

An aerial photograph of a town covered in snow, with mountains in the background under a hazy, golden sunrise sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating long shadows and a warm glow over the landscape.

東  
光

TOKO  
Since 1597

TOKO Sustainability Report  
2023

Kojima Sohonten Co., Ltd.

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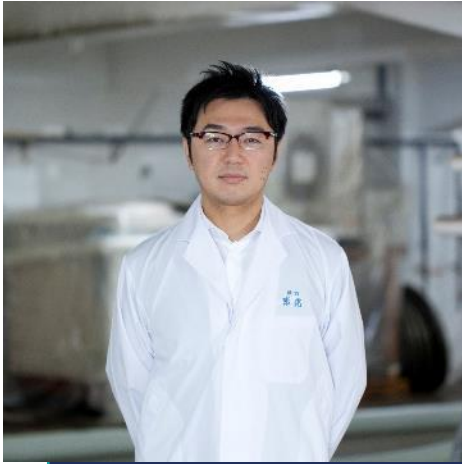
1. Company History

2. Strategic map

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# 1. Company History

# Message from the President



President  
Kenichiro Kojima

Kojima Sohonten has been consistently brewing sake since its founding in its current location in 1597. We are a small brewery producing a luxury item like sake, so the road has not always been a smooth one, but thanks to the support of many people and the efforts of our predecessors, we have been in business for 400 years.

We believe that this long history is not only a great asset to our company, but also an important mirror to which we can look to reexamine ourselves, to retrace the steps of our predecessors, and ask ourselves what we should be striving for in this modern age.

This mindset forms the basis of our company creed, which reflects our commitment to **cultural heritage, care for the environment, and coexistence with the local community**. Rooted in these principles, Kojima Sohonten aims to brew sake sustainably and in harmony with nature.

# Kojima Sohonten Company Creed

## Care for Environment

- A commitment to creating first-class products that help culturally and spiritually enrich people's lives in Japan and around the world.



- Embodying co-prosperity with the community, harmony with society, and coexistence with nature, based on the principles of sincerity, gratitude, and humility.



- Proper corporate management that integrates employee happiness, business development, and the fulfillment of social responsibility through the personal growth of all employees.



## Cultural Heritage

## Coexist with Local Community

# 1 Company History

## Sake Brewing Museum



The company took over a nearby brewery built in 1919 which had ceased business and rebuilt it as one of the largest sake brewing museums in Tohoku.

Built using traditional methods, not reproducible in the modern age, the building alone has cultural value. Over 1,500 traditional brewing tools and vessels give visitors a sense of an ancient sake brewing culture.



The museum receives over 20,000 visitors a year, and in 2003 the current Emperor and Empress of Japan paid a visit. The museum also hosts local events.



## Kojima Sohonten's Company History



1597

Founded by  
Yazaemon Kojima

First generation  
Yazaemon Kojima sets  
up a liquor store called  
Kojima Sakaya.



1952

The company is  
incorporated

Previously run as a sole  
proprietorship, Kojima  
Liquor Store is  
incorporated as Kojima  
Sohonten and the  
business expands.



1984

Opening of Sake  
Brewing Museum

Following the closure of a  
relative's brewery the  
previous year, the company  
reopens it as a sake museum  
showcasing sake brewing  
culture. The museum is later  
visited by the current  
Emperor and Empress of  
Japan.



2012

Development of  
Toko Ginjo Umeshu

The company develops  
an umeshu (liqueur)  
with a sake lees shochu  
base and wins the triple  
crown in Major National  
Competitions.



2015

Launch of signature  
product: Toko  
Junmai Ginjo Genshu

Currently the  
company's best seller.  
The launch instantly  
raises the company's  
Junmai production  
ratio.

## Kojima Sohonten's Company History Continued



2020

**Switch to Junmai-only Production**

Aiming to brew sake with more regional and cultural characteristics, the brewery discontinues the use of imported brewer's alcohol and switches to Junmai-only brewing using only domestic rice, grown mainly in Yamagata Prefecture.

2020

**Challenges Brewing in Kioke**

The company revives brewing in the wooden kioke casks it had brewed in up until 60 years ago.

2021

**Launch of Bizen Kamejikomi**

The company launches a new sake brewed in a kame earthenware pot which originated around the time of the brewery's founding. The new sake is named after the founding era: Azuchi Momoyama.

2022

**Rice cultivation using automatic weeding robot**

The company grows a test batch of rice without pesticides and chemicals using an automatic weeding robot. A sake made with the rice is planned for release in 2023.

2023

**Switch to Renewable Energy**

All electricity is switched to renewable energy generated in the surrounding area. The goal is to create a sustainable sake brewery by utilizing local resources, including energy.



