AUGUST 2021 ISSUE NO. 1

# WAGYU INNOVATIONS



# TECHNOLOGY & TRADITIONS

Close Up With Cole Morace

In the Heart of Texas
Five Generations
of Cattle Ranching

Breeding with Genomics &EBVs

A New Perspective

INAUGURAL ISSUE





COMPACT DESIGN, FAST RELIABLE ANALYSIS MEATIMAGINGUSA@GMAIL.COM

## WAGYU INNOVATIONS & TRADITIONS

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Have Pictures of your Ranch or Cattle? We'd love to see them! Submit them to info@wittmagazine.com to be considered for the next issue.

# LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

Words by Desi Cicale Photography Jim Hendricks



A teacher of mine once told me that change is the only constant in life. That's certainly true for the entire team here, which has spent the better part of this month working tirelessly to create WITT magazine. They have created a Wagyu magazine from the ground up and are fighting tooth and nail to give the most back to our sponsors and readers.

With our July/August issue, we're unveiling a new look for Wagyu enthusiasts everywhere. We hope you like what you see. Our goal is to help show the high-quality meat being produced in the United States. This issue is dedicated to introducing you to some of the people, ranches, and businesses involved with supporting the Wagyu breed in the United States. Stay tuned for more because our next issue will be "all about the meat."

We could not have made this issue happen without the steadfast work of Justin Robertson, our web design director, and Ashley Plunkett, the senior graphic

designer who persevered through all hours of the night and day to develop and implement a design in record time that's elegant, eye-catching, and easy to navigate.

Wherever you read us you represent a readership that loves wagyu and shares a deep, abiding curiosity about the world surrounding it. With every story we post here, with every issue, with every day, we're committed to satisfying that curiosity.



# ARTIST FEATURE

Photo of Marlin Rotach

Not many of us are fortunate enough to know our calling from the time we were children. Martin Rotach is one of the lucky ones. From an early age, he knew art and painting would be his lifelong ambition.

True to any Master of their craft. Marlin held himself to very high expectations as he honed his signature watercolor techniques. Years later awards from multiple different art societies bear witness that he not only met those expectations but vastly exceeded them.

"Daily, I find myself surrounded by source material for paintings. My love for travel manifests itself in ever-changing subjects and I have established a reputation, in large part, by painting monumental florals and scenes of the contemporary American West."

His art has the power to make your fondest memories of the West, rodeos and American life come alive. We are delighted and blessed to have his incredible art as a part of our inaugural issue. We hope you will enjoy his art as much as we do.



"SINCE LIGHT IS THE MAIN FOCUS
OF MY PAINTINGS, THE ENTIRE
PHYSICAL WORLD IS POTENTIAL
SUBJECT MATTER."

Wathir

# TRIPLE CROWN STEAK CHALLENGE

# HALL<sup>OF</sup> FAME

2018 - 2020

# Grand Champions

CMC & Emma Farms Joseph Decuis

2018

Joseph Decuis 2019

# Reserve Champions



Kerwee Wagyu 2019

Feddersen USA Wagyu 2020

The Triple Crown Steak Challenge is currently the only Wagyu competition that looks at both the carcass quality and the taste of steaks entered. It is extremely competitive and a true test to see who is the master in the art of raising Wagyu.

Each of the steaks submitted goes through rigorous testing and is awarded points in 5 different categories- Warner Bratzler Test for Tenderness, Japanese Carcass Camera, Total Lipid Panel, Fatty Acid Profile, and Professional Taste Panel.

There are four different categories of winners: Triple Crown Champion, Grand Champion, Reserve Champion and Category first place.

To win the Triple Crown Award they must place first in each category. Over the years we have had a few close but the famed grand prize has still gone unclaimed. Grand Champion is the next winner with the highest combined score, with the Reserve Champion following. The top 5 in each Category are recognized as well, as first place is not an easy task.

To learn more please visit their website at triplecrownsteakchallenge.com.

