

Outline of the 38th Honkaku Shochu Contest

National Research Institute of Brewing

June 26, 2015

1. Contest

Honkaku shochu is the Japanese distilled liquor made with a pot still.

The 38th Honkaku Shochu Contest was held under the joint auspices of the National Research Institute of Brewing (NRIB) and the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association on June 1 and 2, 2015. For this contest, a nationwide research of *honkaku shochu* was conducted with the aim of clarifying the current manufacturing technology and trends in liquor quality, as well as sharing this information with the manufacturers.

2. Exhibit

(1) Qualification for entry

Manufacturers who hold a license to produce single-distilled *shochu* (*honkaku shochu*) and are members of the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association.

(2) Applicable standard for entry

Entries must be products to be sold on the market. There is no limit for the number of entries.

(3) Entry fee

The entry fee is 5,400 yen (including consumption tax) per entry.

3. Overview of entries

167 entries (92% of the number of entries in June 2014) were exhibited from 69 manufacturers (83%) in 23 prefectures (Table 1).

Overall, the number of entries decreased by 15 compared to the previous contest, it was the number of entries of the past minimum. (Table 2).

4. Trends among entries

(1) Production area (Table 1)

As for the production areas, entries from Kyushu and Okinawa, which are the main production areas for *honkaku shochu*, numbered 134 and made up 80% of the total.

(2) Raw materials (Table 2)

Compared to the previous year's Contest, the number of rice *shochu* entries decreased by 10 (68%), barley *shochu* entries decreased by 7 (88%), sweet potato *shochu* entries increased by 13 (125%), *awamori* entries increased by 3 (123%), sake lees *shochu* entries decreased by 7 (46%), buckwheat *shochu* entries, which was zero in the previous year, brown sugar *shochu* decreased by 4 (33%), and entries using other raw materials decreased by 3 (57%).

(3) Production line (Table 3)

Entries from the "special product line", consisting mainly of long-term aged *shochu*, numbered 29 (81%).

5. Jury

The jury consisted of 22 members who were appointed by the president of NRIB from *shochu* manufacturers recommended by the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association, academic experts, technical officers of the National Tax Agency, and staff of NRIB.

6. Evaluation of liquor quality

The quality evaluation was performed by sensory evaluation and chemical analysis. The sensory evaluation was conducted by a profile method, whereby 4 characters (aroma, taste, material characteristics and the total evaluation) were assessed on a 5-point scale. In addition, the presence/absence of 18 positive characters and 28 negative characters was checked.

To evaluate the level of manufacturing techniques, chemical compounds, which are potential indicators of fermentation management, distillation operations and storage management, were analyzed.

We will inform all the exhibitors the results of the quality evaluation and the chemical analysis.

7. Quality trends

- 1) *Shochu* made from rice and barley is typically crisp, clean, and light, while *shochu* made from sweet potato and *awamori* are known for their traditional flavor and aroma. These characteristics were found in this year's entries.
- 2) Generally, flavors from raw materials were highly expressed in the sake lees *shochu*, the sweet potato *shochu* and the *awamori*. Furthermore, aged sake lees *shochu*, aged *awamori* and barrel-aged barley *shochu* were given high scores in aroma, flavor, and overall evaluation.
- 3) The flavor profile of barrel-aged barley *shochu* tended to reflect the characteristics of the barrel.

Table 1 Number of manufactures and entries per prefecture in the 38th Honkaku Shochu Awards

Manufacturer location		Number of manufactures		Number of exhibits										Total number of exhibits per Taxation Bureau Office		Compared with previous awards (%)	
Regional Taxation Bureau	Prefecture	38th	37th	Detail								38th	37th	38th	37th		
				Rice	Barley	Sweet potato	Awamori	Sake lees	Buckwheat	Brown sugar	Other						
Sapporo	Hokkaido	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-
Sendai	Aomori	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	5	11	45
	Iwate	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3			
	Miyagi	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1			
	Akita	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6			
	Yamagata	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Fukushima	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1				
Kantoshin'etsu	Ibaraki	1	2	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	6	7	9	78	
	Tochigi	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Gunma	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Saitama	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Niigata	2	2	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	3				
	Nagano	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
Tokyo	Chiba	1	0	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	0	7	6	117	
	Tokyo	1	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2				
	Kanagawa	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	1				
	Yamanashi	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3				
Kanazawa	Toyama	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-	
	Ishikawa	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Fukui	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
Nagoya	Gifu	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	3	5	60	
	Shizuoka	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2				
	Aichi	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Mie	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2				
Osaka	Shiga	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	4	5	80	
	Kyoto	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1				
	Osaka	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Hyogo	3	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2				
	Nara	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Wakayama	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2				
Hiroshima	Tottori	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1	2	6	33	
	Shimane	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Okayama	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Hiroshima	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	2				
	Yamaguchi	0	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	3				
Takamatsu	Tokushima	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	5	5	100	
	Kagawa	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0				
	Ehime	2	2	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	4				
	Kochi	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1				
Fukuoka	Fukuoka	6	8	-	11	1	-	1	1	-	3	17	24	35	38	92	
	Saga	1	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5				
	Nagasaki	7	6	-	10	4	-	-	-	-	-	14	9				
Kumamoto	Kumamoto	4	5	7	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	10	14	83	84	99	
	Oita	4	3	-	9	-	-	1	-	-	-	10	10				
	Miyazaki	4	3	1	3	9	-	-	1	-	1	15	11				
	Kagoshima	18	21	1	6	39	-	-	-	2	-	48	49				
Okinawa	Okinawa	6	5	-	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	16	13	16	13	123	
Total		69	83	21	50	66	16	6	2	2	4	167	182	167	182	92	

