

DESCRIPTION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION: METHOD FOR PRODUCING SACCHARIFIED MOROMI

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TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a method for producing a
saccharified mash (*moromi*). More specifically, the present invention
relates to a method for producing a saccharified mash usable in the
10 production of a beer-taste beverage such as beer, a beer-taste beverage
using a saccharified mash obtained by the production method as raw
materials, and an apparatus usable for the production method.

BACKGROUND ART

15 [0002] With the diversification of tastes of the consumers in the recent
years, the development of beer-taste beverages having various flavor
features is in demand.

[0003] For example, Patent Publication 1 discloses that use of a product
prepared by subjecting a sugar and a proteolytic product to a Maillard
20 reaction at a temperature of 105°C or higher and 121°C or lower and a
preparation product thereof makes it possible to control a liquid color and
taste of a fermented alcoholic beverage, so that a fermented alcoholic
beverage with a natural beer-like coloration or taste can be produced
without using a colorant such as caramel as conventionally used.

25 [0004] Patent Publication 2 has reported that a beer-taste beverage with

enhanced richness in taste and enhanced aroma can be produced by
subjecting malts which are raw materials for beers or *Happoushu* (low-
malt beers) amylaceous raw materials such as barleys, rice, maize (corns),
Sorghum bicolor (*Kaoliang*), potatoes, starches, and sugars to
5 saccharification, and thereafter reacting the sugar and/or proteolytic
product at a reaction temperature of 122°C or higher and 141°C or lower,
thereby allowing to contain maltol and furaneol which are high-
temperature reaction products in larger amounts than conventional
products.

10 [0005] Patent Publication 3 has reported that a specified molecular weight
fraction of a high molecular weight component (aminocarbonyl reaction
forming component and caramel reaction forming component) produced
by treating barley seeds, barley malts, barley seed extracts, barley malt
extracts, or a mixture thereof at a temperature of from 120° to 150°C has
15 mild tastiness (*umami*) or richness in taste; therefore, tastiness or richness
in taste of the beer-taste beverage can be enhanced by adding those
fractions as a flavor improver to foodstuff such as a beer-taste beverage,
whereby the flavor of the beer-taste beverage can be greatly improved.

20 RELATED ART REFERENCES

PATENT PUBLICATIONS

[0006] Patent Publication 1: Japanese Patent Gazette No. 3,836,117

Patent Publication 2: International Publication WO 2009/078360

Patent Publication 3: International Publication WO 2009/078359

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED BY THE INVENTION

[0007] However, in the method of Patent Publication 1, although a flavor component is formed by a Maillard reaction, the extraction of the flavor component is not necessarily sufficient, so that a further effort is needed in order to accomplish a desired flavor. On the other hand, when treated at high temperatures as in Patent Publications 2 and 3, while it is possible to extract a component that enhances richness in taste and aroma, a “burn”-like component or the like is more likely to be formed, so that it is difficult to control a desired taste, and it is necessary to heat a mash kettle to an even higher temperature in order to control the reaction liquid temperature at a high temperature mentioned above, which is not said to be highly efficient from the aspect of facilities.

[0008] In addition, as a mash kettle used in the preparation of saccharified mash, a copper kettle has been previously used, but its upkeep or control is complicated, so that the mainstream today is use of a stainless steel (SUS) kettle.

[0009] An object of the present invention is to remark on a heating apparatus of a saccharified mash as one of the method for preparing a flavor component, to elucidate the influences thereof on the quality of a beer-taste beverage, and to provide a method for producing a saccharified mash which is useful in efficiently producing a beer-taste beverage having excellent flavor.

MEANS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS

[0010] As a result of intensive studies, the present inventors have found that a saccharified mash can be produced which is useful in precisely producing a desired beer quality by heating a mash to be saccharified in a tube made of copper upon the production of a saccharified mash, and the present invention has been perfected thereby.

[0011] Specifically, the present invention relates to the following [1] to [3]:

[1] A method for producing a saccharified mash including drawing out a part of a mash to be saccharified into a tank, heating the part, and returning the part and mixing with the remainder part, characterized in that the method includes heating the drawn-out mash to be saccharified in a copper tube.

[2] A beer-taste beverage obtainable by using a saccharified mash obtained by a method as defined in the above [1] as a part of raw materials.

[3] An apparatus for producing a saccharified mash characterized in that the apparatus comprises a mash tun for housing a mash to be saccharified in a manner capable of holding temperature, and a tank capable of receiving a part of the mash to be saccharified from the mash tun and returning a heat-treated mash to the mash tun, wherein the tank includes an external circulation pipe including a copper tube, wherein heating of the mash is enabled within the copper tube.