TRIPLE CROWN STEAK CHALLENGE

HALLOF FAME

2018 - 2020

# Category Winners FULLBLOOD

Professional Taste Panel

Vermont Wagyu 2018

Vermont Wagyu 2019 Feddersen USA Wagyu 2020

Fatty Acid Profile

Ohio Wagyu Mason Hill 2018 Sakura & Vermont 2019

Feddersen USA Wagyu 2020

# Category Winners FULLBLOOD

# Japanese Carcass Camera

CMC & Emma Farms

Kerwee Wagyu 2019

Bowman Farms 2020

# Warner Bratzler Sheer Force

Diamond T Ranch 2018

Joseph Decuis 2019

Feddersen USA Wagyu 2020 TRIPLE CROWN STEAK CHALLENGE

# HALLOF FAME 2018 - 2020

# Category Winners PERCENTAGE

Professional Taste Panel

Meat 2018

Kerwee Wagyu
2019

Super Prime Beef 2020

# Fatty Acid Profile

Mogo Gyulais 2018

H & H Cattle Co. 2019 Twin Oaks

# Category Winners PERCENTAGE

# Japanese Carcass Camera

Midland Meat 2018

Kerwee Wagyu 2019

Midland Meat 2020

# Warner Bratzler Sheer Force

Rocking R Ranch 2018

Kerwee Wagyu 2019

Midland Meat 2020



2 YEAR GRAND CHAMPION WINNER

Foseph Decris

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WWW.TRIPLECROWNSTEAKCHALLENGE.COM/TICKETS

# **Triple Crown Steak Challenge Award Ceremony & Dinner**

#### A NOTE FROM THE HOSTS:

#### ALICE AND PETE ESHELMAN.

OWNERS OF JOSEPH DECUIS & JOSEPH DECUIS WAGYU FARM, RESPECTIVELY

We welcome you to Joseph Decuis Farm on October 1, 2021, for the 4th Triple Crown Steak Challenge Award Ceremony. The Triple Crown has become the industry's most prestigious steak competition as competitors are judged by the latest scientific tools which evaluate the quality of beef.

#### FROM ALICE

In November of 2019, I had an absolute blast with our farm being the host location for the Triple Crown Steak Challenge Award Ceremony and Dinner-Wagyu, Wagyu, and more Wagyu. We felt like we were the hub of the Wagyu universe. There were contestants and participants from all across the country; from Vermont to L.A. and locations both north and south and in between. It was great fun to talk Wagyu, meet Wagyu lovers, Wagyu breeders, and Wagyu ranchers who were all Wagyu eaters, and just immerse ourselves in Wagyu for the evening.

I have to admit, Founder Desi Cicale's enthusiasm and passion for the Wagyu breed and the event were thoroughly infectious and took the whole evening up a notch. I run the restaurant so I understand the service, the kitchen, and what goes into the cooking of the Wagyu but I must also admit, as the wife to a Wagyu farmer and not as involved in the cattle side, I was totally lost trying to understand the judging, the science, how the awards work and what the dinner encompassed. I couldn't get my head wrapped around this wondrous event.



The judging that year was from Purdue University, Indiana's Land Grant University. As I learned more and more about the Werner-Bratzler shear force tests, the Japanese carcass camera, the marbling scores, and how the taste judging actually works, my admiration and knowledge grew. It is so impressive to see how the meat and the animal science and the metrics all come together scientifically, to judge the "finest beef in the world." It blows my mind!

Joseph Decuis, the restaurant, was started in 2000 and we started raising our Wagyu in 2004 after tasting this incredible beef. We started raising Wagyu crossed with Angus and then transitioned to full blood Wagyu as the superior carcass quality offered many more center of the plate menu items. Wagyu has become the flagship of our restaurant accounting for 90% of our entrée sales.

We love educating our guests about Wagyu with farm tours, and we have created a very special Wagyu dining experience. We offer a fine-dining farm to fork experience and have earned many honors including the Wine Spectator Best of Award of Excellence, AAA's Four Diamond award and Bloomberg Pursuits Magazine has called our Wagyu "some of the best Wagyu outside of Japan." (Spring, 2013)

# THE BIG EVENT: TRIPLE CROWN STEAK CHALLENGE



#### FROM PETE:

We were very honored to receive the Triple Crown Grand Champion award in 2019 and 2020. The secret to our Wagyu success is simple. Our foundation genetics are Takeda genetics, we strictly apply Takeda's diet and husbandry practices, and Jimmy Horner, owner of Protocol Naturals, has been instrumental in helping us perfect the Wagyu diet utilizing best practices from Japan.

