

Tohoku Sake Awards 2022

November 10, 2022

Office of Analysis and Brewing Technology

Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau

1. Outline

(1) Purpose

The purpose of The Tohoku Sake Awards (*Tohoku Seishu Kanpyokai*) is to improve further the quality and brewing technique of sake brewers in the Tohoku region under the auspices of the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau, thereby contributing to the sound development of the sake brewing industry.

(2) Review of 2022

The Tohoku Sake Awards generally showcase sake brewers possessing the best brewing techniques in Japan, whose high-quality sake has been brewed with great care during the winter and meticulously managed and matured during the summer.

This year, 142 sake breweries in the Tohoku region's six prefectures entered 137 samples from 120 breweries in the *ginjo-shu* category, and 134 samples from 116 breweries in the *junmai-shu* category.

The *ginjo-shu* category showcased well-balanced sakes with gorgeous fruity aromas and a smooth, rich taste. In the *junmai-shu* category, various kinds of ingredient rice were used, and the sakes had rich personality and flavor characterized by acidity and umami.

Many breweries were damaged when the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011 devastated the Tohoku region. Also, they suffered from damages by the large earthquakes in February, March 2021, and March 2022. Despite these, all of the sakes entered in the Sake Awards are of exceptionally high quality. The fact shows that sake breweries in the Tohoku region are making huge progress toward recovery. The breweries have also been affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic, but we strongly believe that they will overcome these trials.

2. Entry

(1) Qualification for entry

Licensed *sake* breweries located within the jurisdiction of the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau (i.e., Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Akita, Yamagata, and Fukushima prefectures)

(2) Eligible *sakes*

Sake from the below-mentioned categories that were produced from the entrant's own production site located within the jurisdiction of the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau during the brewing year of 2021.

(3) Categories

a *Ginjo-shu* category

Ginjo-shu as stipulated in the "Labeling Standard for the Manufacturing Process and Quality of *Sake*" (NTA notice #8, November 22, 1989)

b *Junmai-shu* category

Junmai-shu as stipulated in the "Labeling Standard for the Manufacturing Process and Quality of *Sake*" (NTA notice #8, November 22, 1989)

(4) Number of entries permitted

Each licensed sake brewery can submit up to two entries in total for the two categories. The number of entries for one category cannot be more than two.

3. Quality Examinations

(1) Schedule

-Preliminary examination: October 4-5 (Tues.-Wed.), 2022

-Final examination: October 7 (Fri.), 2022

(2) Process

The jurors assess the quality of each sample by sensory evaluation. All examinations are blind and administered by category. In the preliminary examinations, each sample is examined for individual attributes to clarify a sensory profile and overall evaluation is given based on a five-step scoring method. After this preliminary process, the highest scoring entries are selected for the final examination. In the final examination, the chosen sakes are evaluated by a three-step scoring method.

(3) Evaluation policy

Overall quality is determined based on the following style-based categories:

a *Ginjo-shu*: well-balanced flavor, characteristic aroma, and delicate taste

b *Junmai-shu*: refined flavor with *umami* (savoriness) and round texture

(4) Quality evaluation jurors

Jurors were selected from a pool of experts, including:

- Academics in the field of sake brewing
- Staff members from the National Research Institute of Brewing (NRIB)
- Staff members from prefectural brewing-related organizations
- Sake experts and manufacturers recommended by the prefectural sake and shochu makers' associations of the Tohoku region
- Technical officers from the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau

