

Greetings

The feature article in this issue is an overview of the documents of the Horikiri Monjiro family. Kikkoman Corporation started as Noda Shoyu Co., Ltd., which was established by a merger of eight brewers in 1917. The Horikiri Monjiro family was one of these brewers. Under the trade name of Sagamiya, the family engaged in the business of brewing *mirin* or sweet rice wine, sake, and soy sauce in what is now Nagareyama City, Chiba Prefecture. The family was most widely known as a mirin brewer. *Shiro* mirin (literally, white mirin) in particular, whose brewing method is believed to have been established by Horikiri Monjiro II, earned a reputation as a gourmet specialty in the east with its pale to clear hue, and it added a new flair to the culinary culture of Edo. *Shiro* mirin is said to be the basis of today's *hon-mirin* (authentic mirin containing roughly 14% alcohol).

In 2011, the Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture, KIIFC, received a collection of documents owned by the Horikiri family, and has since been restoring, cataloging, and analyzing them. As a comprehensive picture of the documents can now be seen, we decided to present a summary of the work done on these documents with some of the research results obtained. The work will continue and will be completed within a couple of years. We hope these documents will help many researchers by illuminating some of the early modern and modern history of the brewing industry in Kanto.

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