We have another advantage - we are one of the few restaurants in the world raising our own Wagyu from start to finish. This gives us the advantage of seeing every carcass in our kitchen. This enables us to manage our breeding program to produce consistent superior carcass quality.

This year we recused ourselves from competing in the Triple Crown Steak Challenge. After winning Grand Champion two years in a row, we felt it was more important to host the event and provide our farm venue and our world-class culinary expertise. We want to contribute to making the award ceremony world-class and felt it was important to showcase Wagyu, the breed and meat, to the world.



#### **INVITATION FROM PETE & ALICE**

Join us for the weekend of October 1 & 2 at Joseph Decuis Wagyu Farm. Friday between 9 AM and 4 PM will be lectures provided by some of the world's most renowned meat scientists. That evening will be our Joseph Decuis celebratory dinner featuring Wagyu of course and the Triple Crown Award Ceremony. On Saturday is our first Wagyu Auction managed by Wagyu 365. Viewing on the farm will take place from 9am to noon; a light lunch will be provided and the auction will begin at 2pm offering 50 lots of some of the finest Joseph Decuis Wagyu genetics.

Tickets for the TCSC Conference & Dinner on Friday are available online at

triplecrownsteakchallenge.com/tickets

Reservations and inquiries for the Auction Saturday may be made by emailing:

Wagyuauction@josephdecuis.com

We hope to see you here!



**CONTACT US TODAY!** 281-455-9335

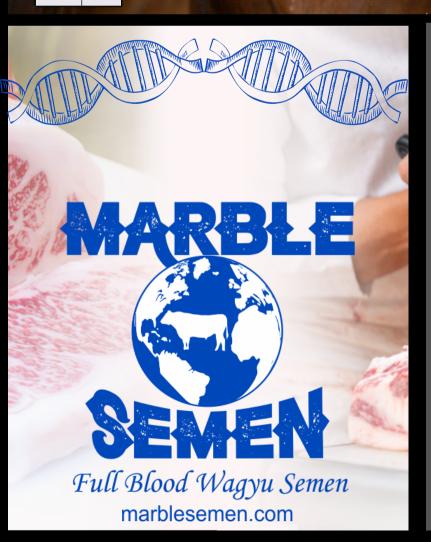
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ADG RFI **3.48** lbs/d -.53

top producing dams with maternal lines from Suzatani, Hisako, Tanitsuru, Hikokura

Limited calves available from the following sires:

- L0010
- ARUBIAL BOND
- Q122
- SHIGESHIGETANI
- YASUFUKU JR.







# BREEDING WITH GENOMICS & EBVS

### BY ASHLEY PLUNKETT

There is a timeless saying, "Tough times never last, but tough people do." Below the friendly, calm exterior lies an old soul with the heart of stoic. Kenny Landgraf is one of those tough people; the world would be a lesser place. He has endured the temptation of throwing in the towel, and in a world where most would walk away, he made the tough choice to persevere.

On paper, Kenny was doing all the right things. He took the time to purchase very respected Wagyu bloodlines, followed all the standard operating and breeding procedures but still fell short of producing leading Wagyu animals and excellent meat. He felt frustrated. Kenny knew there must be other factors he was not seeing and felt like he was shooting in the dark when setting up what, on the surface, seemed like good breeding decisions. He couldn't keep investing in this capital-intensive endeavor and couldn't move forward without making some changes. As a breeder, he always felt one step behind and discouraged that there was no clear path or guide to success.

He found that US wagyu breeders were relying on, as he aptly calls it, "good storytelling"- only focusing on lineage, pedigrees, and misused DNA indicators of SCD & Tenderness. At one time, it was the industry standard; breeders pride themselves with tracing the ancestry of their most respected bulls and dams back through generations. But it was not working for him as it should.

