



Let's all toast Hyogo!

-The Center of Production of Sake and Sake-brewing Rice-4

Yamada Nishiki, King of Sake-brewing Rice

High Quality, Polished or Unpolished

Confronting Global Warming and Competitors in Other Prefectures

Yamada Nishiki is the king of sake-brewing rice. Since it was created 80 years ago in Hyogo Prefecture, no other varieties of sake-brewing rice that are better than Yamada Nishiki have emerged.



Rice bag stamped with "Honmamon (authentic) Yamada Nishiki," thus indicating it is Yamada Nishiki produced in Hyogo Prefecture (Yokawa Town, Miki City)

The enormous popularity of Yamada Nishiki at sake brewing companies gets especially manifested at the "Annual Japan Sake Awards," the most authoritative Japanese sake contest. Surprisingly, 90% of gold prize winning sake brands utilize Yamada Nishiki.

Yamada Nishiki will also show its presence as rice used to make sake at the Sake Category Competition of the International Wine Challenge (IWC), which will be held for the first time in Kobe on the 16th of this month. According to the prefectural office, six of all "Champion Sake" awards at the past nine contests, including the first Champion Tsurunosato produced by Kikuhime Co. Ltd, utilized Yamada Nishiki produced in Hyogo Prefecture.

The main requirements of good sake-brewing rice are large kernels with a starchy "white-core" at their center; minimum protein and fat that can give sake an unfavorable flavor; grain plumpness and size uniformity; and some

other conditions. Yamada Nishiki satisfies all these requirements.

"The amino acid that originates from the Koji mold ensures mildness and minimum bitterness," Shinichi Honda (aged 64), President of Honda Shoten Co., Ltd. (Himeji City) that produces Junmai Daiginjo under the brand name of "Kome-no-Sasayaki (whisper of rice)" and other sake products, stated when explaining the features.

Yamada Nishiki produced in Hyogo Prefecture is very popular because it best-suits the high quality sake of Ginjo, in which the delicate taste and flavor come from the white-core obtained from the highly polished rice. It is supplied to more than 500 brewing companies across the nation.

There is also, however, a brewery that tries to take full advantage of all the attractive features of Yamada Nishiki. Shimomura Shuzoten (Himeji), which is known for "Okuharima," produces Junmai from 80% polished rice that gets highly praised for its well-balanced levels of sweetness, bitterness, and sourness.

Even rice eaten as a staple food is made by polishing the brown rice grains by almost 10%. Rice grains that have been polished by 20% can contain proteins that can lead to an unpleasant tasting sake, but "Yamada Nishiki inherently possesses strong taste and umami compounds, which ensures a well-balanced flavor, and only Yamada Nishiki enables us to make this attempt" stated Hiroaki Shimomura (aged 59), the Toji sake master and the owner of Shimomura Shuzoten.

Yamada Nishiki helps brewers, relatively speaking, easily produce any type of sake, ranging from freshly brewed sake to aged sake, and with fewer failures. And indeed in responding to the admiration of nationwide brewers, Yamada Nishiki is increasingly being produced in various other prefectures than Hyogo.

The national share of Yamada Nishiki being produced in Hyogo Prefecture was about 74% in 2013 but had dropped to about 63% in 2015. However, during the same period, national production increased by 1.7 times. "It was grown in 33 prefectures in 2015, and, in particular, Okayama, Fukuoka, Shiga, Yamaguchi, and Niigata prefectures showed big increases," said Masaru Ikegami (aged 54), the Chief Researcher of the Prefectural Agriculture Technology Center.

Another concern for all the people involved in sake-brewing rice production in Hyogo Prefecture has been global warming. The ratio of the highly-ranked rice had been around 70% in past years but then fell to 15% in 2010 due to the high temperatures experienced in summer that year.

In order to compete with Yamada Nishiki producers in other prefectures, and also fight global warming,

(Unit: ton)
Figures for 2015 are preliminary as of March 31, 2016 while those for 2013 were finalized.

