

# Outline of the 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest

National Research Institute of Brewing  
Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association  
June 24, 2022

## 1. Contest

*Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori* are the Japanese spirits distilled in a pot still.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest was held under the joint auspices of the National Research Institute of Brewing (NRIB) and the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association (JSS) on June 7 and 8, 2022. For this contest, a nationwide research of pot distillation *Shochu*, particularly *Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori*, were conducted with the aim of clarifying the current manufacturing technology and trends in liquor quality, as well as contributing to the improvement of pot distillation *Shochu* (*Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori*) qualities.

## 2. Special rules for entry

### (1) Qualification for entry

Manufacturers which hold a license to produce pot distillation *Shochu* (*Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori*).

### (2) Applicable standard for entry

Entries must be products of *Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori* to be sold on the market or during storage as commercially available. The number of entries per a manufacture is limited within 8 items.

### (3) Entry fee

Members of the JSS: 5,500 yen per entry.

Others: 8,250 yen per entry.

## 3. Overview of entries

A total of 205 entries (106% of entries compared with previous year) were exhibited from 74 manufacturers (104%) in 25 prefectures (Table 1).

Overall number of entries increased by 12 compared to the previous year (Table 1 and Table 2).

## 4. Trends among entries

### (1) Production area

As for the production area, the number of entries from Kyushu (Fukuoka and Kumamoto Regional Taxation Bureaus; Table 1) (148 entries) and Okinawa (17 entries), which are the main production areas for *Honkaku Shochu* and *Awamori*, are 165 that made up 80% of the total (Table 1).

### (2) Varieties of raw materials

The following entries were received, rice *Shochu*: 24 (no change compared to the previous year), barley *Shochu*: 73 (increased by 2), sweet potato *Shochu*: 69 (increased by 1), Awamori: 17 (increased by 4), sake lees *Shochu*: 12 (increased by 1), buckwheat *Shochu*: 2 (no change), brown sugar *Shochu*: 4 (increased by 2), and other *Shochu*: 4 (increased by 2) (Table 1 and Table 2).

### (3) Varieties of products techniques

Entries from normal products numbered 153 (110%). Entries from the special products, including long-term aged, cask-aged or earthenware jar-aged *Shochu*, numbered 52 (96%) (Table 3).

## 5. Judging panels

The judging panel consisted of 15 members who were appointed by the president of NRIB from *Shochu* and *Awamori* manufacturers recommended by JSS, *Shochu* and *Awamori* specialists from prefectural research centers, technical officers of Regional Taxation Bureaus, and staffs of NRIB (Table 4).

The judging process was conducted in consideration of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Judges were seated at their assigned seats at 2-meter range intervals, and the samples were poured into plastic cups and served on trays to the judges individually. Each judge also used their own vessel for spitting out. Other measures against COVID-19 include measuring body temperature before entering the judging room, installing alcohol-based sanitizer, wearing masks, installing splash-proof partitions, and ensuring the ventilation of the judging room.

## 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 5 characters (raw material characteristics, rich/light, sweetness, aftertaste, and the total evaluation) were assessed on a 5-point scale. In addition, the presence/absence of 16 positive characters and 24 negative characters was considered (Figure).

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

The results of the sensory evaluation and the chemical analysis will be informed to all the manufacturers applied for entries.