Unlike most who would have just given up, he chose to dig deeper, both into himself, his journey, the herd, and into the world of Wagyu abroad. In the spring of 2020, an associate approached him about buying semen straws of a top 1% rated Australian bull, Mayura L0010. This bull was relatively unknown in the United States but had exceptional EBVs. He tried to put together a buying



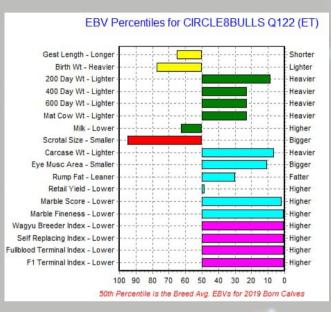
"SUCCESS IS NOT JUST A
SINGLE STEP IN THE RIGHT
DIRECTION, BUT A GOAL TO
BE A LITTLE BETTER DAY
BY DAY, REGARDLESS OF
YOUR SETBACKS OR
SHORTFALLS."

group, but all the breeders he approached turned him down. Finally, he decided to go for it and joined one other individual to buy a large block. Shortly after acquiring that block of semen, L10 was taken off the market. Upon researching the young bull, he determined that this top bull had something he had never seen before in the American system, Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) and Selection Indexes. He sat down and started researching. He discovered that animals and breeding decisions were being made based upon genomics rather than pedigree diagrams. His quest for answers took him beyond the American Wagyu circles to the Australian community and their genomics and selection indexes to compare and rank animals. His eyes were opened, and discovering the wealth of information available in the international Wagyu community gave him a newfound excitement.

"I FELT LIKE I LEARNED MORE IN 1 HOUR READING THE INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES THAN I HAD LEARNED IN 5 YEARS RELYING ON THE AMERICAN RESOURCES," HE REMEMBERS FONDLY, "WHY HAS NO ONE TOLD ME THIS?"

# **BREEDING WITH GENETICS & EBVS**

# CONT.





At the time, Sumo Wagyu had (and still has) one of the highest-ranked Wagyu bulls globally, Sumo Monjiro Q51, but it was only six months old. Kenny was baffled on how this could even be possible with such a young animal. Simon's answer was simple, "Genomics!" Simon explained the basics of genomics- an analysis of the DNA markers allows them to project animal traits, some being highly predictive. Included were growth traits (200 days, 400 days, 600 days), material traits, and additional meat carcass traits (Eve Muscle Area, Marble Score, Marble Fineness). Simon reminded him that the accuracy might be lower in such a young animal initially. Still, the values become increasingly more accurate as they collect more carcass data and progeny data on the animal. This discussion was illuminating. Instead of taking five years to raise a now had a tool that allowed one to telescope in on both the animals to

bull, breed several generations, create some carcasses and evaluate, we focus on and, importantly, those not to breed. As part of the carcass traits, Australian breeders realized the power of

the genetic and carcass data and adopted the MIJ Mobile Carcass Camera for more accurate meat carcass scoring. The data reinforced the genetic traits of the sire and the dam that produced this carcass. As more data is being recorded and reported, the predictions become more accurate and beneficial to the entire Australian Wagyu industry.

After this enlightening discussion with Simon and gaining a better understanding of DNA evaluation and EBVs, Kenny decided to become a member of the Australian Wagyu Association. He registered most of his fullblood Wagyu animals in this new association. When the results came in during the fall of 2020, he took a hard look at his herd. With the good often comes a little bad, and his eyes were opened. Sadly, according to the lineage, the female he considered the best had some of the lowest quality genetic traits. However, other females rated higher than he predicted. With this new genomic information on his herd, he gained a new perspective, and his breeding decisions instantly changed.