# 1 Company History

## Kojima Sohonten's Company History

1400

1600

1800

2000

< Earthenware Pots / Kame >

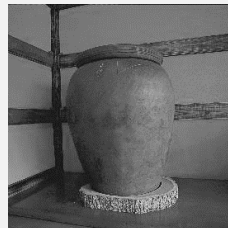
< Kioke >

< Enamel Tanks >

1952 Incorporation into  
Kojima Sohonten



1597 Company's founding by  
Yazaemon Kojima



1984  
Opening of Sake  
Museum



# 1 Company History

## Kojima Sohonten's Company History

2010

2015

2020

2025

< Enamel Tanks >



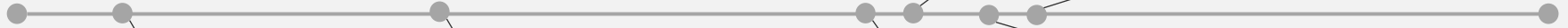
Launch of Azuchi Momoyama



Switch to renewable energy

2021

2023



2012

2015

2020

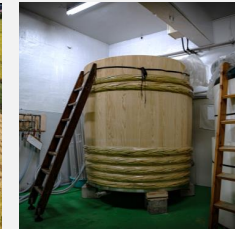
2022

Development of Toko Ginjo Umeshu

Launch of Toko Junmai Ginjo Genshu

Switch to Junmai-only production & Kioke challenge

Rice with automatic weeding robot



## 2. Strategic map

## 2. Strategic map

- i. Economical
- ii. Green
- iii. Ethical

# Economical



Seek happy and stable lives  
for employees through  
continuous growth



Introduction of equipment that  
will allow for greener brewing  
while continuing to grow.