List of Jurors 2022

Name	Affiliations	Participating Examinations
OGURA AKIRA	AOMORI PREFECTURAL INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTER, HIROSAKI INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	GP, JP
SAITO TOMOAKI		GF, JF
NARUMI NOBUHIRO	NARUMIJOZOTEN CORPORATION	GP, JP
NAGANE KENICHI	MOMOKAWA BREWING, INC.	GF, JF
TAMAKAWA HIDEYUKI	IWATE INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE	GP, JP
HIRANO TAKAHIRO		GF, JF
MIURA KENTARO	IWATEMEIJO CO., LTD.	GP, JP
KONNO YASUAKI	SUISEN SHUZO CO., LTD. OHFUNATOGURA	GF, JF
HASHIMOTO KENYA	MIYAGI PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT	GP, JP
ITO KENJI	MIYAGI SAKE AND SHOCHU MAKERS ASSOCIATION	GF, JF
WATANABE KOJI	SAURA COMPANY, LIMITED	GP, JP
SAITO KAICHIRO	KAKUBOSHI CO., LTD.	GF, JF
UEHARA TOMOMI	AKITA RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND BREWING	GP, JP
SHINDO SHO		GF, JF
SASAKI AKIHIRO	DEWATSURUSYUZO CO., LTD.	GP, JP
SATO OSAMU	AKITA MEIJO COMPANY LIMITED	GF, JF
KUDOH SHINPEI	YAMAGATA RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	GP, JP
ISHIGAKI HIROYOSHI		GF, JF
SATO ICHIRO	FUMOTOI CO., LTD.	GP, JP
WADA SHIGEKI	WADA SHUZO LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	GF, JF
KIKUCHI NOBUHIRO	INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT, AIZUWAKAMATSU TECHNICAL SUPPORT CENTRE	GP, JP
TAKAHASHI RYO		GF, JF
WATANABE KEITA	AIZU SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	GP, JP
SATO TETSUYA	YAMATOGAWA SHUZOTEN.LTD	GF, JF
JOHN GAUNTNER	SAKE WORLD, Inc.	GF, JF
KUMADA CARLIN	YUTAKA SHOPPING KK	GF, JF
KANAUCHI MAKOTO	MIYAGI UNIVERSITY	GF, JF
FUJII TSUTOMU	FUKUSHIMA UNIVERSITY	GF, JF

Name	Affiliations	Participating Examinations
YAMADA OSAMU	NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF BREWING	GF, JF
MUTO AKINORI	OFFICE OF ANALYSIS AND BREWING TECHNOLOGY, SENDAI REGIONAL TAXATION BUREAU	GP, JP, GF, JF
FUJITA DAISUKE		GP, JP, GF, JF
KATO YUKO		GP, JP, GF, JF
KURAMOTO AKIHIDE		GP, JP, GF, JF

Abbreviations: GP, *Ginjo-shu* preliminary ex.; JP, *Junmai-shu* preliminary ex.; GF, *Ginjo-shu* final ex.; JF, *Junmai-shu* final ex.

4. Awards

Entrants earning high scores in the final examination for each category are awarded an honor prize. The number of recipients of this prize is limited, and only those placing in the top one-third of all entrants in each category are eligible.

Of the top three rankings for each category, the “Grand Honor Prize” is awarded to those placing first in each category, and the “Special Honor Prize” to those placing second or third.

Certificates in English and Japanese are then presented to each of the prizewinners by the commissioner of the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau.

5. Award Ceremony

The event will not be held this year due to COVID-19.

6. Brewing Techniques Workshop

(1) Date

This event is scheduled to be held from November 14 (Mon.) to 18 (Fri.), 2022.

(2) Location

This event is scheduled to be located at the office of Analysis and Brewing Technology of the Sendai Regional Taxation Bureau at the 1st floor of the Sendai Joint Government Building A.

(3) Participants

Due to COVID-19 measures, participants will be limited to sake brewers, technical guidance organization staff in the Tohoku area and jurors of the Tohoku Sake Awards 2022 who register in advance. The dates and times of participation will be staggered.

7. Statistics

(1) Number of Entries

Prefecture	<i>Ginjo-shu</i>	<i>Junmai-shu</i>	Total
Aomori	11 (10)	10 (10)	21 (11)
Iwate	14 (12)	19 (14)	33 (17)
Miyagi	18 (14)	21 (15)	39 (21)
Akita	23 (22)	24 (22)	47 (24)
Yamagata	35 (29)	28 (25)	63 (34)
Fukushima	36 (33)	32 (30)	68 (35)
Total	137 (120)	134 (116)	271 (142)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of breweries

(Previous Year)

Prefecture	<i>Ginjo-shu</i>	<i>Junmai-shu</i>	Total
Aomori	11 (10)	11 (10)	22 (11)
Iwate	12 (11)	17 (14)	29 (15)
Miyagi	20 (17)	19 (15)	39 (21)
Akita	28 (24)	23 (22)	51 (26)
Yamagata	37 (29)	27 (24)	64 (35)
Fukushima	37 (30)	30 (26)	67 (36)
Total	145 (121)	127 (111)	272 (144)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of breweries

(2) Number of Prizewinners (including Grand Honor and Special Honor Prizes)

