

Five Fascicles of Exotic Political, Natural, and Medical Delights

Daidso (common and formal name), also called *Mame*--that is, 'bean plant'--on account of its excellence. An upright beanstalk, with pods like lupine, with a pale fruit in the form of a largish pea.

A bean similar to the previous entry, but fuller and four feet tall, it is supported by a crooked, branching stem, smooth in some places and hairy in others. It has leaves like the garden bean's, rougher on the back, which is hairy. In the month of August it unfolds little blue-white flowers between the folds of its leaves, with several flowers situated on one stalk; they are tiny like the scarcely-open flowers of vetch, with a banner¹ and upright petals. These flowers develop into copious pods, an inch and a half long and rough with long hairs, similar to yellow lupine, containing two seeds or more rarely three. The seeds are like garden peas in shape, size, and taste, although somewhat compressed, with a brown circle.²

This bean in Japanese cuisine will fill two pages. Indeed the paste called *Miso* is made from it, which is added to dishes, both for consistency and in place of butter, for butter is unknown in this region. Also the well-known sauce called *Sooju* is made from it, which is almost invariably poured over dishes--if not all dishes, certainly all fried and steamed foods. I present here recipes for both of them.

To make *Miso* they take one measure of *Mame* or *Daidso* beans which, having been cooked in water for a long time until they are very soft, they then grind into a soft porridge. They mix into the porridge, with the help of repeated beatings, four measures of common salt in summer, three in winter; the less salt is added, the more elegant the end product is--though it does not last as long. Soon after that they add one measure of *Koos* (that is, husked rice, parboiled in the steam of sweet water, which, after it has cooled, is placed in a warm room for one or two days and nights, until it reaches a contracted state) in quantity equal to that of the beans, and they mix it in by beating it thoroughly. They place this mixture (which has the consistency of porridge or plaster) in a wooden jar which was previously used to hold the common beer called *Sacki*. Before using this jar for *Miso* they leave it empty and untouched for one or two months. *Koos* adds the proper flavor to the paste, and the process requires the expert

¹ Botanical jargon used for papilionaceous flowers of the Fabaceae family.

² The point where the bean attaches to the pod; it's "umbilical cord."

hand of a master, as in the case of the barley of the Germans. For this reason there are masters who specialize in this field and sell prepared products.

To make *Sooju* they take those same beans cooked to the same softness, with equal measures of salt and coarsely-ground *Muggi* (that is, grain; barley and wheat are equally common, but the variety produced from wheat is darker), or one measure of each.³ They mix the beans with the ground grain, and they place the mixture in a warm place for one day and night, covered, so that it will stay warm. Then, having placed the mixture in a clay jar, they cover this mass of dough with the aforementioned salt, adding two and a half measures of common water. When this is done, on the following day, and every day after that, they at least once (but preferably twice or thrice) agitate the mass, which is kept covered, with a paddle. After this process has continued for two or three months, they strain and press the mass, preserving the liquid in wooden jars. The older the liquid becomes, the clearer and better it becomes. When the mass has thus been drained, they soak it again with water poured on and press it again after agitating it for a few days.

³ The meaning seems to be that the measures of grain and salt should be equal to each other, and they may (or may not) also be equal to the measure of beans.