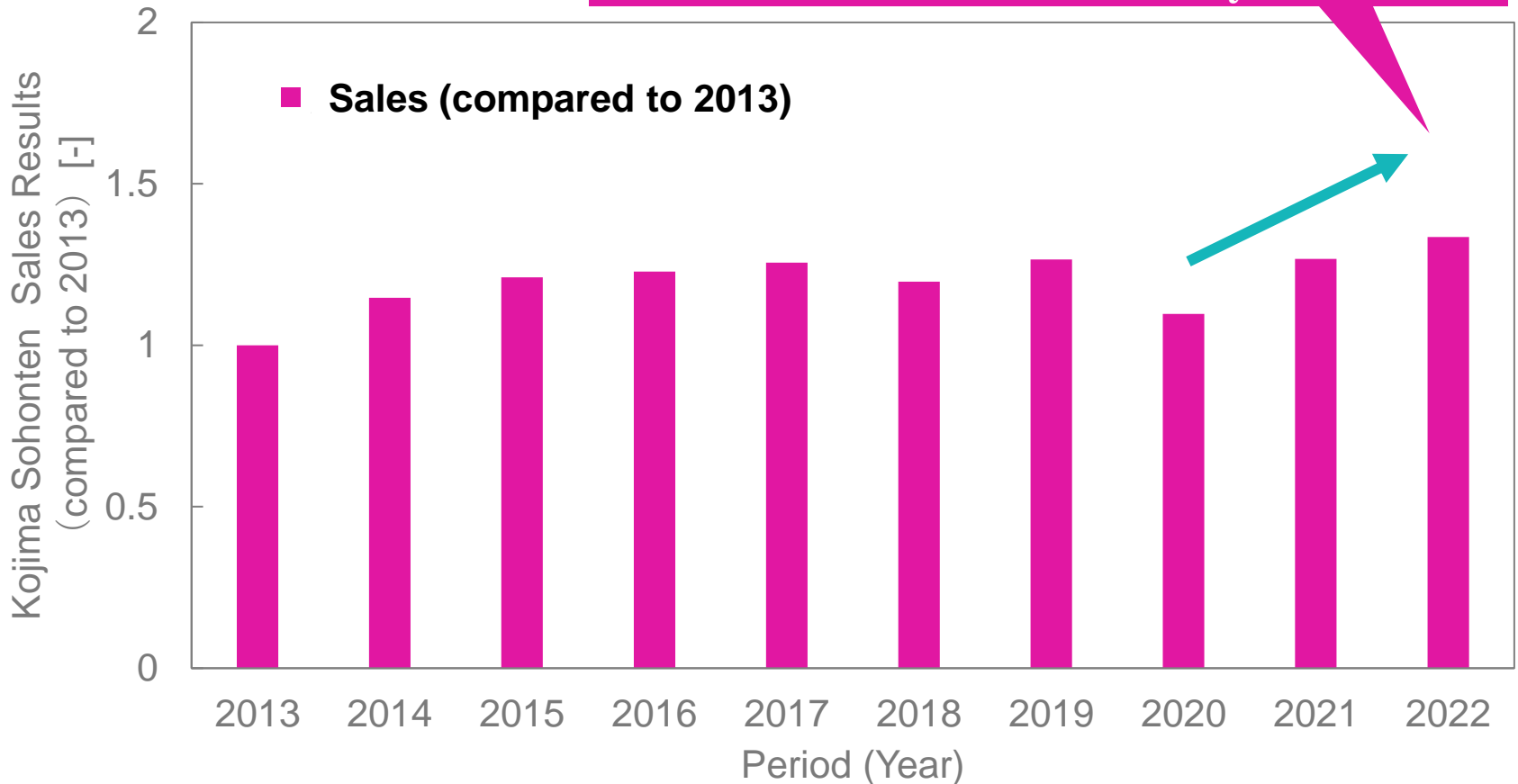


Consumer-focused quality-oriented product  
development



## 2 Strategic map - Economic Value

Amidst the Corona pandemic, while overall sake sales are down year-on-year, Kojima Sohonten continued to grow in 2021 and 2022, achieving 1.3 times that of 2013 in the latter year.



**Fig. Kojima Sohonten Sales Results (Including Exports) (compared to 2013) [-]**

\*Ratio of sales (including exports) in each year when sales in 2013 is set to 1

### Export Countries

With an export network already spanning approx. 20 countries, Toko is working to transcend borders and culture to share the deliciousness of carefully-crafted sake to people around the world.



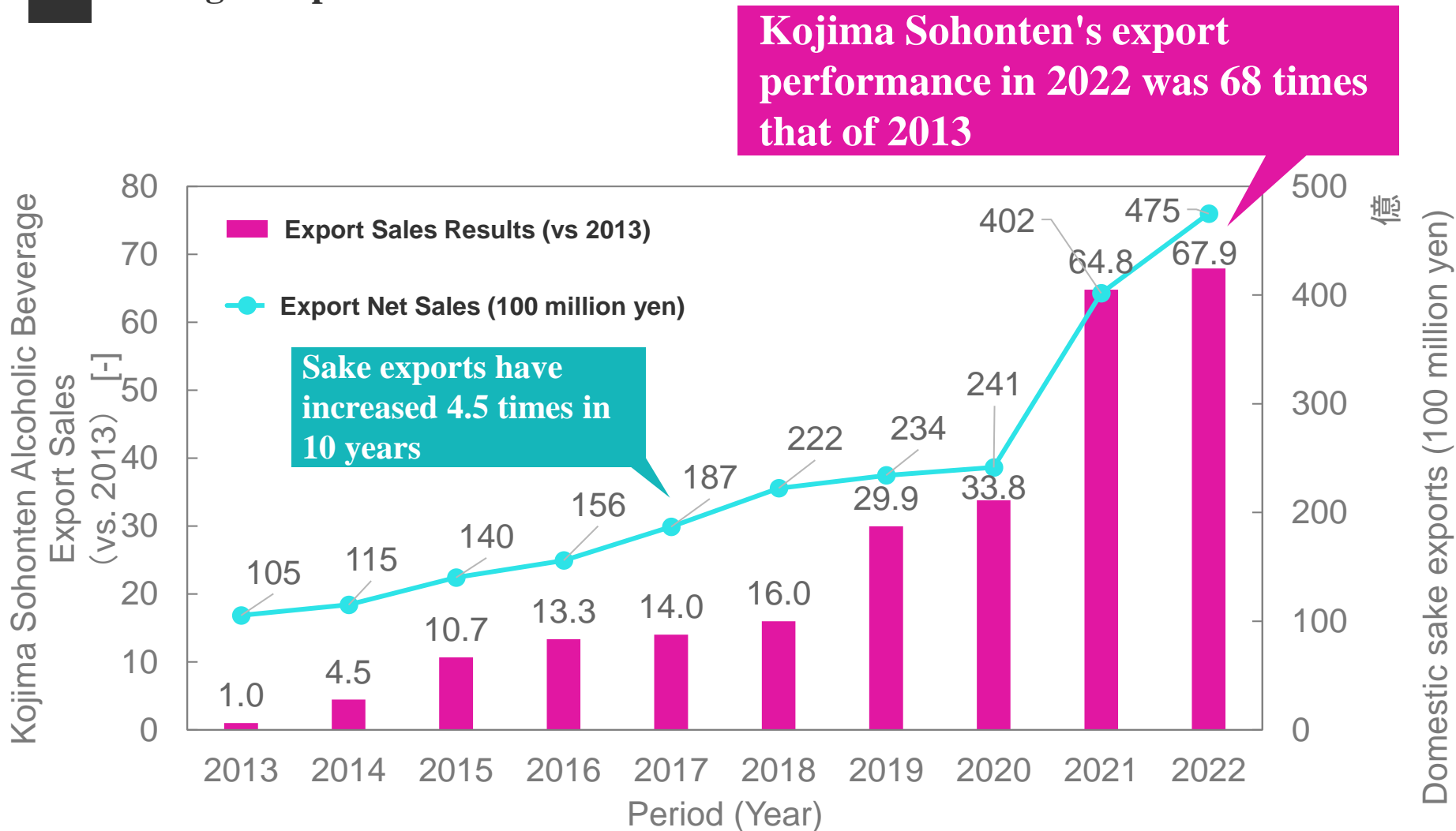
China, Korea, Taiwan, Macau Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Russia, Israel, America, Canada, Brazil.