Prefecture	<i>Ginjo-shu</i>	<i>Junmai-shu</i>	Total
Aomori	3 (3)	4 (4)	7 (6)
Iwate	4 (4)	9 (8)	13 (9)
Miyagi	4 (4)	6 (5)	10 (8)
Akita	9 (9)	6 (6)	15 (13)
Yamagata	12 (11)	7 (7)	19 (15)
Fukushima	11 (10)	15 (14)	26 (18)
Total	43 (41)	47 (44)	90 (69)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of breweries

(Previous Year)

Prefecture	<i>Ginjo-shu</i>	<i>Junmai-shu</i>	Total
Aomori	6 (6)	5 (5)	11 (6)
Iwate	2 (2)	7 (6)	9 (7)
Miyagi	6 (5)	5 (4)	11 (7)
Akita	8 (8)	7 (7)	15 (13)
Yamagata	14 (10)	5 (5)	19 (13)
Fukushima	15 (14)	12 (11)	27 (20)
Total	51 (45)	41 (38)	92 (66)

Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of breweries

8. List of Prizewinners

In regard solely to entrants awarded the “Grand Honor Prize” and the “Special Honor Prize,” tasting notes by two foreign jurors and some of the Japanese jurors are published.

(1) *Ginjo-shu* Category

a. Grand Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Yamagata	FUMOTOI CO., LTD.	JCN6390001006753	FUMOTOI
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Floral notes in the aroma laced with melon and lychee, and a well structured solid pillar of flavor that includes white pepper and good minerality.</i>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>Aromas of ripe pineapples, lemon grass and stewed pear flow beautifully into a soft juicy palate of powdered sugar and rice pudding, with a clean white pepper finish.</i>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Aromas of rich ripened apples and grapes, coupled with hints of vanilla, mixed with a soft sweetness and pleasant richness, then a thick yet refreshing finish.</i>			

b. Special Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Yamagata	YONETSURUSYUZO CORPORATION	JCN8390001010456	YONETSURU
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<p>• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Apple and Asian pear are the main elements of the aromatics and are supported by a full acidity that ties in well with the slightly sweet flavor.</i></p> <p>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>A luscious nose of peach, apricot and green apple gives way to a clean refreshing body with hints of cotton candy and orange soda, leading to a crisp finish.</i></p>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Notes of ripe strawberry and green apple with accents of refreshing sweetness and bitterness reminiscent of chocolate. Light and easy to drink with an aftertaste that disappears pleasantly.</i>			

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Fukushima	SUEHIRO SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD. HAKASEGURA	JCN2380001017549	GENSAI
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<p>• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Prune and peach aromas lead into a full and fairly rich flavor, the main components of which are sweetness, richness and acidity.</i></p> <p>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>Deep aromas of Chinese quince, plum, and hazel nuts leads to a medium body with citrus like zesty acidity and a finish with hints of Thai basil.</i></p>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Notes of vanilla and ripened fruit with just the right amount of honey-like sweetness. A pleasant sensation of light carbonation bubbling and receding in the mouth.</i>			

c. Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Aomori	NISHIDASUYUZOUTEN CO.	JCN9420001001673	KINKAN KIKUIZUMI
Aomori	NARUMIJOZOTEN CORPORATION	JCN2420001009987	INAMURAYA-BUNSHIROU
Aomori	SEKINOI SHUZOU LIMITED COMPANY	JCN4420002019678	KITAIAMI
Iwate	TSUKINOWA SYUZOUTEN CO., LTD.	JCN3400002007322	TSUKINOWA
Iwate	IWATEMEIJO CO., LTD.	JCN4400601000560	IWATEHOMARE-SENDAIBENIYA-CYOUKURO
Iwate	HAMACHIDORI CO., LTD.	JCN4400001007322	HAMACHIDORI
Iwate	NANBUBIJIN CO., LTD. BASENKYOUKURA	JCN8400001007847	NANBUBIJIN
Miyagi	UCHIGASAKI BREWING CO.	JCN3370003001278	HOYO
Miyagi	HIRAKOUSHUZOU CO., LTD.	JCN6370301001456	HITAKAMI
Miyagi	KAWAKEI SHOTEN GENERAL PARTNERSHIP CORP.	JCN5370203000219	KOGANESAWA
Miyagi	ICHINOKURA CORPORATION KINRYUKURA	JCN4370201000031	ICHINOKURA KINRYUKURA
Akita	AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO., LTD. HONSHAGURA	JCN8410001000388	TAKASHIMIZU
Akita	AKITA SHURUI SEIZOH CO., LTD. GOSHONOGURA	JCN8410001000388	TAKASHIMIZU
Akita	KODAMA BREWING CO., LTD.	JCN6410001003426	TAIHEIZAN
Akita	HINOMARUJOZO CO., LTD.	JCN6410001009167	MANSAKUNOHANA
Akita	SAIYA SHUZOTEN CO., LTD.	JCN6410001004787	YUKINOBOSHA KACHOGESSEKI
Akita	HIRAIZUMIHONPO CO., LTD.	JCN8410001005189	HIRAIZUMI
Akita	AKITAKENHAKKOKOGYO CORPORATION	JCN6410001005430	ITTEKISENRYO
Akita	KIMURA BREWERY INC.	JCN8410001010073	FUKUKOMACHI