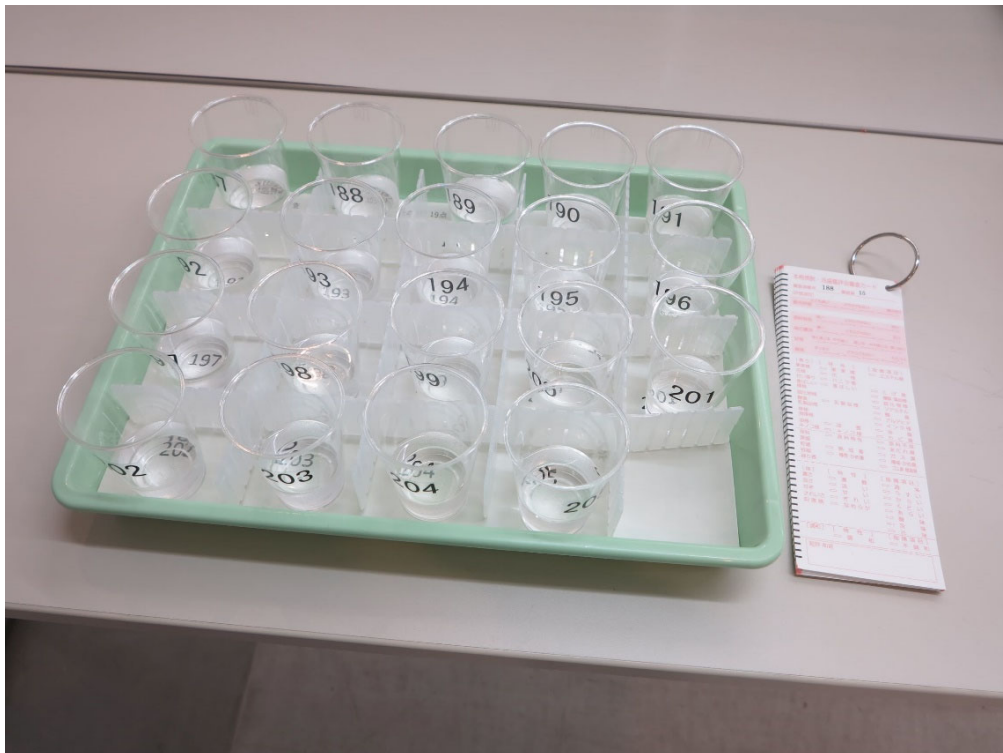
## 7. Quality trends

- (1) *Shochu* made from rice and barley was mainly aromatic and mild tasted, that made from sweet potato and *Awamori* was mainly fragrant, and that made from sake lees was mainly highly fruity flavored.
- (2) As for normal products, on one hand in vacuum-distilled sake lees *Shochu*, flavors from raw materials were highly expressed and its average evaluation value was relatively good. On the other hand in atmospheric-distilled barley *Shochu*, a richer taste was highly expressed.
- (3) As for long-term aged products, sake lees *Shochu*, barley *Shochu* and *Awamori* had higher raw material-derived characteristics. Long-term products of *Awamori*, barley *Shochu* and sweet potato *Shochu* tended to be smoother in taste. The average value of the overall evaluation was relatively good in long-term products of *Awamori*.
- (4) As for cask-aged products, the properties derived from cask were highly evaluated in cask-aged Barley *Shochu*, rice *Shochu* and sake lees *Shochu*.
- (5) As for earthenware jar-aged products, the characteristics derived from the jar-aged was highly expressed in the sweet potato *Shochu*.

## Judging room



Seating: Seats were spaced at least 2 meters apart. Splash-proof screens were installed on the desks.



Serving: A plastic cup (150 ml volume) was filled with a sample (30-35 ml) and the cups are placed on a tray. The tray is then individually served to a judge.

**Table 1 Number of manufactures and entries per prefecture in the 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest**

Manufacturer location		Number of manufactures		Number of entries										Total number of entries per Taxation Bureau Office		Compared with previous year
Regional Taxation Bureau	Prefecture	45th	44th	Varieties of single distilled <i>shochu</i>								45th	44th	45th	44th	
				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	6	83
	Iwate	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2			
	Miyagi	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1			
	Akita	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1			
	Yamagata	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2			
	Fukushima	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
Kanto-Shinetsu	Ibaraki	1	0	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	0	10	4	250
	Tochigi	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Gunma	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Saitama	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Niigata	3	3	2	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	5	4			
	Nagano	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
Tokyo	Chiba	1	0	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	5	4	125
	Tokyo	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1			
	Kanagawa	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1			
	Yamanashi	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2			
Kanazawa	Toyama	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	0	0	-
	Ishikawa	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Fukui	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
Nagoya	Gifu	2	0	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	4	0	9	5	180
	Shizuoka	2	2	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	4			
	Aichi	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1			
	Mie	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
Osaka	Shiga	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	2	3	67
	Kyoto	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Osaka	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Hyogo	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2			
	Nara	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Wakayama	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	1			
Hiroshima	Tottori	1	0	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	8	4	200
	Shimane	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Okayama	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3			
	Hiroshima	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Yamaguchi	3	1	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	4	1			
Takamatsu	Tokushima	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	1	1	100
	Kagawa	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Ehime	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0			
	Kochi	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1			
Fukuoka	Fukuoka	8	7	1	21	1	-	1	1	-	2	27	24	43	40	108
	Saga	1	1	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5			
	Nagasaki	6	6	-	8	3	-	-	-	-	-	11	11			
Kumamoto	Kumamoto	4	4	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	11	105	113	93
	Oita	4	4	1	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	19			
	Miyazaki	6	6	1	9	16	-	-	1	-	1	28	27			
	Kagoshima	14	18	-	6	40	-	-	-	4	-	50	56			
Okinawa	Okinawa	6	5	-	-	-	17	-	-	-	-	17	13	17	13	131
Total		74	71	24	73	69	17	12	2	4	4	205	193	205	193	106

