

# BLACKMORE WAGYU BEEF

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## Mr. Shogo Takeda:

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### Introduction

The Takeda Farm was the first to introduce Wagyu breed of cattle to the island of Hokkaido in 1954. Wagyu cattle of that time were used for labour as well as for meat. Even those Wagyu that had been used for heavy labour in rice paddies or for pulling on the farm were heavily grain fed at an age of six to eight months to later prepare them for slaughter.

The Takeda Farm's foundation cattle were first purchased from Nougi District and Nita District in Shimane Prefecture and then later from Atetsu District in Okayama and Mikata District in Hyogo Prefecture. The descendents were raised, bred and selected for better meat quality, greater quantity, and greater economic value. This intensive breeding, cross-breeding and inbreeding program has resulted in the five maternal (dam) lines of today.

The maternal lines are:

1. Kinto – Ezokinto – Kinto
  - Hikokura
  - Kikohime
  - Takechiyo
  - Namihikokura
2. Sakae 2 – Chiyotake – Chiyotake 5
3. Aino 4 – Aino – Aino 5
4. Aihime – Aizakura – Aizakura 3
5. Dai Roku Tomiyoshi – Moriyoshi 3 – Moriyoshi 5

### Takeda Farm

Takeda Farm has no peer in Japan. For 50 years the Shogo Takeda family has been breeding Japanese Black Wagyu. One of the largest Wagyu breeding herds in Japan, the operation is home to 130 females. The average breeder has 2 to 5 females.

Takeda has diligently line-bred Wagyu for carcass quality and growth performance and other efficiency traits such as fertility and milking ability.

Over a period of 25 years, Takeda isolated and concentrated on bloodlines which offered greater economic value. He wanted a high percentage of his carcasses to reach the A-5 grade (A is the highest yield grade, 5 the highest quality grade in Japan) and to achieve this in a shorter feeding period. At the same time he wanted his cattle to be larger framed with more muscle mass,

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producing a heavier carcass. He selected females who would produce a calf at two years of age and continue to produce each year. And he wanted females with a greater milking ability. As a result of this selection process Takeda Farm Wagyu are unequalled in economic performance in Japan.

Through years of selection, Takeda proved a sire whose progeny would do all that he asked. Itomichi, a son of Dai Nana Itozakura (Fujiyoshi bloodline) has been the primary herd sire at Takeda Farms for 12 years. Itomichi is line-bred through a carefully planned mating system, utilizing five proven female lines. The resulting progeny exceeds the averages of the breed in most categories. When Itomichi was bred to Dai 3 Kiyohime daughters (Tajima bloodline, Kumanami strain) it formed the basis of the present day Takeda Farm breeding herd.

Additionally Takeda has introduced an outcross sire. Terutani (Tajima bloodline, Kikumidoi strain) when crossed with females rich in the blood of Itomichi produces A-5 carcasses 70% of the time (more than three times the average Japanese Wagyu). The Takeda story is well documented through scientific fact and public approval. The Takeda program is highly integrated. Takeda rarely sells any breeding stock; instead all cattle which do not meet his standards are fed in his own feeding operation. The ultimate test is the consumer and Takeda Farm includes a successful restaurant and retail meat shop. From farm to finish, the important economic traits, which are bred-in characteristics of Takeda genetics, are proven.

No where has more selection pressure been applied on the highly prized Wagyu than at Takeda Farm. No where can Wagyu genetics be found which have the mature size, faster growth and higher percentage of quality carcasses than at Takeda Farm.

Takeda Wagyu has been bred for low birth weight, yet high growth rates and larger mature size. Called antagonistic traits, it is rare for cattle to possess both low birth and high growth. The average size for a mature female at Takeda Farm is 650 kgs compared to the Japan average of 545 kgs. This outstanding growth has been achieved without sacrificing birth weight which is currently 32 kgs.



Mr. Shogo Takeda and David Blackmore discussion Wagyu strategies

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