Kenny examined the herd and potential animals through the lens of EBVs from both an animal and a breeding standpoint. He decided to head to the following reputable sale in the United States in late summer. Indeed, animals without genomics were less desirable. While there, he noticed several animals out of the Lone Mountain program with EBVs and one with a bull calf out of the sire, Mayura L0010, that he had purchased semen straws on. This bull calf is forecast to be in a top 8% sire based on the EBV mating projections. He wondered what he was missing and asked one of his associates if he was the only one looking up the EBVs of these animals in the sale. The associate shot back, "your average breeder in the states is not looking at EBVs." Kenny was already ahead of the curve; it was immediately paying off. The Mayura L0010 bull calf was coming back with him to the Landgraf Ranch.

				Apr	il_2	202	1 W	agyu l	BREED	PLAN				
4	Gestation Length (days)	Wt	Day Wt	Day Wt	Day Wt	1200000	Milk		Carcase Wt (kg)	Eye Muscle Area (sq cm)	Rump Fat	Yield	SUR WARR	Marble Fineness (%)
EBV	-0.4	+0.5	+7	+8	+6	+13	-8	-1.2	+23	+5.9	-1.0	+0.7	+2.9	+0.51
Accuracy	62%	68%	71%	71%	73%	60%	63%	48%	67%	57%	60%	48%	63%	55%
		Bree	d A	vg. I	EBV	s for	201	9 Bor	n Calve	S Click fo	r Percer	ntiles		-
EBV	+0.1	+1.0	+10	+16	+19	+20	+1	-0.1	+15	+1.3	+0.0	+0.0	+0.8	+0.17

Traits Analy	vsed: BW	r,200WT,400WT	.Genomics

Traits Analysed: BWT,200WT,400WT,Genomics

SELECTION INDEX VALUES					
Market Target	Index Value	Breed Average			
Wagyu Breeder Index	+\$ 249	+\$ 141			
Self Replacing Index	+\$ 288	+\$ 142			
Fullblood Terminal Index	+\$ 239	+\$ 121			
F1 Terminal Index	+\$ 238	+\$ 111			



Kenny's eyes were opened to a whole new world of EBVs, Selection Indexes, and genomics through the learning process. With these tools, he was able to look at his herd in a whole new light. He could now run mating predictions, test multiple bulls against the desired female, find the best pairing, and evaluate the projected progeny carcass traits using this advanced tool.

He found going into sales that he had a better idea of how each animal would perform, ask the fair price when selling, and stop overpaying or bidding for underproducing new stock. He could rapidly create and sell better genetics for the ranch. The EBVs changed his breeding method, such as to only AI breed his females to top 1% - 2% bulls. Natural breedings would be limited to only the top 10% bulls. All fullbloods are paired with a top 1% bulls. He still uses a herd bull for cover purposes, but that bull must be a top 10% bull. More attention is given to using a bull to complement and upgrade a female and add to her marbling and marbling fineness.

Like many privately owned Wagyu ranches, his was relatively small with 200 acres. His strategy shifted; he was "Not trying to win the quantity game, but the quality game." With the power of AI (Artificial Insemination), EBVs, and directed breeding plans, he's dramatically increased the quality of his animals in one generation, with 8 of his top females ranked in the top 10% (percentile bands for 2019 calves), 5 in the top 5%, and 2 in the top 1%. He even owns four animals in Australia, which will produce top embryos for export to the USA. Over the past year, he added the coveted Mayura L0010, Coates Itoshigenami G113 & Sumo Michifuku F154 genetics into his herd.

His new reputation of Australian Wagyu bulls quickly spread, and opportunities from top Australian breeders started falling in place. He became one of the first ranches in the United States to do AI from the F154 progeny bull, Circle8Bulls Q122. He expects the first calves from this top 1% bull in September of 2021.

Like many masters, he tries to help others hungry for information and a desire to better their craft. His sales philosophy is as distinctive as he is. His goal for each genetic sale, "don't just do a transaction, become a consultant." He isn't just about the deal but has the desire to help them look at their females and make educated decisions to better their herd.

In some cases, that means calculating or estimating their EBVs on their current females and doing projected matings using top 1% rated bulls.