**Table 2 Change in number of entries according to the varieties of single distilled *shochu***

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
28th	76	9	94	23	69	32	15	5	21	1	22	6	<u>11</u>	3	27	3	335	82
31st	57	▲ 19	90	▲ 4	<u>103</u>	34	28	13	22	1	21	▲ 1	7	▲ 4	26	▲ 1	354	19
36th	23	▲ 34	54	▲ 36	68	▲ 35	20	▲ 8	14	▲ 8	0	▲ 21	3	▲ 4	8	▲ 18	190	▲ 164
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
39th	25	4	67	17	74	8	15	▲ 1	14	8	3	1	4	2	11	7	213	46
40th	32	7	67	0	88	14	22	7	13	▲ 1	3	0	4	0	7	▲ 4	236	23
41st	26	▲ 6	77	10	98	10	18	▲ 4	13	0	4	1	7	3	5	▲ 2	248	12
42nd	24	▲ 2	95	18	85	▲ 13	17	▲ 1	8	▲ 5	3	▲ 1	2	▲ 5	4	▲ 1	238	▲ 10
43rd	22	▲ 2	71	▲ 24	73	▲ 12	17	0	8	0	3	0	1	▲ 1	2	▲ 2	197	▲ 41
44th	24	2	71	0	68	▲ 5	13	▲ 4	11	3	2	▲ 1	2	1	2	0	193	▲ 4
45th	24	0	73	2	69	1	17	4	12	1	2	0	4	2	4	2	205	12

Note 1: "Compared with previous awards" for 36th, 31st, 28th, 26th, 21st, 16th, 9th and 6th refers to comparisons to the 31st, 28th, 26th, 21st, 16th, 11th, 6th and 1st Awards, respectively.

Note 2: Underlined numbers are the highest numbers of entries in the past.

**Table 3 Details of products in the 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest**

Varieties of single distilled <i>shochu</i>			Normal products								Special products								Total	
			Vacuum distillation		Atmospheric distillation		Blend		Subtotal		Long-term aging		Cask aging		Earthenware jar aging		Subtotal			
			Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries		Number of entries			
			45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th	45th	44th		
Rice			12	13	3	2	-	-	15	15	4	6	3	3	2	-	9	9	24	24
Barley			34	34	6	8	13	7	53	49	3	2	17	20	-	-	20	22	73	71
Sweet potato			5	3	48	49	3	5	56	57	4	2	2	3	7	6	13	11	69	68
Awamori			2	1	10	7	-	-	12	8	4	2	-	1	1	2	5	5	17	13
Sake lees			6	6	1	-	-	-	7	6	2	3	3	2	-	-	5	5	12	11
Buckwheat			1	1	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	2
Brown sugar			2	-	2	1	-	-	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2
Other			3	2	1	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	2
Detail	Kudzu vine		1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	Chestnut		1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	Black been		-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
	Sesame		1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total			65	60	71	67	17	12	153	139	17	16	25	30	10	8	52	54	205	193