Production of Yamada Nishiki by Prefecture

| | 2015 | 2013 |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| Miyagi | 48 | 26 |
| Yamagata | 4 | 1 |
| Ibaraki | 177 | 2 |
| Tochigi | 415 | 13 |
| Kanagawa | 94 | 59 |
| Niigata | 808 | 20 |
| Toyama | 507 | 249 |
| Ishikawa | 48 | 30 |
| Fukui | 166 | 103 |
| Yamanashi | 63 | 5 |
| Shizuoka | 565 | 316 |
| Mie | 267 | 195 |
| Shiga | 1,335 | 390 |
| Kyoto | 142 | 94 |
| Osaka | 27 | 29 |
| Hyogo | 24,422 | 17,153 |
| Nara | 84 | 27 |
| Wakayama | 77 | 42 |
| Tottori | 363 | 248 |
| Shimane | 209 | 108 |
| Okayama | 3,174 | 1,544 |
| Hiroshima | 952 | 235 |
| Yamaguchi | 1,514 | 393 |
| Tokushima | 940 | 533 |
| Kagawa | 25 | 21 |
| Ehime | 25 | 21 |
| Kochi | 29 | 30 |
| Fukuoka | 1,390 | 867 |
| Saga | 527 | 207 |
| Nagasaki | 77 | 34 |
| Kumamoto | 280 | 58 |
| Oita | 69 | 17 |
| Miyazaki | 28 | 11 |
| Subtotal | 38,853 | 23,081 |

Hyogo Prefecture commenced upon the quality improvement project of "Upgrading Hyogo's Yamada Nishiki" in cooperation with JA in 2011.

As a part of the project they changed the rice planting season and increased the sieve mesh size from 2.0 mm to 2.05 mm in order to choose plumper grains and improve the size uniformity. "Sake brewing companies expect Hyogo's Yamada Nishiki to have large, uniform grains. We would like to be able to satisfy their expectations," stated the Agriculture and Horticulture Division of the Prefectural Government.

(Kazuyoshi Tsujimoto)

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兵庫県の山田錦であることを示す「ほんまもん山田錦」の判を押された袋＝三木市吉川町

| 検査年度 | 検査結果 |
|--------|---------|
| 平成27年産 | 合格 |
| 銘柄 | 兵庫県産 |
| 正味重量規格 | 30 kg |
| 皆掛重量 | 30.5 kg |

一方、この米の魅力を示す「ほんまもん山田錦」の判を押された袋... 80%の純米酒は、甘みや渋み、酸などが調和

酒米の王者、山田錦
兵庫県で誕生してから80年になる今も、これに勝る酒米は出てきていない。

王者・山田錦

シヨナル・ワイン・チメ、6本が兵庫産山田錦を使って備える。... 削っても削らなくても

兵庫に乾杯
日本酒と酒米の聖地

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| 山田錦の府県別生産量 | 2015年産 | 13年産 | 単位: トン |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 宮城 | 48 | 26 | 1 |
| 山形 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| 茨城 | 177 | 2 | 13 |
| 栃木 | 415 | 13 | 59 |
| 群馬 | 94 | 20 | 20 |
| 神奈川 | 808 | 249 | 249 |
| 新潟 | 507 | 249 | 249 |
| 富山 | 507 | 249 | 249 |
| 石川 | 48 | 30 | 30 |
| 福井 | 166 | 103 | 103 |
| 山梨 | 63 | 5 | 5 |
| 静岡 | 565 | 316 | 316 |
| 三重 | 267 | 195 | 195 |
| 滋賀 | 1,335 | 390 | 390 |
| 京都 | 142 | 94 | 94 |
| 大阪 | 27 | 29 | 29 |
| 奈良 | 24,422 | 17,153 | 17,153 |
| 和歌山 | 84 | 27 | 27 |
| 徳島 | 77 | 42 | 42 |
| 香取 | 363 | 248 | 248 |
| 島根 | 209 | 108 | 108 |
| 岡山 | 3,174 | 1,544 | 1,544 |
| 広島 | 952 | 235 | 235 |
| 山口 | 1,514 | 393 | 393 |
| 徳島 | 940 | 533 | 533 |
| 香川 | 25 | 21 | 21 |
| 愛媛 | 25 | 21 | 21 |
| 高知 | 29 | 30 | 30 |
| 福岡 | 1,390 | 867 | 867 |
| 佐賀 | 527 | 207 | 207 |
| 熊本 | 77 | 34 | 34 |
| 大分 | 280 | 58 | 58 |
| 宮崎 | 69 | 17 | 17 |
| 小計 | 38,853 | 23,081 | 23,081 |

15年産は16年3月31日現在の速報値、13年産は確定値

他県産、温暖化に対抗

削っても削らなくても... 他県産の攻勢と温暖化に対抗するため、県は2013年に約74%の期待に応えてきた63%に低下した。全国... (辻本一好)