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Akita	KARIHO SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN9410001007903	KOUN
Yamagata	KOTOBUKI TORAYA SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN1390001000587	JUKYUGURA
Yamagata	DEWAZAKURA SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	JCN5390001004452	DEWAZAKURA
Yamagata	DEWAZAKURA SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD. YAMAGATAGURA	JCN5390001004452	DEWAZAKURA
Yamagata	EIKO FUJI SAKE BREWING COMPANY	JCN8390001007782	EIKO FUJI
Yamagata	SAKATA SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN5390001006226	JYOKIGEN
Yamagata	TOHOKUMEIJO CORPORATION	JCN5390001006440	HATSUMAGO
Yamagata	MATUYAMA SYUZO CORPORATION	JCN8390001007254	MATUMINE NO FUJI
Yamagata	KOYASHUZO CORPORATION	JCN9390001008714	HANAUYO
Yamagata	WADA SHUZO LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN6390003000928	ARATAMA GASSANMARU
Fukushima	AKEBONOSYUZOU CO., LTD.	JCN5380003001861	ISSHOUSEISYUN
Fukushima	EISEN SYUZOU CORPORATION	JCN6380001017280	EISIROU
Fukushima	OTOKOYAMASHUZOUTEN,L.P.	JCN6380003001761	AIZUOTOKOYAMA
Fukushima	SHIRAISHUZOTEN LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN3380003001772	BANDAIHOU
Fukushima	TSURUNOE SYUZO CO., LTD.	JCN7380001017619	AIZU CHUJO
Fukushima	NAGURAYAMA SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	JCN6380001017685	NAGURAYAMA
Fukushima	NINKI INC.	JCN1380001009951	NINKI-ICHI
Fukushima	HIMONOYA SYUZOTEN CO., LTD.	JCN1380001009456	SENKONARI

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Fukushima	KOKKEN SYUZO CORPORATION	JCN5380001019146	KOKKEN

JCN indicates Japan Corporate Number

(2) Junmai-shu Category

a. Grand Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Fukushima	INAGAWA SHUZOTEN LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN9380003001759	SHICHIJUO
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Broad, rich and rice-like flavor profile supported by dried fruit flavors and an ideal level of acidity.</i>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>A nose reminiscent of a pear and banana cream crepe with a round mellow body, mild acidity, and a hint of fennel on a smooth finish.</i>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Fruity aromas of banana and berry, particularly in the mouth. The sweetness and acidity are well harmonized, smooth, and light with a lingering taste.</i>			

b. Special Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Miyagi	ICHINOKURA CORPORATION HONSHAKURA	JCN4370201000031	ICHINOKURA
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<p>• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Melon and citrus nuances in the complex aromas, followed by grape and apple essences in the supporting flavors. Fairly sweet but balanced finish.</i></p> <p>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>Crisp nose of pineapple and green apple candy, with a hint of anise seed. A silky and smooth sweet body with a powder sugar finish.</i></p>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Balanced aromas of green apple and vanilla. The flavor has a rich sweetness and is refreshing and sharp.</i>			