Export Countries

**20**



## 2 Strategic map - Economic Value



**Fig. Kojima Sohonten Export Results (vs. 2013) and Domestic Sake Exports[-]**

\*Ratio of actual export sales in 2013 to actual sales in each year when actual export sales in 2013 are set as 1

# Milestones



World Sakagura Ranking 2020 tied 37th



Kojimaya Untitled 1 received platinum in Dewasansan rice trench



ワイングラスでおいしい  
日本酒アワード  
The Fine SAKE Award, Japan

2021 gold Toko Junmai Daiginjo Yuki Megami

2020 gold Toko Junmai Daiginjo Yuki Megami, Toko Junmai Ginjo Genshu

2019 gold Toko Karakuchi Junmai Daiginjo

2018 gold Toko Junmai Daiginjo Fukuroshibori, Toko Junmai Ginjo Dewasansan

Toko Junmai Ginjo Dewasansan, Toko Junmai Ginjo Dewa no Sato, Toko Junmai

# Green

An aerial photograph of a vast, lush green valley. The foreground and middle ground are dominated by dense, rolling hills covered in vibrant green forests. In the distance, a city or town is visible, nestled in a valley between more distant mountain ranges. The sky is a clear, bright blue, dotted with scattered white cumulus clouds. The overall scene conveys a sense of natural beauty and environmental health.

## —Confronting climate change —



- Effect of climate change

Sake breweries are grappling with the effects of climate change. Poor and lower harvest yields of sake rice caused by high temperatures is one such example. In recent years, rising average summer temperatures are making it difficult to achieve the intended sake quality.

Kojima Sohonten is continuing to take action to protect the surrounding nature.

