**Tajima Wagyu Beef**

Known for its exceptional quality of marbling and superior taste, Tajima Wagyu is a beef type that originates in Tajima, the northern section of Hyogo Prefecture, which encompasses both the city of Toyooka and Kinosaki Onsen. In fact, almost all black cattle in Japan, including those used for revered brands like Matsusaka and Omi beef, have their roots in this area because Tajima cattle are used as stock seed for other brands of beef cows. Tajima Wagyu can be found year-round and is one of the staples you’ll find in Kinosaki Onsen and Toyooka, served and sold at restaurants and food shops.

The Tajima area had long been a breeding region for cattle and, as the popularity of eating beef increased during the Meiji era (1868–1912), Tajima beef started attracting attention under the title of “Kobe beef.” Today, the reputation of Kobe and other popular brands of beef can be traced back to Tajima. Specifically, Kobe beef is classified as high-quality Tajima beef in which the cattle has been raised in Hyogo Prefecture from the Tajima strain of black cattle. To be considered genuine Tajima Wagyu, the beef from this area also has to clear strict standards and be approved by the Kobe Beef Marketing and Distribution Promotion Association.

Tajima Wagyu beef gets its high marbling thanks to the unique climate of the area that sees a high temperature difference between day and night. This stimulates the cattle to store fat in order to keep themselves warm during colder times. The tender meat has a texture that melts on the tongue and is often served as steak, roast beef on top of rice, *shabu-shabu* style in a simmering broth, or *yakiniku* style, in which various cuts are grilled at the table.