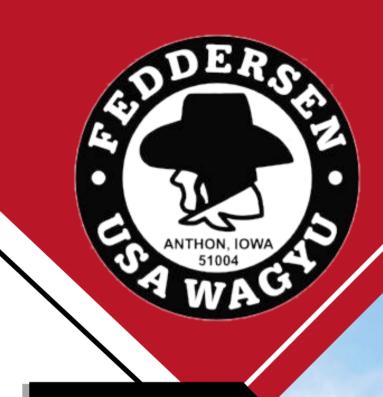
While teaching, he is trying to help other breeders understand the power of gathering data from their animals, carcasses, and genomics. Ideally, if they have genetic samples of their cattle, they register their animals with the American Wagyu Associate and the Australian Wagyu Association. Once registered, they can test their genomics with the Australian Wagyu Association and get EBVs on their animals. And the journey begins, and you may find you have a few genetic goldmines you didn't even realize were in your herd.

Now Kenny has the problem many hope for; the demand is exceeding his supply. He still has his Mayura bulls but focuses more on selling quality-rated Wagyu females, embryos, and semen. A lesser emphasis has been on meat sales, but he'll focus on this next as his investment in top genetics manifests. He also believes there will be good demand for the top-rated Wagyu bulls as there is currently a shortage of breeding-age black bulls in Texas.

He continuously improves his herd genetics and is currently focused on creating size with higher marbling and fineness. He's recording carcass values with the new Meat Imaging Mobile Carcass Camera and all the weights from his animals. He hopes to have more bulls available next year to share the genetics with the Wagyu community.

He wants America to become more competitive with Australia who presently concentrates its sales to the top 5% EBVs. He has every confidence American Wagyu breeders can catch up and is sponsoring a Premium Sale scheduled for March 24-26, 2022, in Luling at the 2 Bar C Ranch. It will be modeled after the Australian market and will only feature animals and genetics in the highest percentile EBVs.

To learn more about EBVs see page 38.



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# **MASTERING FARM TO TABLE**

#### BY SUNNY ROBINSON

Do you know where the steaks you feed your family come from? In a world of busy schedules and quick answers, not many of us can say we do. Sakura Farms is trying to change all of that.

They begin with the future in mind and are striving toward a sustainable approach that will allow the next generation a firm foundation while providing nutritious and fresh flavors to the community.

In 2017, the journey started with a strong team combining expertise in genetics, cow-calf production, nutrition, and the fine art of feeding the best marbling to create world-class American Wagyu beef.

Sakura has integrated exhaustive research and attentive husbandry to produce a fantastic product that they could not keep to themselves. In an effort to share the wonders of Wagyu, they streamlined a way to allow their friends in the community and any meat-loving foodie a way to purchase restaurant quality meat for their family dinner table.

They have a variety of options available no matter your level of interest. Whether you are a rookie epicurean, burger guru, or an expert grillmaster they have a pack for you that can be purchased directly from them and shipped to your door, or if you're local, check out their website for their next appearance at the local farmers market.

Come experience the Sakura Wagyu Farms difference.

#### WHERE TO EAT SAKURA:





















#### WHERE TO BUY SAKURA:



WYOMING MEAT MARKET





COLE MORACE, FOUNDER & CEO INTERVIEWED BY DANIEL COLLINS

Located just a short drive from Conroe, The Woodlands, and Houston, The big city name of Cleveland hardly fits this Texas town's laid-back charm. For Cole Morace, getting away from the hustle and bustle of the big city and creating Wagyu ranch life became his passion.

Like so many other ranchers, it all started with the first taste of Wagyu, meat juices melting in the mouth, followed by the delicate buttery flavor of the most tender cut of beef. To intensify the experience, it was authentic yakiniku style, served in Japan while Cole was on a business trip. Immediately Cole wanted to share his experience with his family and friends. At that moment, Morace Cattle Company was born.

Since Cole was raised in the early '70s in

North Louisiana, raising and caring for cattle on the open range with his father, raising Wagyu was a natural fit. He wanted to increase the quality of beef he first experienced in Japan. He knew he needed top carcass producing genetics and a high-quality feed and forage program.