# Switch to Junmai-only brewing

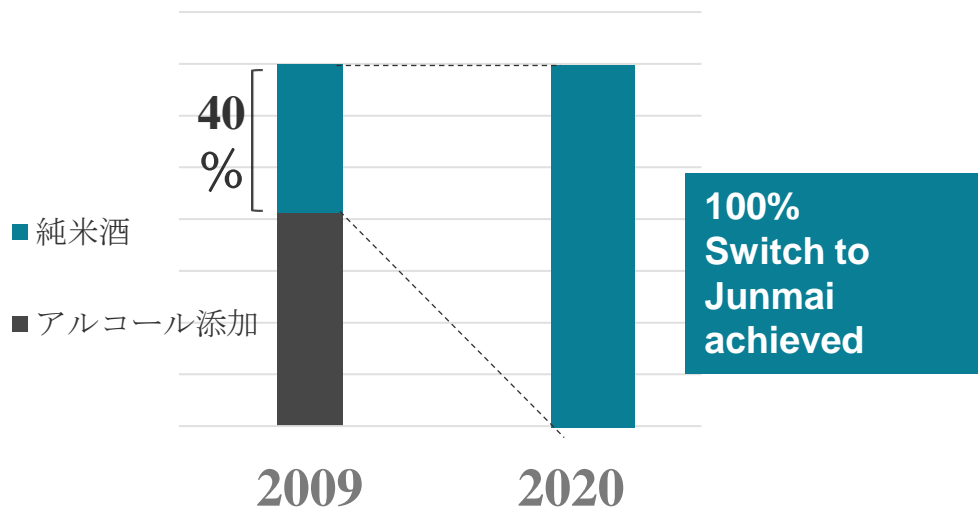


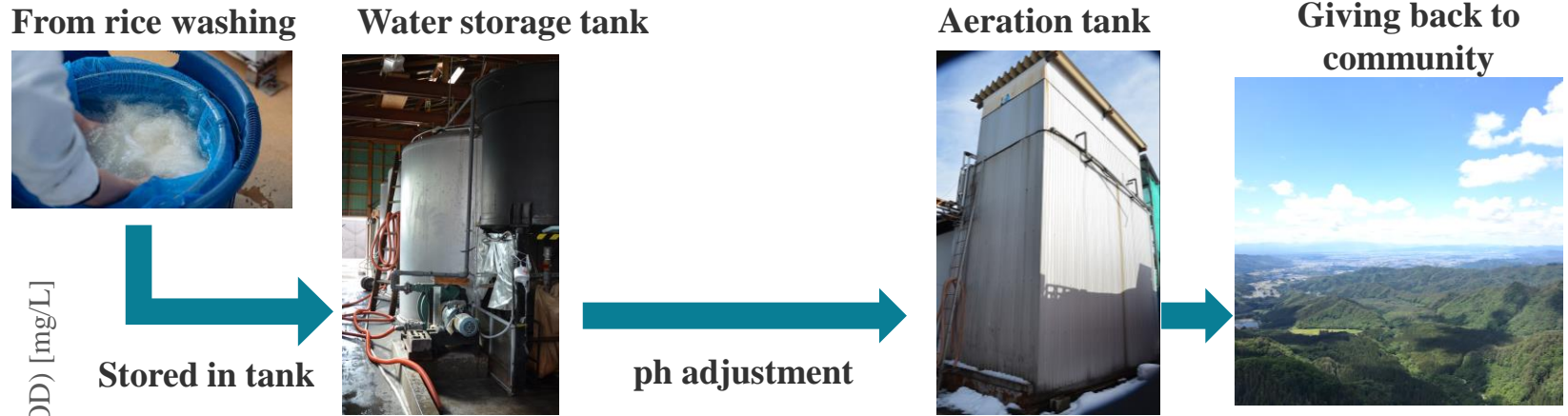
Fig. Ratio (%) of total brewing that is Junmai

In 2020, Kojima Sohonten switched its entire production to a Junmai-only lineup, sake made without the addition of brewer's alcohol.

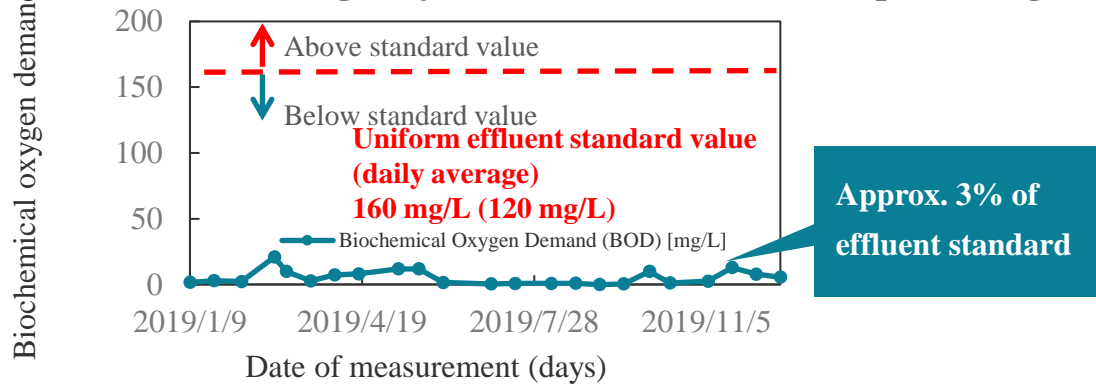
By using only locally produced ingredients instead of brewed alcohol made outside of Japan, the company has reduced its food mileage and contributed to the reduction of energy and CO2 emissions generated during transportation.

\*Food mileage: the distance food travels from where it is grown or manufactured to where it is ultimately consumed.

# Purification of waste water



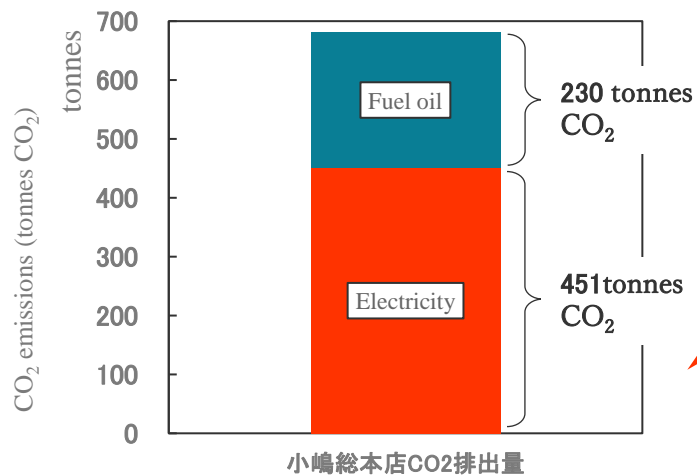
**Fig. Kojima Sohonten's wastewater processing method**



**Fig. Biochemical oxygen demand of wastewater produced by Kojima Sohonten (BOD) [mg/L]**

Kojima Sohonten is working to maintain the local water quality by purifying wastewater from rice washing and cleaning down to approx. 3% of the effluent standard before returning to the rivers.

