

Summary of Specification



1. Name of the GI + transcription in Latin alphabet or in international phonetic alphabet

比婆牛 (transcription : Hiba Gyu), Hiba Gyu

2. Category of the product for which the name is protected

Class 2 : Fresh meat (Beef)

3. Applicant – name and address

Azuma-zuru Promotion Association

1-10-1 Nakahonmachi, Shobara City, Hiroshima Prefecture 727-8501, Japan

4. Date of first Protection in the country of origin

September 9, 2019

5. Description of product

Hiba Gyu is beef of Japanese Black (“*Kuroge Wagyu*”) from the *Iwakura-zuru*, which is one of the oldest cow lines produced in Shobara City through selection of excellent cows from many cows. Breeding cattle of Hiba Gyu have genetically higher percentage of unsaturated fatty acids than breeding cattle of other areas, so that Hiba Gyu melts in the mouth and feels soft on the tongue.

6. Description/delimitation of the Geographical Area and of specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographic area

(1) Producing area

Hiroshima Prefecture

(2) Production method

① Breed

Breeding cattle should be pedigree Japanese Black (“*Kuroge Wagyu*”) produced in Shobara City, Hiroshima Prefecture, with a father, maternal grandfather, or maternal grandmother’s father as a fertile bull of Hiroshima Prefecture descended from “No. 38-1 Iwata.”

② Fattening

The place of the longest fattening period and the last rearing place should be Hiroshima Prefecture.

③ Dressed carcass standard

Bullock or heifer beef, and the score of meat quality grade must be above 3 in the

7. Link with the Geographical Area

Shobara City, as the place of production of Hiba Gyu breeding cattle, is located in a mountainous area in northern Hiroshima Prefecture. The place is endowed with nature, including fresh stream, rich agricultural and forestry resources, and rare wild grasses and flowers. The cool climate is suitable to produce Japanese Black (“*Kuroge Wagyu*”) that is deemed to have a low tolerance for heat.

In 1843, by breeding particularly excellent cows selected from among *Wagyu*, Rokuemon Iwakura from Hiwa Village (current Hiwa Town in Shobara City) produced “*Iwakura-zuru*”. “*Iwakura-zuru*” is certified by the Wagyu Registry Association as the oldest cow lines.

For further improvement of pedigree *Wagyu* that inherited the characteristics of “*Iwakura-zuru*”, Azuma-zuru Production Cooperative was established in 1948. Through collective and planned breeding in Hiba Shobara area (current Shobara City), a unique line named “*Azuma-zuru*” was created, which led to the birth of excellent *Wagyu* fertile bulls, such as No. 38-1 Iwata.

Wagyu from this area became known as “Hiba Gyu” named after the place, and made significant contribution to the improvement of *Wagyu* nationwide. Under the current National Wagyu Competition a.k.a. Wagyu Olympics, Hiba Gyu received the Prime Minister Award, the highest award at the fourth (1982) and fifth (1987) in a row. The awards recognized the breeding initiative in Hiba Shobara area. The local breeding efforts continued to contribute greatly to the improvement of meat production performance of Hiba Gyu. In 1988, Hiba Gyu won the Emperor Award at the Festival of Agricultural, Forestry and Fisheries. The production area earned a reputation as Japan’s No. 1 Wagyu producer.

Shobara City has many fertile bulls having genes of No. 38-1 Iwata from “*Iwakura-zuru*”. In 2014, Azuma-zuru Promotion Association was established to certify cows that had 5% or greater genes of No. 38-1 Iwata as *Azuma-zuru*. Meanwhile, Shobara City has provided support for feeding and purchasing *Azuma-zuru* to pass local Wagyu line on to the next generation.

8. History / confirmations of on-going production

For further improvement of pedigree *Wagyu* that inherited the characteristics of “*Iwakura-zuru*”, Azuma-zuru Production Cooperative was established in 1948. Afterwards, they created No. 38-1 Iwata which was the origin of Hiba Gyu.

Originally, the name “Hiba Gyu” was used for the beef of *Wagyu* produced in Hiba Shobara area. A book published in 1961 titled, “*Hiba no Wagyu*” (*Wagyu* from Hiba), used the name “Hiba Gyu” that had been used from old times. When the Azuma-zuru Promotion Association was established in 2014, the breeding area of Hiba Gyu was defined that the place of the longest fattening period should be Shobara City or within the jurisdiction of JA Shobara to build a system for cooperation among breeding and fattening farmers in Shobara area. Starting May 2018, the place of fattening was expanded to throughout Hiroshima Prefecture because fattening of Hiba Gyu used to be carried out across the prefecture before 1986.

Trust in and value of Hiba Gyu has been further increased as Shobara City certifies Hiba Gyu.

¹ Beef Carcass Trading Standards are nationwide universal standards managed by Japan Meat Grading Association (JMGA) and authorized by MAFF. The grading of the standards indicates (1) the extent of beef marbling, (2) beef color and brightness, (3) meat firmness and texture, and (4) fat color, luster, and quality.

9. Specific rules concerning labelling and using, if any
N/A

10. Control body / control authority responsible for checking the respect of the product specifications

Control body is Azuma-zuru Promotion Association.

In addition, MAFF regularly monitors the condition of quality control in the process of production, through the examination of annual report submitted by Azuma-zuru Promotion Association.

11. Outline of the quality control plan

Azuma-zuru Promotion Association will check (1) Breed, (2) Fattening, (3) Dressed carcass standard and final products. If a producer fails to abide by the specification, Azuma-zuru Promotion Association will issue a warning and request a correction of his/her production. In case the producer does not follow the warning, Azuma-zuru Promotion Association will prohibit stops the shipment of his/her products as “Hiba Gyu” for a given time. In addition, Azuma-zuru Promotion Association will prepare an annual performance report and submit it to the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

12. Information of registered trademark(s) identical or similar to the GI (if applied by the GI holder in other Party’s territory)

N/A