He researched the breed and met with Wagyu farms in Japan. His most significant insight into the breed was his introduction to Shogo Takeda of Takeda

#### COLE MORACE CONT.

farms, one of the original importers of Wagyu in the mid-'90s to the United States. He listened intently to what Mr. Takeda said and followed his principles.

Cole also set out to meet Waqvu breeders in the US. He has produced steers with very fine marbling and exceptional taste. Cole wanted his marbling to be fine, so the smaller flecks of fat would bathe the beef in buttery flavor. He studied the heritable traits for marbling and set his genetics to improve carcass values and unrivaled taste. Cole believes in using wholesome grains and not by-products for feed. He believes that using high-quality feed affects the taste of his beef. He raises his Wagyu steers in the Japanese tradition allowing them to grow slowly. The extra time will enable Wagyu to marble intensely.

Cole has expanded his operation to sell his beef online. His wife Cristina handles the marketing and beef sales. Over the vears, he has seen an increase in consumer demand. The American consumers want more information about the food they buy, and Wagyu offer superior taste, texture, and additional health benefits.

When producing a top-notch carcass, Cole uses genomics and data collection to evaluate his herd. He also uses the MIJ Carcass Camera to measure the quality of his carcasses and analyzes his herd sires and dams based on their carcass data. Australian genomic evaluations are an essential part of accessing projected values. Morace Cattle Company's already proven high carcass marbling sires and dams are carefully paired to produce exceptional offspring. Cole's maternal line genetics come from Suzutani, Hisako, Tanitsuru, Hikokura, Yuriko, to name a few. He offers Exportable and Domestic Exportable embryos from his Top Carcass-producing dams.

His 2021 limited calves are available from these sires: L0010, Q122, F154, Arubial Bond, Shigeshigetani, Yasutaka Jr,

For Cole, the most enjoyable parts of raising Wagyu are watching the calves grow and seeing how well the sire and dam transferred their best traits. It is exciting to see a calf you like to watch. One with attitude, running full speed, bucking and kicking, not afraid of anything, and walks right up to see who you are. Cole has one such calf and is very interested to see how his prospective bull calf will turn out. So far, Mor Mr. Itozura Nami-128G/FB61136 has exhibited some remarkable growth traits at Bull trials performed by PX feeders on Grow Safe.

- Outcomes- the ADG 3.48 lbs. RFI is -.53.
- This bull had a BW 52lbs, 205 days WW 720lbs.







The main goal Cole is hoping to accomplish is to produce bulls that do not sacrifice growth over marbling to improve his herd with increasing carcass weight.

For more information on genetics or beef sales, don't hesitate to get in touch with

www.wagyubeefcattle.com Instagram @wagyubeefsteakmcc



# BIENVENIDOS A MARIA'S!







#### BY SUNNY ROBINSON

On the west end of the historic community of Mistletoe Height's, just steps away from the Clear Fork Trinity River in Fort Worth, you can find a first-class restaurant. As you step through the door, you can immediately feel the heart and soul invested in its creation and catch the aroma of delicious carnivorous fares to get your mouth watering.

The restaurant we are talking about is the now-famous Maria's Mexican Kitchen. Owned and operated by Chef Felipe Armenta, who named the restaurant after his beloved mother- Maria De Los Angeles Gil Armenta. If you keep your eyes open, you can see her beautiful image colorfully painted on one of the beautifully decorated interior walls.

Why you may ask, should you take the time to track down what may seem like just another Texas Mexican restaurant? To us, the answer is abundantly clear. Maria's is cut from a very different cloth. Chef Felipe is a master of his craft and expertly intertwines modern culinary techniques with generations-old Armenta family recipes. Be ready to partake in a "truly unique dining experience featuring delectable Mexican Cuisine." Staying true to his one-of-a-kind mother; he personally seeks out and samples meat and vegetables from local producers to find the best of the best.

Maria's does not feature just beef entrees, but Wagyu from an award-winning farm. The meat is sourced directly from a local Wagyu farm, Morace Cattle Company, and is the epitome of farm-to-table. One bite into the Ribeye Tampiqueña, seared over hot coals and served with pasilla chili sauce and poblano cream, will leave you smiling and anticipating each additional savory bite.