EFFECTS OF THE INVENTION

[0012] The saccharified mash obtainable by the method of the present invention allows to control the generation of factors that would be regarded as negative in sensory aspect such as "burnt taste," and enhances

“body,” “aroma” and the like, thereby making it possible to precisely produce a desired beer-taste beverage.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

5 [0013] [FIG. 1] FIG. 1 is graphs showing the results of sensory assessments of beer-taste beverages using saccharified mash with different heating methods.

[FIG. 2] FIG. 2 is a schematic view showing one embodiment of a production apparatus usable in the production method of the present invention.
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MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0014] The method for producing a saccharified mash of the present invention is a method including drawing out a part of a mash to be
15 saccharified into a tank, heating the part, and returning the part and mixing with the remainder part, characterized in that the method includes heating the drawn-out mash to be saccharified in a copper tube.

[0015] Copper is a metal that has a function as an oxidizing agent. Accordingly, when a mash to be saccharified is heated in a vessel made of
20 copper, although the detailed mechanisms thereof are not elucidated, an oxidation reaction proceeds at the contact surface with copper, and it is assumed to more likely cause formation of a component relating to “body,” “aroma” or the like.

[0016] (Mash to Be Saccharified)
25 In the present invention, the “mash to be saccharified” refers to a

mixture in which warm water is added to raw materials containing malts, and a reaction from starch to sugar is carried out by heating. For example, the mash to be saccharified is obtained by supplying malts which are pulverized by a method well known to one of ordinary skill in the art into a mash tun, and mixing the pulverized malts with a warm water at a temperature of from about 40° to about 70°C. Here, a mash tun known to one of ordinary skill in the art can be used without particular limitations.

[0017] As the raw materials of the mash to be saccharified, besides malts, amylaceous raw materials such as barleys, rice, maize (corns), *Sorghum bicolor* (Kaoliang), potatoes, starches, and sugars can be used. In addition, the raw materials may contain proteolytic products contained in crop raw materials such as malts, barleys, and rice, or an additive such as a bittering agent or a color pigment.

[0018] (Tank)

The tank into which a part of the drawn out mash to be saccharified is supplied (mash kettle) may be any ones so long as the tank is capable of receiving a heat-treated mash and returning the part to a mash tun, and the materials therefor are not particularly limited. For example, as mentioned above, although a tank made of copper has been conventionally used, a tank made of stainless steel is suitably used at present in consideration of complicatedness of upkeep and control.

[0019] The amount of the mash to be saccharified drawn into the tank is not particularly set, and the amount can be properly adjusted in accordance with a known technique. For example, a mash to be saccharified that is filled in the mash tun can be drawn into the tank in an amount of from 10

to 50% by mass. Also, the number of times of drawing out and returning the mash to be saccharified are not particularly limited.

[0020] (Heat Treatment)

In the present invention, the heat treatment of the mash to be
5 saccharified that is drawn out is carried out in a copper tube. So long as
the heat treatment of the mash to be saccharified is carried out in a copper
tube, a part of the mash to be saccharified may be drawn out into a copper
tube and heated, or heating may be carried out while circulating the
entirety in a copper tube. The amount drawn out or circulated in a copper
10 tube is not particularly set, and the amount can be properly adjusted. The
copper tube is not particularly set in its shape so long as the entire copper
tube can be heated and subjected to heat exchange. From the viewpoint of
forming a component concerning "body," "aroma" or the like, a ratio of an
inner surface area of the copper tube (m^2) to a volume of a mash to be
15 saccharified which is drawn into a tank (m^3) (inner surface area / volume)
is preferably 1.5 or more, and more preferably 3.0 or more, and preferably
10.0 or less, more preferably 9.0 or less, even more preferably 7.0 or less,
and still even more preferably 5.0 or less. In addition, the length and the
thickness of the copper tube can be properly adjusted depending upon the
20 production facilities and the amount produced. Here, the purity or quality
of the copper is not particularly limited.

[0021] The heat treatment may be subjected to direct fire so long as the
above copper tube can be heated, and it is preferable that heating is carried
out using steam in consideration of upkeep or maintenance of the copper
25 tube. As the steam used in heating, a steam at an absolute pressure of from

0.12 to 0.20 MPa is preferably used. A steam produced by a boiler (not illustrated in figure) is subjected to a pressure reduction via a reduced pressure valve and used in heating of the above copper tube. The absolute pressure as used herein is a value of a gauge pressure within a steam pipe from a reduced pressure valve to a copper tube added with an atmospheric pressure. The temperature of the steam that heats a copper tube is preferably 105°C or higher, and more preferably 110°C or higher. Also, the temperature is preferably 120°C or lower, and more preferably 115°C or lower. The heating time is not unconditionally determined because it depends upon the amount of the mash drawn out for heating, and the mash in the copper tube may reside in the tube and heated, or the mash may be heated while circulating. In addition, it is desired that the above copper tube is kept heating until the heating of an entire amount of the mash to be saccharified is terminated, and the number of times of the above heat treatment performed is not particularly limited. Since the mash to be saccharified that is drawn out is mixed with the remainder of the mash in the mash tun to allow saccharification, so that the temperature reached by the above heat treatment may be higher than that of the remainder of the mash, and for example, it can be heated up to 100°C by the above heat treatment.

