

Breeding History of Japanese Beef Cattle and Preservation of Genetic Resources as Economic Farm Animals:

In this paper, breeding history and present aspects of the Japanese Black breed, which is the major breed and distributed nationwide would be described to discuss on the way of preservations of genetic resources as economic farm animals at any period.

Introduction

Section taken from *Breeding History of Japanese Beef Cattle and Preservation of Genetic Resources as Economic Farm Animals*.

Estimated characteristics of pure native cattle

All modern cattle, including the Japanese Black are not bred true of old native cattle, because they are descendants of mongrels between native and various kinds of imported cattle.

Characteristics of pure native cattle would only be able to estimate from old documents and 'Mishima' cattle that are preserved under governmental protection as a natural monument . These cattle are reserved in 'Mishima', a small island located in the Sea of Japan, and are recognized as a group of isolated native cattle from crossing with foreign breeds.

Some characteristics summarized by Dr. M Ishihara are as follows:

- Black coat color is predominant and black cattle with small white spot on udder or near bottom, or a little amount of white hairs on black skin seemed to be preferred rather than single black pattern. White spotted, brown and blind-like patterned cattle were also present.
- Body size was small. Withers height of mature females was 115-118 cm, and that of males about 123-125 cm.
- Middle part of body was plump with well-stand ribs, but hind legs and neck were thin.
- Quality of coat and skin was fine and hair was curled. Horn represented bluish white color, fine texture and round section.
- Body shape was clean-cut and shanks were fine with strong joint and tendon. Hooves were firm. Movement was smart.
- Heifers were sired at more than 24 months old for the first calving, while young bulls were used at three years old for service, adult bulls of five years old were able to serve to 80 females a year.
- The abilities of drafting and carrying were a little inferior, but working will and turning action were superior to the modern Japanese Black.
- Maximum milk secretion was about 3.3 kg per day, and lactation period lasted within about 116 days, although there were wide individual variations on dairy performance
- Body weight gain and feed efficiency were low, but excellent meat quality was a common character.

BLACKMORE WAGYU BEEF

It is clear that the requirements for the old native cattle were directed to important traits of working performance, because of lacking in utilization for dairy and meat productions. The requirements were ignored when they were crossbred later with foreign breeds, expecting to obtain large-sized and superior on dairy performance.

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