

# Wagyu Breeds and Brands

There are over 200 Wagyu brands in Japan, each one accorded to cattle or beef meeting certain standards based on place of production, bloodline, breed, grade, and rearing method and period. Listed here are 52 leading brands (criteria vary from brand to brand).

## 1 Hokkaido

### Ikeda Beef

Wine dregs are added to the feed. The meat is on the lean side.

## 2 Aomori

### Aomori Kuraishi Beef

This brand's appeal lies in its full, rustic flavor.

## 3 Iwate

### Iwate Shorthorn Wagyu

A lean-meat brand produced through natural breeding.

## 4 Iwate

### Maezawa Beef

Brightly marbled meat lauded for its sublime savoriness.

## 5 Akita

### Ugo Beef

An Akita local favorite with fine marbling and a rich, deep umami.

## 6 Miyagi

### Sendai Beef

A diet of quality rice and hay provides a mellow, juicy flavor.

## 7 Yamagata

### Yonezawa Beef

Known for its texture, firmness, and distinctive sweetness.

## 8 Yamagata

### Yamagata Beef

Fat is the key to the delicious taste of this fine-textured beef.

## 9 Fukushima

### Fukushima Beef

Fine marbling makes this beef ideal for shabu-shabu.

## 10 Ibaraki

### Hitachi Beef

Feed containing barley and other local grains yields quality fat.

## 11 Tochigi

### Tochigi Beef

Four-time all-Japan top prizewinner and an export hit in the U.S.

## 12 Gunma

### Joshu Wagyu

Wheat-based feed is the secret of this mineral-rich meat.

## 13 Saitama

### Bushu Beef

Super-sweet and tender thanks to its delicate texture.

## 14 Fukui

### Wakasa Beef

Known for the sweetness of its juices and a refined aftertaste.

## 15 Yamanashi

### Koshu Beef

Fattened for a lengthy 30 to 33 months on feed with whisky lees.

## 16 Nagano

### Shinshu Beef

Feed that includes apple dregs provides umami-rich flavor.

## 17 Gifu

### Hida Beef

Famed throughout Japan for its marbling and full-bodied taste.

## 18 Shizuoka

### Ashitaka Beef

This meat's robust flavor makes it ideal for sukiyaki.

## 19 Aichi

### Mikawa Beef

Features quality fat, a chewy texture, and a sweet taste.

## 20 Mie

### Matsusaka Beef

A name synonymous with premium Japanese beef.

## 21 Mie

### Iga Beef

Varying feed mixtures produce meat with a rich aroma and body.

## 22 Wakayama

### Kumano Beef

Fragrant, fine-textured meat from cattle raised at least 26 months.

## 23 Nara

### Yamato Beef

Soft, flavorful beef from heifers raised for 30 months or more.

## 24 Shiga

### Omi Beef

One of the Wagyu Big Three along with Matsusaka and Kobe beef.

## 25 Kyoto

### Kyoto Beef

Meat with a refined texture from cattle raised 22 months or more.

## 26 Osaka

### Osaka Ume Beef

Cattle are fed over 1 kg of pickled apricots daily for six months.

## 27 Hyogo

### Kobe Beef

A name bestowed only on Tajima beef meeting strict criteria.

## 28 Hyogo

### Tajima Beef

Breeding stock for top-brand beef raised throughout Japan.

## 29 Okayama

### Chiya Beef

Boasts a bloodline going back centuries.

## 30 Hiroshima

### Hiroshima Beef

Created by crossbreeding for lean meat with a full flavor.

## 31 Shimane

### Iwami Beef

Famed for tender meat. Only 200 head are produced each year.

## 32 Tottori

### Tottori Olein 55 Beef

Tottori Wagyu with high oleic acid content to maximize tenderness.

## 33 Yamaguchi

### Mishima Beef

This indigenous breed, the progenitor of Japanese Black Wagyu, is a national designated Natural Monument. Only about 10 bulls, excluding those used for breeding, are put on the market every year, making this premium beef a rarity.

## 34 Tokushima

### Awa Beef

Firm, well-marbled beef from cattle raised at least 30 months.

## 35 Kagawa

### Olive Beef

Feed containing pressed olives adds zest. Goes well in salads.

## 36 Ehime

### Ishizuchi Beef

Reasonably priced beef with tasty meat and fat.

## 37 Kochi

### Tosa Brown

A variety of Japanese Brown further improved in Kochi.

## 38 Fukuoka

### Kokura Beef

Only about 100 head are certified yearly for this premium brand.

## 39 Oita

### The Oita Bungo Beef

Fine marbling and a mellow, melt-in-the-mouth flavor.

## 40 Miyazaki

### Ozaki Beef

## 41 Miyazaki

### Miyazaki Beef

A two-time "Wagyu Olympics" winner and a popular export.

## 42 Kumamoto

### Kumamoto Japanese Black

Known for stringent health monitoring of each animal.

## 43 Saga

### Saga Beef

Strict grading standards maintain a sweet, full-bodied flavor.

## 44 Nagasaki

### Iki Beef

All phases of breeding and rearing take place on Iki Island.

## 45 Kagoshima

### Kagoshima Black Beef

The leader in production of Japanese Black beef in Japan.

## 46 Okinawa

### Ishigaki Beef

The beef served at the 26th G8 summit in Okinawa in 2000.

## 52