# Switching all electricity to renewable energy



Breakdown of Kojima Sohonten's energy usage and annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (tonnes)

From Spring 2023  
Total shift to  
renewable energy  
sources

Biogas power station  
(Okitama)



小嶋総本店の循環型エネルギーサイクル



Modern sake brewing uses a lot of electricity such as to control the fermentation temperature and power the refrigerated storage, which while improving the quality of sake have also increased production CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Amid the effect of climate change on the rice quality, Kojima Sohonten will reduce its carbon footprint with a view to becoming a sustainable sake brewery. From 2023, the company will switch all electricity used in the production process to natural energy produced in Yamagata Prefecture's Okitama region.

## Organic Sake Rice Cultivation

In 2022, the company started a pesticide-free cultivation experiment using an Aigamo robot on fields that up until the previous year were cultivated the conventional way using agrichemicals. The experiment is part of a wider goal to grow regional varieties of sake rice while protecting the biodiversity of the rice fields. The first year was a success and the company plans to develop products using organic rice and continue to explore organic farming methods together with contract farmers.



Spring/Autumn 2022, Rice cultivation using the Aigamo Robot



**\*Aigamo Robot**  
Automatic weeding robot  
designed by Organic Rice Design  
Co.,Ltd.



# Waste-free Sake Brewing




Distilling sake lees (left) to make the base shochu of the company's Toko ginjo umeshu product (right).

Rather than discarding them, we utilize all raw material-derived by-products such as rice bran and lees. Rice bran is used as a food ingredient and as fertilizer for nearby orchards, while the sake lees are used to make fruity and aromatic shochu which becomes the base for the company's ginjo umeshu.

⇔ The sake lees that remain after pressing are also provided to nearby orchards as fertilizer.

# Ethical

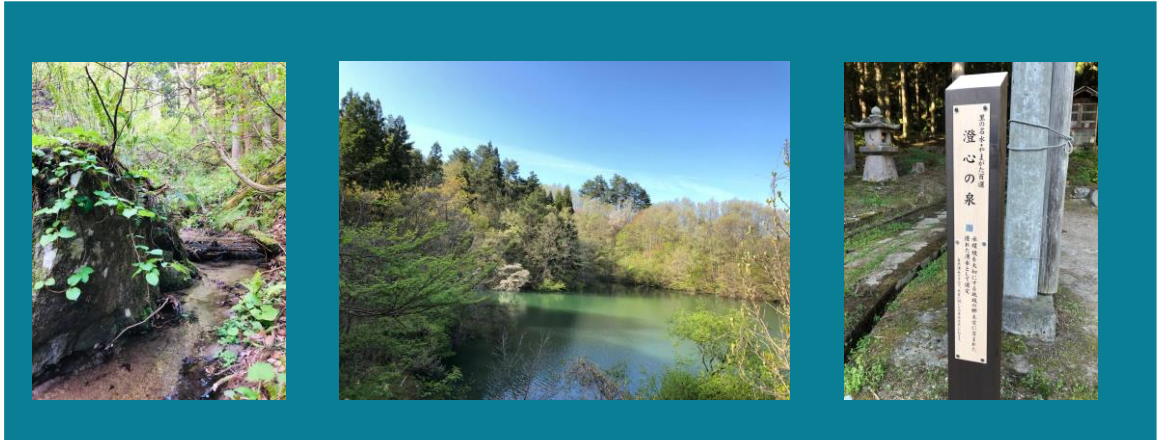
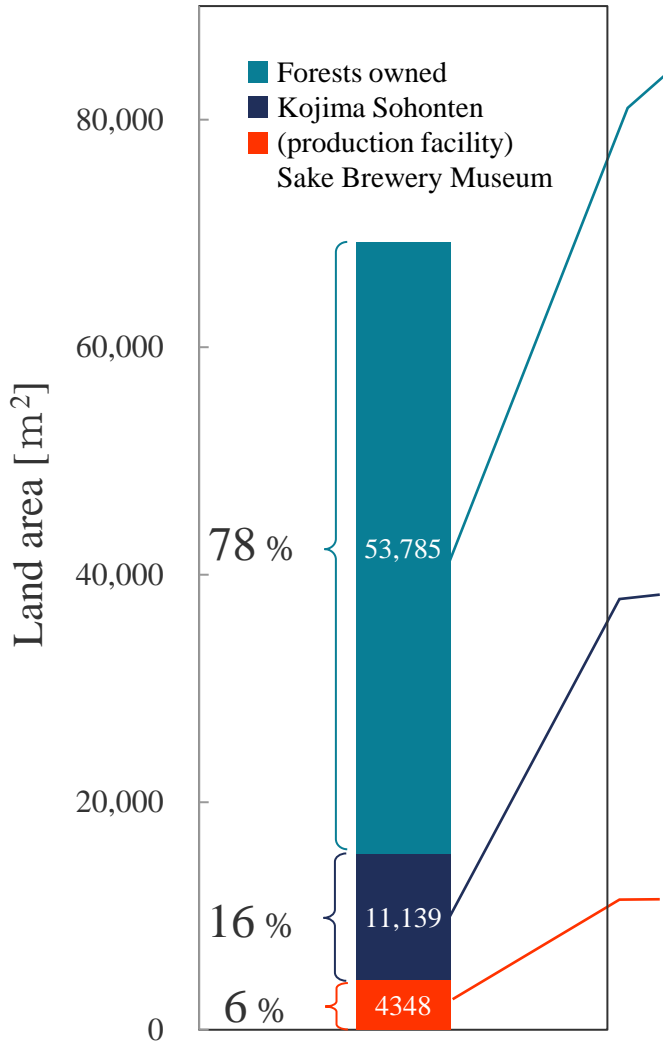