[0022] The above copper tube can appropriately include a pipe for drawing out a mash into a tank, a pipe for returning the heated mash, a valve for adjusting the amount of the mash, or the like between the tube and the tank, so long as the heat treatment for a mash to be saccharified may be carried out. Here, while the materials or shapes or the length of the above pipe

can be appropriately set in accordance with known techniques, it is preferable to have a design that allows easiness in attachability and detachability of the copper tube from the pipes, from the viewpoint of easiness in the upkeep or maintenance of the copper tube.

5 **[0023]** Thus, the heat treatment of the mash can be carried out in a copper tube. The heat-treated mash obtained is mixed with the remainder of mash to allow saccharification, whereby a saccharified mash in the present invention can be produced. Generally known conditions for saccharification may be used.

10 **[0024]** A beer-taste beverage can be produced by removing husks or the like from the saccharified mash obtained by filtration, adding hops or the like thereto, boiling the mixture, removing solid contents such as coagulated proteins, adding an yeast to allow fermentation, and optionally removing the yeast with a filter or the like. Accordingly, the present
15 invention also provides a beer-taste beverage obtainable by using a saccharified mash obtained by the production method of the present invention as a part of raw materials. Here, storage (stored liquor), filtration and container filling, and optionally sterilization steps can be carried out, and as the conditions for these boiling step, solid content
20 removing step, fermentation step, and the like, conditions that are generally known may be used.

[0025] The beer-taste beverage of the present invention can be variously classified according to the other raw materials, production methods, and the Japanese Liquor Tax Act, so long as a saccharified mash that is heated
25 in a copper tube is used, and may be any beverages so long as the beverage

has a beer-like taste. In other words, the beer-taste beverage of the present invention includes all the beer-taste beverages irrespective of the presence or absence of a fermentation step with an yeast, unless specified otherwise. For example, the beer-taste beverage includes *Happoushu* (low-malt beers),
5 beers, liqueurs, and other miscellaneous liquors in the names under the Japanese Liquor Tax Act, and also includes fermented beverages having low alcoholic contents (for example, fermented beverages having alcoholic contents of less than 1%), Spirits, non-alcoholic beer-taste beverages, beer-taste refreshing beverages, and the like. The beer-taste beverage of the
10 present invention has excellent flavor in which “burnt taste” is controlled, and “body” and “aroma” are provided.

[0026] The alcoholic concentration of the beer-taste beverage of the present invention is, but not particularly limited to, preferably from 0 to 40% (v/v), and more preferably from 1 to 15% (v/v). Especially, an alcoholic
15 concentration of the same level as beverages favorably drinkable by consumers as the beer-taste beverage such as beers and *Happoushu* (low-malt beers), in other words, from 3 to 8% (v/v), is more preferred.

[0027] The beer-taste beverage of the present invention is filled in a tightly sealed container such as bottles, cans, barrels, or plastic bottles (PET
20 bottles), so that the beverage can be provided as a beverage in a container.

[0028] Furthermore, the present invention provides an apparatus for producing a saccharified mash.

[0029] The apparatus for producing a saccharified mash of the present invention is characterized in that the apparatus comprises a mash tun
25 (numeral 1 of FIG. 2) for housing a mash to be saccharified in a manner

capable of holding temperature, and a tank (numeral 2 of FIG. 2) capable of receiving a part of the mash to be saccharified from the mash tun and returning a heat-treated mash to the mash tun, wherein the tank includes an external circulation pipe (numeral 4 of FIG. 2) including a copper tube (numeral 3 of FIG. 2), wherein heating of the mash is enabled within the copper tube.

[0030] The mash tun can be appropriately set in accordance with known techniques, as mentioned above.

[0031] In addition, the tank comprises a tank main body and a circulation pipe having a copper tube externally attached to the tank main body, and it is preferable that the tank main body has a pipe capable of receiving a part of a mash to be saccharified from the mash tun and returning a heat-treated mash to the mash tun. The copper tube is similar to a copper tube usable in the method for producing a saccharified mash of the present invention, and the distribution of a mash to be heated and a heat-treated mash inside the copper tube is carried out by the circulation pipe.

EXAMPLES

[0032] The present invention will be specifically described hereinbelow by the Examples, without intending to limit the scope of the present invention to the following Examples.

