

Japanese Black Wagyu Prefectural Bloodlines

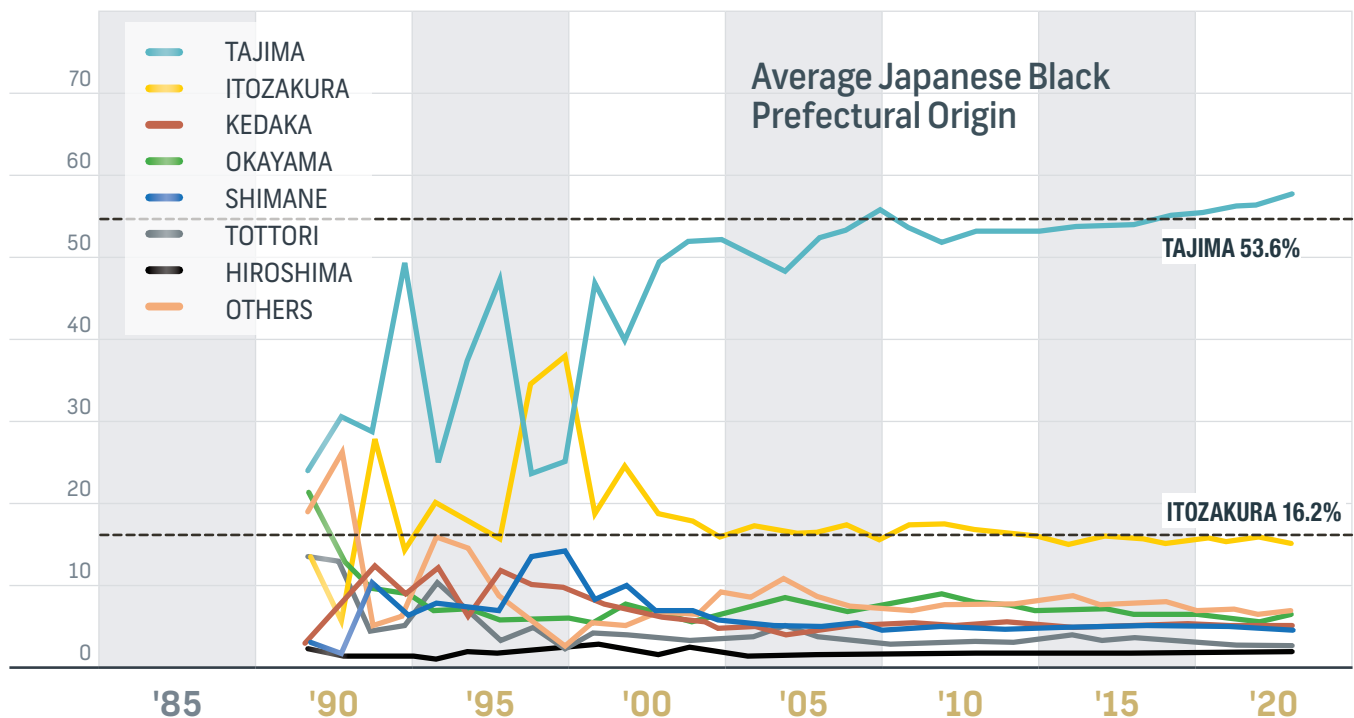
There are two Wagyu breeds outside of Japan – Japanese Black and Red Wagyu (or Japanese Brown). In Japan, the Red Wagyu is known as Akaushi.

The three major prefectural sub-populations within the Japanese Black represented in the Australian population are Tajiri or Tajima (Hyogo prefecture), Fujiyoshi (Shimane) and Kedaka (Tottori). These populations were used mainly as agricultural work animals, and the prefecture herds evolved distinctively in regional geographic isolation in Japan.

The Australian Wagyu Association Prefectural analysis deepens knowledge on linkage of Wagyu to the Japanese ancestral breeding regions from which the international herd was developed and can trace its lineage back to Fullblood sires and Dams registered in the Japanese National Registry. For Japanese Black, there are 369 founder animals (201 sires and 168 dams) from which progeny and frozen genetics were exported from Japan to the US.

Prefectural composition (%)

Changes in Japanese Black Prefectural Composition since 1989 (courtesy of AGBU).



Traditional prefectural origin composition of the Australian Wagyu Association registered herd, showing changes in composition reflecting breeding trends over time.



HYOGO PREFECTURE

Descendants of **Hyogo** breeding form the largest segment of the Australian Fullblood herd. Hyogo is the home of Kobe Beef and the sole remaining segregated prefectural herd in Japan. Hyogo cattle are known for superior meat quality but relatively small stature. Carcase weights are significantly lower than the Japanese national average, and average carcase BMS (Japanese Meat Grading Association (JMGA) marble score) is not significantly higher. The most common and well-known Hyogo sire bloodline in Australia is Tajima, but the Kumanami strain is represented in the sire Itoshigenami, also frequently described as Tajima outside Japan.

Hyogo cattle are considered ideal outcross sires in the production of Crossbred Wagyu F1 50% feeder cattle, which explains the numerical dominance of high Hyogo content animals in the Australian herd, a result of original import demand for F1 production sires. This is the most commoditised strain of Black Wagyu both in Australia and Japan. Some infusion of Hyogo genetics is generally regarded as essential in the efficient production of the best quality Wagyu beef. Due to high levels of inbreeding in the Hyogo sub-population, care is needed in joining strategies.



ITOZAKURA LINE

The second most common grouping in Australia, this is a modern bloodline founded on the famous sire Dai 7 Itozakura, combining **Hyogo** and **Okayama** prefectural genetics (in Shimane Prefecture). Many seedstock of Takeda Farm breeding fall within this grouping and the founding sire is prominent in many Australian pedigrees. The line is sometimes mis-described as Fujiyoshi. The founding sire of the line was the premier Japanese Black sire for superior beef production in Japan over a lengthy period, combining consistent high marbling with strong growth.



SHIMANE PREFECTURE

This lightly represented group represents the third highest proportion of the local population and often described as **Fujiyoshi**. The group consists of medium framed cattle with good maternal qualities, growth rates and meat quality.



TOTTORI PREFECTURE

In terms of national calf registrations, **Tottori** prefecture genetics have dominated Japanese Wagyu beef production since the 1960s, but the prefecture is only lightly represented in Australia through the Westholme Fullblood herd. The two main sub-strains are Kedaka and Eikou. Tottori produces larger animals featuring straight, strong back lines, good growth rates, superior maternal ability and high yielding, high quality carcasses. In terms of percentage infusion in national sire production tables Tottori remains the most influential strain in Japanese breeding.

JAPANESE BROWN

Known as 'red' lines (Akaushi), the Kochi and Kumamoto strains present in Australia have been strongly influenced by Korean and European breeds, particularly Simmental.