As a local, long-established company in a traditional industry, Kojima Sohonten is engaged in significant initiatives to preserve culture that is dying out and contribute to the local community.

## 2 Strategic map - Ethical

### Breakdown of land owned by Kojima Sohonten



Owned premises

Fig. Breakdown of land owned by Kojima Sohonten [%]

## Connection with Uesugi Shrine /Succession of Snow Lantern Festival

Kojima Sohonten has been an official liquor store of the Uesugi family of the Yonezawa Domain. Since the Meiji era, the former site of Yonezawa Castle has been loved by citizens as Uesugi Shrine, and Toko is still used as the sacred sake for ceremonies there.

Kojima Sohonten works with Uesugi Shrine, a spiritual symbol of Yonezawa, to pass on local history and culture, serving taruzake and amazake to visitors during Hatsumode and at festivals. ◦



## Coexisting with local community

### Yonezawa Sake Rice Research Group



た土地柄を  
もに米作り  
、冬は酒造

Kojima Sohonten established a sake rice research group in 2012 with local contract farmers to study rice cultivation together. Since the cultivation techniques for sake rice differ in some respects from those for table rice, they are working with farmers who initially had no experience in sake rice cultivation to learn cultivation techniques and improve quality from the rice paddies.

### Creating stable employment in the agricultural off-season



For rice farmers in areas with heavy snowfall, the winter months when snow accumulates are non-productive off seasons. Kojima Sohonten hires these farmers as temporary brewers to help provide stable employment all year around, while also enabling the full-time brewing staff to experience a complete production cycle from the rice paddies to sake brewing.

## Fertile Soil of Yonezawa

Located in the southernmost part of Yamagata Prefecture, Yonezawa is a basin surrounded by 2,000-meter mountains: Mt.Ou to the east, Mt. Azuma to the south, and Mt. Iide to the west. The water flowing out of the nutrient-rich soil and the difference in temperature between its four seasons, some of the most distinct in the world, have helped rice cultivation to flourish and produce delicious rice. The forests and undeveloped woodland also form a rich ecosystem.



**Japanese Macaque (Snow Monkey)**

White, wild two-tailed macaques inhabit the Azuma Mountains, but are a rare sight.



**Japónica Lutea**

A species of the Lycaenid butterfly family found in rice paddies, only in a small part of Iwate, Yamagata, and Niigata prefectures.



**Serow**

Widely found mainly in mountainous areas. Designated as the prefecture's animal. <sup>32</sup>





**Fig. Yonezawa's Four Seasons**

# 3. Product Lineup

## Toko Azuchi Momoyama



ABV	15 %
SMV	+1
Raw Ingredients	Kame no O、 Tsuya Hime brewing rice
Rice Polishing Ratio	90% (Kame no O: 50%、 Tsuyahime: 90%)

This collaboration with Mr.Matsui, a bizenyaki potter in Okayama Prefecture, marks a return to sake brewing in earthenware pots called kame, which is one of the methods that was used at the time of the brewery's founding, 400 years ago in the eponymous Azuchi Momoyama period. The mineral feel of brewing in kame is well balanced with the acidity and umami produced by the diverse array of microbes that inhabit the kimoto starter.