[0033] Example 1 and Comparative Examples 1 and 2

Thirty kilograms of malts were ground to an appropriate granularity, the ground malts were supplied into a 200 L-volume mash tun, and 120 L of warm water was added thereto to prepare a mash (mash to be

saccharified) at about 40°C. A 30 L part was drawn out from the mash tun, heated to 100°C to boil, and mixed with the remainder to allow saccharification. A mash in which saccharification was perfected was heated to 78°C, transferred to a wort filtration tank and filtered, to obtain a filtrate. Here, in Example 1 and Comparative Examples 1 and 2, heating facilities used in the step of boiling a part of the mash defined above at 100°C were different. In Comparative Example 1, a facility in which an entire amount was subjected to heating with a steam in a stainless steel kettle (bottom area: 0.20 m², 50 L volume) was used; in Comparative Example 2, a facility in which an entire amount was heated on direct fire in a copper kettle (bottom area: 0.20 m², 50 L volume) was used; in Example 1, a facility in which an entire amount was supplied in the stainless steel kettle, the entire amount was then heated with a copper steam heat exchanger (copper tube: diameter: 23 mm, length: 1.8 m, inner surface area: 0.13 m², ratio of inner surface area / volume of mash supplied into the stainless steel kettle = 4.3), using a steam at an absolute pressure of 0.15 MPa, while circulating at 10 L/min (equivalent to an amount of mash existing in the copper pipe during circulation of 7.5 x 10⁻⁴ m³), and the heated mash was returned to the stainless steel kettle.

[0034] A part of the filtrate obtained was taken, hops were added thereto, and a mixture was boiled for 60 to 90 minutes. These controlled worts were microbially utilized primarily for glucose, sucrose, maltose, and isomaltose under the identical conditions. Bottom-fermenting beer yeasts that were not microbially utilized or hardly likely to be microbially utilized for a trisaccharide were added thereto, and allowed to ferment at about

10°C for from 10 to 30 days, and a fermented mixture was filtered, to give a filtered beer.

[0035] The flavor of the resulting beer was assessed according to a sensory test according to a scoring system. Seven well-trained sensory assessors were asked to assess for “body,” “aroma,” “harmonious taste,” “burnt taste,” and “overall assessment” in a full mark of score 3, wherein “very strongly felt” or “very excellent” was given score 3; “clearly felt” or “excellent” was given score 2; “slightly felt” or “slightly excellent” was given score 1; and “not felt” or “ordinary” was given score 0. Specifically, 7 sensory assessors were asked to assess the three samples (Example 1 and Comparative Examples 1 and 2), and a deviation of each of the assessment results was calculated from a mean and standard deviations of the assessment results for each of the items, and a mean thereof was defined as an assessment score for each sample. The deviation had a mean score of 50, wherein the higher the numerical values for “body,” “aroma,” “harmonious taste,” and “overall assessment,” and the lower the numerical values for “burnt taste,” the more excellent the results. The results are shown in Table 1 and FIG. 1.

[0036]

[Table 1]

Table 1

Mean	Body	Aroma	Harmonious Taste	Burnt Taste	Overall Assessment
Comp. Ex.1	45.1	45.3	44.5	56.6	45.3
Comp. Ex. 2	50.0	50.6	50.3	53.7	49.2
Ex. 1	54.9	54.1	55.1	39.7	55.6

[0037] It can be seen from Table 1 that the beer in which a saccharified mash obtained by the method for production of the present invention is used has not only the controlled taste of burnt taste, but also excellent body, aroma, taste, and the like, thereby showing excellent overall flavors.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0038] The beer in which a saccharified mash obtained by the method of the present invention is used has not only the controlled burnt taste, but also excellent body, aroma, taste, and the like, whereby a new taste can be provided as a luxurious product.

EXPLANATION OF NUMERALS

- [0039]
- 1 mash tun
 - 2 tank (mash kettle)
 - 3 copper tube
 - 4 external circulation pipe

CLAIMS

[Claim 1] A method for producing a saccharified mash comprising drawing out a part of a mash to be saccharified into a tank, heating the part, and returning the part and mixing with the remainder part, characterized in that the method comprises heating the drawn-out mash to be saccharified in a copper tube.

[Claim 2] The method according to claim 1, wherein the heating in the copper tube comprises heating the copper tube by a steam at an absolute pressure of from 0.12 to 0.20 MPa.

[Claim 3] The method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein a ratio of an inner surface area (m^2) of the copper tube to a volume (m^3) of the mash to be saccharified which is drawn out into the tank (inner surface area / volume) is from 1.5 to 10.0.

[Claim 4] A beer-taste beverage obtainable by using a saccharified mash obtained by a method as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 as a part of raw materials.

[Claim 5] An apparatus for producing a saccharified mash characterized in that the apparatus comprises a mash tun for housing a mash to be saccharified in a manner capable of holding temperature, and a tank capable of receiving a part of the mash to be saccharified from the mash tun and returning a heat-treated mash to the mash tun, wherein the tank comprises an external circulation pipe comprising a copper tube, wherein heating of the mash is enabled within the copper tube.