Agricultural Research Center, Horticultural and Agricultural Experiment Station) established the techniques to forecast the harvest period, based on which a base date for shipping is determined, and post harvest ripening technique at the producing area. As a result, in 1990, the stable shipping of pears featuring characteristics of Yamagata La France became possible.

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

La France was introduced in Japan around 1902 at the national agricultural experiment station, and in Yamagata Prefecture around the 1910s , about 100 years ago.

In Yamagata Prefecture, post harvest ripening at the producing area was vigorously pursued after trial and errors from the 1980s. In 1981, the skill was adopted by Oe Town Agricultural Cooperative (the current Sagae Nishimurayama Agricultural Cooperative), and in 1987, by Tendo City Agricultural Cooperatives.

In 1990, Yamagata Prefecture Federation of Economy and Agricultural Cooperatives (the current Yamagata Prefecture office of National Federation Agricultural Cooperative Associations (ZEN-NOH Yamagata) ) established the shipping base date (shipping release date) system to ensure producing area's post harvest ripening is implemented. Major agricultural cooperatives began to adopt the system. In 2013, the definition of base date was revised as the first day of the season on which consumers can purchase the fruit that went through producing area post harvest ripening, and efforts were made to coincide the first shipping on that day. Not only agricultural cooperatives but also the entire prefecture including markets and shipping groups now comply with the rule. This prefecture-wide base date system of La France is only implemented in Yamagata Prefecture.

The name Yamagata La France began to be used in an organizational manner by Yamagata Prefecture Agricultural Cooperative (JA Yamagata) in 2001, and by Tendo City Agricultural Cooperative in 2004.

In FY 2014, Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotional Association was established by the local agricultural cooperatives and governments. The promotional association has been working to pursue further quality through various initiatives such as creating a cultivation calendar featuring the latest techniques.

As a result, La France growing area in Yamagata, which was 68 ha in 1978 jumped to 749 ha as of 2016, which is number one in the country (accounts for 82%), with the number of farmers standing at 2,300 (2015).

In recent years, the fruit is being exported to Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The export volume which stood at roughly 0.5 ton in FY 2000 increased to around 13 tons by FY 2018.

## **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 Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association.

In addition, MAFF regularly monitors the condition of quality control in the process of production, through the examination of annual report submitted by Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association.

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

Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association will check (1)producing area, (2)variety, (3)cultivation method, (4)shipment standard and final products. If a producer fails to abide by the specification, Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association will issue a warning and request a correction of his/her production. If the producer does not follow the warning, Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion Association may prohibit the shipment of the product as “Yamagata Prefecture La France” and/or expel the producer from the association. In addition, Yamagata Prefecture La France Promotion 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