

Feed Ration - The Blackmore Difference:

The cattle are introduced to a secret feeding regime for 500-600 days designed by a leading Japanese producer and feedlotter in conjunction with specialists from a leading Japanese university.

Introduction

Research from Japan indicates when young Wagyu are raised in an environment with a steady continual growth pattern, hormones released from the brain activate marbling cells in the muscle. Early data and research being carried out by Blackmore Wagyu indicates that this process may even start at conception. This is contradictory to the Australian way of raising cattle where feed fluctuations controlled by the seasons and compensatory growth required to get cattle to market. Hence our cattle are monitored and feeding regimes controlled from conception to carcass.

The birth mother receives a controlled feed intake to maintain a stable, healthy condition until the calf is born, and then mother and offspring are closely monitored until weaning. Japanese research shows that the protein molecule in Wagyu milk is a different size and shape to British and European breeds - making it more readily absorbed by their offspring. This is believed to contribute in activating the marbling cells in young Wagyu cattle.

Our feeder cattle are given a stress free weaning period (undercover) in preparation to enter the feedlot facility. At no stage do we allow the cattle to receive the setbacks associated with extreme winter and summer conditions.

At the undercover feeding facility our cattle are introduced to Japanese styled rations in consultation with Mr. Shogo Takeda (one of Japan's premier breeders) and a leading Japanese University.

Our ration only contains natural food ingredients that cattle would be expected to eat. Many other rations contain what we consider unnatural products, for example orange pulp and peel. Due to our ration being natural, we do not need to include rumensins, antibiotics or buffers to maintain a healthy animal. Our natural ration does not have a high grain component and because of the secret ingredients it provides a natural pro-biotic reaction (similar to 'Yakult') allowing a healthy stomach. This is the reason why Japanese farmers will introduce beer to the ration, an approach we also practice.

The quickest way to lose carcass quality is for the animal to be subjected to stress, comprising performance. Muscles tense and become tight (tough) and the animals overall well being is put at risk. Our cattle are pampered like 'the king of the beef world they are'. Half their pens are undercover, while the other half is open allowing them to lie in the sun. They have a continual supply of ration, and unlike Western cattle, will graze small amounts all day and night. Western cattle tend to stand at the trough until all contents are consumed. To our delight, after 600 days of this pampering the cattle are still fit and active. We put this down to the unique facility, ration and management and state that a 'happy' animal makes the greatest beef.

Blackmore feeds his cattle this secret ration for 500-600 days, allowing for slow daily gain, maximizing marbling and minimizing the laying of external and seam fat. It allows the overall unique flavour to penetrate the whole carcass.