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Fukushima	SATOU SHUZOUTEN CORPORATION	JCN7380002009846	FUJINOI
Tasting notes by two foreign jurors			
<p>• JOHN GAUNTNER (SAKE WORLD, Inc.) <i>Honey and lemon in the initial flavors, but more earthy notes and some smokey elements appear later in the back of the flavors.</i></p> <p>• KUMADA CARLIN (YUTAKA SHOPPING KK) <i>Aromas of lavender, apple and pineapple lead to a full juicy body with a pleasant long mellow finish.</i></p>			
Tasting notes by Japanese jurors			
<i>Gentle aromas of banana mixed with the scent of sticky rice dumplings and an aftertaste of nuts. A wonderful balance of rich sweetness and refreshing acidity.</i>			

c. Honor Prize

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Aomori	MIURASHUZO CO., LTD.	JCN4420001010349	HOUHAI
Aomori	ROKKA SHUZO CO., LTD.	JCN3420001009607	JOPPARI
Aomori	NARUMIJOZOTEN CORPORATION	JCN2420001009987	INAMURAYA- BUNSHIROU
Aomori	MOMOKAWA BREWING, INC.	JCN6420001012244	MOMOKAWA
Iwate	AKABUSHUZOU CO., LTD.	JCN5400001007445	AKABU
Iwate	SAKURAGAO SHUZO CO., LTD.	JCN6400001000663	SAKURAGAO
Iwate	TSUKINOWA SYUZOUTEN CO., LTD.	JCN3400002007322	TSUKINOWA
Iwate	SENNKINNSYUZOU CORPORATION	JCN5400001007081	RYUUSENN- YAEZAKURA
Iwate	SUISEN SHUZO CO., LTD. OHFUNATOGURA	JCN7402701000297	SUISEN
Iwate	IWATEMEIJYO CO., LTD.	JCN4400601000560	IWATEHOMARE
Iwate	HAMACHIDORI CO., LTD.	JCN4400001007322	HAMACHIDORI
Iwate	NANBUBIJIN CORPORATION	JCN8400001007847	NANBUBIJIN
Miyagi	UCHIGASAKI BREWING CO.	JCN3370003001278	HOYO
Miyagi	YAMAWA SYUZO CO., LTD.	JCN2370201002401	YAMAWA
Miyagi	KANENOI SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN9370201003145	WATAYA
Miyagi	HAGINO SHUZO CO., LTD.	JCN7370201003139	HAGINOTSURU
Akita	FUKUROKIJUSHUZOU CORPORATION	JCN7410001003499	IPPAKUSUISEI
Akita	ASAMAI SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN3410001008956	AMANOTO
Akita	SAIYA SHUZOTEN CO., LTD.	JCN6410001004787	YUKINOBOSHA CHOSETSU
Akita	RYOZEKISHUZO CO., LTD.	JCN6410001005595	RYOZEKI
Akita	KARIHO SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN9410001007903	KAEI
Akita	DEWATSURUSYUZO CO., LTD.	JCN6410001008202	DEWATSURU
Yamagata	SHUHO SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	JCN4390002001276	SHUHO
Yamagata	AZUMANOFUMOTO LIMITED COMPANY	JCN4390002014534	AZUMANOFUMOTO
Yamagata	YONETSURUSYUZO CORPORATION	JCN8390001010456	YONETSURU

Prefecture	Brewery	JCN	Brand
Yamagata	TAKENO TSUYU SAKAGURA CO., LTD.	JCN8390003000538	HAKURO SUISHU
Yamagata	SAKATA SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN5390001006226	JYOKIGEN
Yamagata	WADA SHUZO LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN6390003000928	ARATAMA
Yamagata	TAKAGI SHUZO CORPORATION	JCN4390001009320	JUYONDAI
Fukushima	KINSUI SHO SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	JCN4380002000997	KINSUI SHO
Fukushima	EISEN SYUZOU CORPORATION	JCN6380001017280	EISIROU
Fukushima	OTOKOYAMASHUZOUTEN,L.P.	JCN6380003001761	AIZUOTOKOYAMA
Fukushima	SHIRAI SHUZOTEN LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN3380003001772	ISASUMINOMORI
Fukushima	TATSUIZUMISHUZO LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN9380003001775	KYONOHANA
Fukushima	TSURUNOE SYUZO CO., LTD.	JCN7380001017619	AIZU CHUJO
Fukushima	NAGURAYAMA SAKE BREWERY CO., LTD.	JCN6380001017685	NAGURAYAMA
Fukushima	YAMAGUCHI GENERAL PARTNERSHIP	JCN4380003001747	GIHEI
Fukushima	SATOUSYUZOU CO., LTD.	JCN4380001007977	MIHARUKOMA
Fukushima	TOYOKUNI SHUZO LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	JCN3380003000799	CHOU
Fukushima	KOKKEN SYUZO CORPORATION	JCN5380001019146	KOKKEN
Fukushima	WATANABE KENICHI		KUBOI

JCN indicates Japan Corporate Number