

Japanese Seasonings



Sake lees (酒粕, sake kasu) are the flavorful rice solids left after sake is brewed & pressed. Rich in umami, amino acids & nutrients, they are used in soups, marinades, sauces, pickles & sweets, adding a mildly sweet, savory & fermented flavor.



酒粕の作り方

How Sake Lees are Made

A Step-by-Step Guide to Traditional Sake Lees (Sake Kasu)

What are Sake Lees?

Sake lees (酒粕, *sake kasu*) are the nutritious, flavorful solids left over after pressing fermented rice to make sake. They contain rice, koji, natural enzymes, vitamins, minerals, and amino acids, and have a mild, pleasantly sweet and savory flavor.



1 原料を準備する Prepare the Ingredients



Use high-quality rice, water, koji (*Aspergillus oryzae*), and yeast. The koji converts starches to sugars, and yeast ferments the sugars into alcohol.

2 麹を作る Make Koji



Steam the rice and inoculate with koji mold. Let it grow in a warm, humid environment for about 36–48 hours, until the rice is covered with white, fragrant koji.

3 もろみを仕込む Prepare the Fermentation Mash (Moromi)



Combine steamed rice, koji, water, and yeast in stages to create moromi (fermentation mash). Ferment for about 2–4 weeks at a cool temperature (around 10–15°C / 50–59°F), while stirring and monitoring.

4 発酵させる Ferment



During fermentation, yeast converts the sugars into alcohol, creating sake. The mash becomes fragrant, with a balance of sweetness, umami, and acidity.

5 もろみを搾る Press the Mash



The moromi is placed in a sake press (funne or modern press). Pressure is applied to separate the liquid (sake) from the solid solids (sake lees).

6 酒粕を取り出す Collect the Sake Lees



After pressing, the remaining solids are removed. These compressed, moist solids are sake lees (*sake kasu*). They can be used fresh, or further

7 熟成・保存する Aging and Storage



Sake lees can be used fresh, stored in the refrigerator for a few weeks, or aged for several months. Aging deepens flavor, making it richer and more complex.

8 完成 Finished Sake Lees



Sake lees are now ready to use! They have a soft, moist texture with a mild, sweet, and savory flavor, rich in nutrients and natural enzymes.