**Table 4 List of Judging panels for the 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest**

	Name	Organization and Position	
1	SUDO, Shigetoshi	Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association	Technical Advisor
2	TADA, Itaru	Tenpai Co.,Ltd	Representative Director
3	ONO, Tsuneo	Kayashima Shurui Co.,LTD.	Executive Officer
4	KAWAHARA, Shinya	Oshima Shuzou Co.,Ltd	Section Chief
5	KOMINE, Shiuchi	Satsuma Shuzou Company limited	Senior Adviser
6	SAWADA, Kazutaka	Industrial Technology Center of Saga	Researcher, Division of Food Industry
7	TANAKA, Ryoichi	Kumamoto Industrial Research Center	Chief Researcher, Food Science and Technology
8	FUKURA, Natsuko	Miyazaki Prefectural Food Research and Development Center	Chief Engineer, Applied Microbiology Department
9	HIGA, Kenichi	Okinawa Industrial Technology Center	Supervisory Researcher
10	AKUTSU, Takehiro	Fukuoka Regional Taxation Bureau	Chief Technical Officer, Office of Analysis and Brewing Technology
11	MOTOMURA, Hajime	Kumamoto Regional Taxation Bureau	Director, Office of Analysis and Brewing Technology
12	AIZAWA, Johji	Okinawa Regional Taxation Office	Chief Technical Officer, Indirect Tax Division
13	YAMADA, Osamu	National Research Institute of Brewing	Director, Quality and Evaluation Research Division
14	IWASHITA, Kazuhiro	National Research Institute of Brewing	Director, Analytical Research Division
15	MUKAI, Nobuhiko	National Research Institute of Brewing	Director, Brewing Technology Division

**Figure Judging Sheet for the 45<sup>th</sup> Honkaku Shochu and Awamori Contest**

**本格焼酎・泡盛鑑評会審査カード**

審査酒番号 \_\_\_\_\_ 審査員 \_\_\_\_\_

[評価項目]

総合評価 ☐ とても良い ☐ どちらでもない ☐ 難点あり

原料特性 ☐ 強い ☐ どちらでもない ☐ 弱い

味の濃淡 ☐ 濃い ☐ どちらでもない ☐ 薄い

甘味 ☐ 強く感じる ☐ やや強い ☐ 感じる ☐ やや感じる ☐ 感じない

後味 ☐ すっきり ☐ どちらでもない ☐ もたつく

[香り] [特性] [指摘項目]

果実様 ☐ 果実様 ☐ エステル臭

花様 ☐ 花様

甘い香り ☐ バニラ香

香ばしい・煙様 ☐ 香ばしい ☐ こげ臭

硫化物様 ☐ 燻製・薬品様 ☐ 燻製・薬品様

酸臭・乳製品様 ☐ 乳製品様 ☐ 硫化物様

草様・溶媒様 ☐ 酸臭 ☐ ジアセチル

油様・キノコ様 ☐ 油香 ☐ アルデヒド

キノコ様 ☐ キノコ様 ☐ インク様

原料 ☐ 原料特性 ☐ 油臭

蒸留 ☐ 原料不良 ☐ カビ臭

貯蔵 ☐ 未だれ臭

容器 ☐ ガス臭

移り香 ☐ 樽臭・かめ臭

移り香 ☐ ゴム臭・樹脂臭

[味] [特性] [指摘項目]

濃さ ☐ 濃 ☐ 醇 ☐ 過多

淡さ ☐ 淡 ☐ い ☐ うすい

甘辛 ☐ 甘 ☐ い ☐ かしい

きれいさ ☐ きれい ☐ くだい

刺激感 ☐ なめらか ☐ あらい

刺激感 ☐ なめらか ☐ 酸味

刺激感 ☐ なめらか ☐ 苦味

刺激感 ☐ なめらか ☐ 渋味

[調和] [特性] [指摘項目]

調和 ☐ 調和 ☐ 不調和

短評・助言

← 5-point scale evaluation

Overall evaluation

Raw material characteristics

Body

Sweet taste

Aftertaste

← Optional checks (aroma)

Fruity

Floral

Sweet

Roast, Smoky

Sulfury

Volatile acids, Milk product

Herbal, Solvent

Oily, Mushroom

Raw material characteristic

Distillation-derived

Cask-aged, earthenware jar-aged

Lingering scent

← Optional checks (taste)

Full body

Light body

Sweetness

Clean

Smooth

← Optional checks (balance)

Total balance

← Comment/Advice