

Company Guidance

本物の味を正直に

Expressing True Flavor



的場水産株式会社

MATOBA SUISAN Corp.

Expressing True Flavor

A creator strives daily to always be genuine, and to stay true. Both goals are connected by the words “thank you”. We learn from the wisdom of the past, and the sweat of today, to aim for the taste of tomorrow. In steadfastness we will carry on.

In the half century since establishing this company in 1956, we have strived to express true flavor. We started out as wholesalers of dried bonito, but in 1975, in an effort to meet our customers’ needs, we began to make our own bonito packs and other dried bonito-related products under the brand name Futamaru. Literally “Double Circle,” Futamaru is intended as a playful reference to the “Mato,” meaning “target,” in my family name.

We have also introduced a new brand called Katsuo-ya, a line of products particularly suited for high-quality gifts. In recent years, in the pursuit of expediency, true taste has been largely neglected by the food industry. It is in times like these that we must rigidly protect our traditional production methods and provide our customers with products that are safe, reliable and satisfactory. I strongly believe that this is our duty to our customers and we will keep this in our hearts as we earnestly undertake the production of fine products.

Shinya Matoba
President and Managing Director



Contribute to food culture while keeping our foundation rooted in passed down traditions.

How many people truly know how much time and effort is required to produce a single dried bonito? Even now, we at Matoba Fisheries continue to protect painstaking production methods that date back some 300 years. Bonito that have been quick-frozen out at sea are thawed and sectioned by hand. They are then boiled, boned and shaped by applying a bonito paste to any cut or crevice. Next, they are slowly smoked for two weeks. The driest of our products, called *honkarebushi*, mature under a layer of mold and require anywhere from three to six months to produce. As no step in the process is particularly well-suited to automation, this work is performed by hand and relies

heavily on the expertise and experience of skilled artisans. One tense moment follows another, and a momentary distraction can adversely affect the outcome.

When a *honkarebushi* product is cut in half, the inner surface gives off a beautiful shine like that of a precious stone. It would not be an exaggeration to say that dried bonito is a treasure from the sea that, through hard work, has been transformed into a jewel. This would not be possible without artisans who have learned traditional methods handed down across time. We at Matoba Fisheries will continue to contribute to food culture while keeping our foundation rooted in passed down traditions.

The Making of Honkarebushi

1



Cleaning The Fish

After cutting off the bonito's head and gutting it, it is cut in half and the spine is removed.

2



Filleting The Fish

The fish is then cut in half again. The two back sections are referred to as "male" sections and two belly sections are "female."

3



Placed In Baskets

The sections are lined up carefully in trays taking care not to alter their shape.

4



Stewing

These trays of bonito are submerged for 60-90 minutes in water that is 90-95 degrees Celsius, just below the boiling point.

The Making of Honkarebushi

5



Bone Removal

After cooling, the smaller bones are carefully removed by hand. Half of the skin is then removed from the two back sections and 1/3 from each of the two belly sections.

6



Mending

Before continuing on to the next part of the process, the bonito needs to be checked for any damage or cracks. If any damage is found, the bonito will need to be mended. A bonito paste is used to fill in cracks and smooth out any irregularities. This improves the ultimate shape of the finished product and prevents any mold from forming beneath the surface. After mending, the bonito will be sterilized with hot (90°C) steam for more than 10 minutes.

The Making of Honkarebushi

7



Fire Roasting

The bonito sections are then smoked using the wood from oak and other hardwood trees.

8



Bare Honkarebushi

Sections that have been dried 10-15 times are called arabushi or “rough timbers.” Any tar or fat is carefully scraped off the surface.

9



Molding

Stored in a very humid environment for 2-3 weeks, a layer of blue-green mold forms. This mold is harmless and results from a breakdown of fats that renders the final product all the more tasty.

The Making of Honkarebushi

10



Drying

The pieces are then dried before being placed in humid storage once again. This cycle is repeated 3 - 4 times.

11



Completed Honkarebushi

After a minimum of 6 months of work, the honkarebushi is ready to eat.



A Production Line With Safety In Mind

In December 2016, a new factory built to international sanitary standards, equipped with both “dirty zones” and “clean zones”, was completed and certified. We believe that we must not only protect our tradition and flavor, but also our customer’s safety and security.

Here at Matoba Fisheries, while contributing to Japanese food culture with the production of *honkarebushi* and other dried bonito products, we have also procured advanced facilities for the slicing, grating and packaging of dried bonito. Thus, while making use of and transmitting traditional technology we are also applying advanced technology to the development of a large number of new food products as we strive to be an active, all-around food producer.

Finely-tuned to meet your needs - customizable shaving & grinding line

We have both shaving and grinding lines in our factory that can be customized as per the client’s request.

Shaving Line



We are able to shave as thinly as 0.01mm or cut as thick as 1.0mm.

Grinding Line



On the grinding line we are able to grind as coarse as 5mm or fine as 0.001mm.





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