### 3 Product Lineup

## Yonezawahan Uesugika goyo sakaya no Kenjoshu Junmai Ginjo Kiokejikomi



ABV	16 %
SMV	?
Raw Ingredients	Kame no O brewing rice
Rice Polishing Ratio	55 %

Sake brewed in a new modern version of the wooden vats that were used as brewing vessels in the Edo period (1603-1868) when Kojima Sohonten offered sake to the Uesugi family. Enjoy the light, complex flavor with a subtle hint of fresh cedar.



### 3 Product Lineup

## Fukurotsuri

### Toko Junmai Daiginjo Fukurotsuri Juuhachi

**\*NEW: winter, 2022**



ABV 15%

SMV -2

Raw Ingredients Yamagata-grown brewing rice, Yuki Megami

Rice Polishing Ratio 18%

### Toko Junmai Daiginjo Fukurotsuri



ABV 16%

SMV -2

Raw Ingredients Yamada Nishiki brewing rice

Rice Polishing Ratio 35%

**International Sake Challenge 2016 Gold Winner**

### Toko Junmai Daiginjo Fukurotsuri

#### Yuki Megami



ABV 16%

SMV -2

Raw Ingredients Yamagata-grown brewing rice, Yuki Megami

精米歩合 35%

**Fine Sake Awards 2018 Gold Winner**

### A method of pressing designed to capture each luxurious drop

Fukurotsuri is a method of pressing where brewers hang the sake up in special bags and let the sake drip out naturally. It is one of the most labor-intensive methods, but sake pressed this way has more elegant, subtle flavor profiles. Kojima Sohonten's product lineup includes 3 fukurotsuri, each with a spring water-like clarity.



## Toko Junmai Ginjo Genshu

Fine Sake Awards 2022 Gold Winner  
Fine Sake Awards 2020 Gold Winner  
Fine Sake Awards Gold Winner 3 Consecutive Years  
2018 SAKE-China Appraisals Platinum Winner



ABV	16 %
SMV	-4
Raw Ingredients	Yamagata Prefecture-grown brewing rice
Rice Polishing Ratio	55 %

### Fruity with solid backbone of umami

Highly acclaimed in contests around the world, this is Kojima Sohonten's best seller offering incredible cost performance. Excellent balanced sake with a soft texture, medium body and profile of ripened fruits and a dry, clean finish. An everyday sake with class. Although it is a genshu (undiluted sake), the 16% abv ensures that it does not tire the palate out.



# Junmai Daiginjo

Toko Junmai Daiginjo  
Yamada Nishiki



ABV	16%
SMV	-1
Raw ingredients	Yamada Nishiki brewing rice
Rice Polishing Ratio	45%

Smooth, mouth filling with intrinsic Yamada Nishiki profile.

Toko Junmai Daiginjo Yuki  
Megami



ABV	16%
SMV	-2
Raw ingredients	Yamagata-grown Yuki Megami brewing rice
Rice Polishing Ratio	45%

Feminine elegance with clarity.

**Fine Sake Awards 2020 • 2021 Gold Winner**

Toko Hidarikiki Junmai  
Daiginjo



ABV	15%
SMV	-1
Raw ingredients	Yamagata-grown Dewasansan brewing rice
Rice polishing ratio	50%

Light and florid, sophisticated profile.

Toko Junmai Daiginjo  
Karakuchi



ABV	15%
SMV	5
Raw ingredients	Dewakirari brewing rice
Rice polishing ratio	50%

A dry sake overflowing with crystal-clear clarity.

**Fine Sake Awards 2019 Gold Winner**

# Junmai Ginjo Toko

**Toko Junmai Ginjo Dewasansan**



ABV	15%
SMV	1
Raw ingredients	Yamagata Dewasansan brewing rice
Rice polishing ratio	55%

Soft and delicate. A feminine sake that goes well with Japanese dining.

**Fine Sake Awards 2018 Gold Winner**

**Toko Junmai Ginjo Dewa no Sato**



ABV	17%
SMV	-4
Raw ingredients	Yamagata Dewanosato brewing rice
Rice polishing ratio	60%

Certified as Yamagata Selection, an initiative to promote Yamagata's "treasures" to the world.

**Fine Sake Awards 2018 Gold Winner**

**Toko Chokarakuchi (ultra-dry) Junmai Ginjo**



ABV	16%
SMV	8
Raw ingredients	Yamagata-grown Rice
Rice polishing ratio	60%

Ultra dry sake with a mild aroma and excellent sharpness.

**Fine Sake Awards 2022 and 2023 Gold Winner**

**Toko Junmai**



ABV	15%
SMV	1
Raw ingredients	Yamagata-grown rice
Rice polishing ratio	60%

Mild and relaxed flavor profile. A standard Junmai-shu without any eccentricity.