



Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Beyond K-Food: South Korea Elevates ‘K-Sool’ to the Global Stage Through Diplomatic Showcase

Sejong, 29 April 2026 — The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) hosted a promotional event for traditional Korean alcoholic beverages (K-Sool) on 29 April at Korea House in Seoul. The event welcomed the spouses of diplomats stationed in the Republic of Korea—representing nations including the United States, China, Mongolia, Germany, and Thailand—who were invited as guests of honour.

In January 2026, the MAFRA and the MOFA designated 30 overseas diplomatic missions as this year’s K-food export hubs. Since then, they have been implementing a promotional support programme designed to leverage these missions as strategic platforms for introducing traditional Korean alcoholic beverages to the global market.

As part of a broader initiative to facilitate the globalisation of traditional Korean

alcoholic beverages and bolster K-Food exports, the MAFRA convened a panel of expert judges to select 36 distinct varieties of traditional alcohol. Each selection embodies the unique heritage and philosophy of its respective region. These curated beverages have been distributed to the designated overseas diplomatic missions serving as pivotal hubs for K-food exports.

Under this scheme, the 36 selected beverages, accompanied by an informative guidebook, were dispatched to overseas missions sequentially from March, with all deliveries successfully completed as of April. This initiative seeks to establish a robust foundation for the international promotion and appreciation of traditional Korean alcoholic beverages.

The K-Sool promotional event was organised to underscore the significance of this initiative. By artfully pairing Korean cuisine with traditional beverages, the event aims to promulgate the profound appeal of Korean culinary culture worldwide through the diplomatic community stationed in Korea.

The showcase featured 36 varieties of traditional alcohol crafted from Korean agricultural produce, including rice, jujubes, and persimmons. Participants were given detailed explanations of the distinct characteristics and historical origins of each beverage, followed by a tasting session. The tasting highlighted representative examples from four key categories—“Makgeolli” (traditional unfiltered, cloudy rice wine), “Yakju/Cheongju” (refined clear rice wine), fruit wine, and distilled spirits—all selected from the esteemed winners of the 2025 K-Sool Award.

The event featured a luncheon where specific pairings were served to demonstrate the harmony between Korean cuisine and traditional alcoholic

beverages: the refined Yakju/Cheongju “Cheongmyeongju” and the fruit wine “Krate Medium Dry.

As part of ongoing efforts to support the international promotion of traditional Korean alcoholic beverages, the MAFRA is pursuing a branding initiative. This involves classifying such beverages into four core categories—Makgeolli, Yakju/Cheongju, fruit-based wines, and distilled spirits—and establishing their official nomenclature. Accordingly, “K-Sool” denotes traditional Korean alcoholic beverages; “Makgeolli” refers to traditional unfiltered, cloudy rice wine; “Yakju” represents refined clear rice wine; “Fruit Wine” corresponds to fruit-based wines; and “K-Soju” refers to distilled spirits.

The accompanying guidebook, produced in both the Korean and English languages, begins with an introduction to these four categories. It further provides in-depth information on the characteristics of the 36 selected beverages, their producers, recommended food pairings, purchasing details, prices, and cocktail recipes.

The MAFRA remains committed to providing policy support to ensure that the traditional alcohol industry can be scaled up, quality standards can be enhanced, and products can expand further into overseas markets. To bolster the consumption and exports of K-Sool, the MAFRA will implement a range of support measures across diverse sectors. These include securing placement in convenience stores, sales on national carriers, availability in airport duty-free shops, supporting producers’ participation in overseas exhibitions, and establishing pop-up stores in key overseas markets. The MAFRA will also continue to strengthen cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Minister Song Miryung of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs stated, “Traditional Korean alcohol (K-Sool) is a precious cultural asset that encompasses Korean agriculture, regional identity, and a rich history steeped in deep-rooted cultural narratives.” Minister Song emphasised: “Synergistic effects can be maximised when K-Sool grows in tandem with the expansion of K-Food. We will further enhance the competitiveness of Korean food culture through promotional efforts that link Korean cuisine with traditional alcoholic beverages.”



<Minister Song Miryung of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (at the centre)>