Table 2 Change in number of entries according to raw material category

Raw material Awards	Rice		Barley		Sweet potato		Awamori		Sake lees		Buckwheat		Brown sugar		Other		Total	
	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards	Number of entries	Compared with previous awards
1st	38	-	16	-	78	-	24	-	24	-	5	-	4	-	15	-	204	-
6th	59	▲ 21	47	▲ 31	48	▲ 30	24	0	26	2	29	24	6	2	33	18	272	68
9th	69	▲ 10	100	▲ 53	26	▲ 22	24	0	<u>60</u>	34	<u>31</u>	2	7	1	<u>78</u>	45	395	123
10th	86	▲ 17	<u>110</u>	▲ 10	37	▲ 11	<u>37</u>	13	38	▲ 22	<u>31</u>	0	10	3	<u>78</u>	0	<u>427</u>	32
11th	<u>96</u>	▲ 10	105	▲ 5	48	▲ 11	23	▲ 14	25	▲ 13	26	▲ 5	8	▲ 2	53	▲ 25	384	▲ 43
16th	55	▲ 41	76	▲ 29	24	▲ 24	19	▲ 4	17	▲ 8	21	▲ 5	<u>11</u>	3	27	▲ 26	250	▲ 134
21st	63	▲ 8	70	▲ 6	22	▲ 2	17	▲ 2	27	10	19	▲ 2	4	▲ 7	23	▲ 4	245	▲ 5
26th	67	▲ 4	71	▲ 1	37	▲ 15	10	▲ 7	20	▲ 7	16	▲ 3	8	4	24	▲ 1	253	▲ 8
27th	73	▲ 6	76	▲ 5	45	▲ 8	17	▲ 7	22	2	22	6	4	▲ 4	21	▲ 3	280	▲ 27
28th	76	▲ 3	94	▲ 18	69	▲ 24	15	▲ 2	21	▲ 1	22	0	<u>11</u>	7	27	▲ 6	335	▲ 55
29th	63	▲ 13	84	▲ 10	79	▲ 10	30	▲ 15	25	4	19	▲ 3	8	▲ 3	29	▲ 2	337	▲ 2
30th	67	▲ 4	91	▲ 7	88	▲ 9	27	▲ 3	29	4	15	▲ 4	5	▲ 3	25	▲ 4	347	▲ 10
31st	57	▲ 10	90	▲ 1	<u>103</u>	▲ 15	28	▲ 1	22	▲ 7	21	6	7	2	26	▲ 1	354	▲ 7
32nd	51	▲ 6	83	▲ 7	98	▲ 5	28	0	20	▲ 2	17	▲ 4	9	2	19	▲ 7	325	▲ 29
33rd	44	▲ 7	77	▲ 6	82	▲ 16	32	4	21	1	14	▲ 3	7	▲ 2	11	▲ 8	288	▲ 37
34th	36	▲ 8	49	▲ 28	69	▲ 13	17	▲ 15	14	▲ 7	5	▲ 9	2	▲ 5	10	▲ 1	202	▲ 86
35th	24	▲ 12	57	▲ 8	58	▲ 11	16	▲ 1	11	▲ 3	2	▲ 3	2	0	11	▲ 1	181	▲ 21
36th	23	▲ 1	54	▲ 3	68	▲ 10	20	4	14	3	0	▲ 2	3	1	8	▲ 3	190	▲ 9
37th	31	▲ 8	57	▲ 3	53	▲ 15	13	▲ 7	13	▲ 1	2	2	6	3	7	▲ 1	182	▲ 8
38th	21	▲ 10	50	▲ 7	66	▲ 13	16	3	6	▲ 7	2	0	2	▲ 4	4	▲ 3	167	▲ 15

Note 1. White rice bran is included under "other".

Note 2. "Compared with previous awards" for 26th, 21st, 16th, 9th and 6th refers to comparisons to the 21st, 16th, 11th, 6th and 1st Awards, respectively.

Note 3. Underlined numbers are the highest numbers of entries in the past.

Table 3 Status of exhibits in the 38th Honkaku Shochu Awards

Raw material category			Special products	Total
		Number of entries	Number of entries	Number of entries
Rice		18	3	21
Barley		36	14	50
Sweet potato		64	2	66
Awamori		9	7	16
Sake lees		4	2	6
Buckwheat		2	-	2
Brown sugar		2	-	2
Other		3	1	4
Detail	Sesame	1	1	2
	Kudzu vine	1	-	1
	Corn	1	-	1
Total		138	29	167

Note 1. "Special products" refers to long-term aging, barrel aging and jar aging.