To the staff, it is not just a business but a way to share with the community. The food is not just great cuisine but filled with the heart and soul of many generations. Through Maria's and his accompanying restaurants, Towne Grill, & Pacific Table, Chef Felipe is bringing the Fort Worth restaurant industry to a new level and depth.



## BY ASHLEY PLUNKETT



To say you run a "family-owned business" is one thing, but to totally embrace and practice it daily is something rare, even in this present age of entrepreneurism. Midland Meat Co, owned and operated by John Scharbauer, is a true family-run business with a passion for cattle and a heart for their Texan family.

Scharbauer Ranches has been in the cattle industry for five generations, so you could say, "it's in their blood." Yet, it is more than that. Scharbauer Ranch, established in 1883, was an innovator of their time and one of the first to bring Hereford cattle to Texas. From there, they have grown to have Hereford, Angus, and Wagyu breeds.

As a father of 4, John's already involving his kids with the cattle and business and is hopeful they will feel the same pride and passion for the cattle as so many have come

before them. His passion for high-quality natural and organic food is very personal. Three of his kids developed food allergies to processed foods at a young age, further solidifying his desire to seek out and produce quality food.

In 2015 John founded Midland Meat Company, a compact shop filled with high-quality beef along with other Natural Proteins. Initially, it was a small operation, with only a couple of employees, but they began to grow as word spread. Six years of operation under their belt, and they have learned so much. The community is very supportive and very interested in what they do, John observed an obvious need to educate the consumers on different cuts of meat available since most were only familiar with the limited options available at grocery stores. John enjoys spending time







MIDLAND MEAT CO. (432) 262- 4644 2705 N Big Spring St Midland, Tx 79705



midlandmeatco.com



www.facebook.com/midlandmeatco www.facebook.com/mmchalfacre

at the shop to answer any questions customers might have.

He wants to help the community understand the importance of knowing the origin of your meat and the care and clean diets he provides his own. Regardless of the type of beef, he prides himself on having high quality All-Natural Beef. He sees each Beef as a 3-year investment that deserves all the quality and cares his two ranches can supply.

It has paid off! Midland Meat Co is now a 3-time percentage Wagyu champion of the Triple Crown Steak Challenge. Their briskets are now famous amongst competitive Pitmasters, because of their success in competitions across the country. Claiming 3 World Championship brisket trophies over the last 5 years, Houston twice and the American Royal once respectively.

Restaurants have also realized how delicious and high quality the meat is from Midland. John fondly recalls that he did reach out to one restaurant in the beginning, but he's finding many restaurants in his area want to support local

ranches. "They want high-quality fresh suppliers." Scharbauer Ranches supplies as many as ten local restaurants, one in Fort Worth, and the acclaimed Restaurant Daniel in Manhattan, New York, along with their own restaurant located in Midland called the Half Acre.

His business strategy is both profound yet straightforwardcreate a quality product people can rely on, keep your pricing very competitive, try to keep your businesses as integrated as possible and remain open to all markets. It's serving them well too, soon Midland Meat will be expanding to a 5000 sq ft shop to better supply and service the community.

Despite all the growth and organic publicity, John remains thankful for the business and his fantastic staff. He recalls how the once small team has now grown to include 17 families. All of which have stayed on from the beginning. John is positive Midland Meat "couldn't do it without the wonderful people," both in the shop and the customers. He considers them all a part of his extended family and is grateful for the opportunity to give back and support his local community.



# AN INTRO TO MARBLE SEMEN



#### EBV Percentiles for MIKU MAMMUT Q26 (AI) (ET) Gest Length - Longer Birth Wt - Heavier Lighter 200 Day Wt - Lighter 400 Day Wt - Lighter Heavier 600 Day Wt - Lighter Heavier Mat Cow Wt - Lighter Heavier Milk - Lower Higher Scrotal Size - Smaller Carcase Wt - Lighter Heavie Eye Musc Area - Smaller Bigger Rump Fat - Leaner Fatter Retail Yield - Lower Higher Marble Score - Lower Higher Marble Fineness - Lower Higher Self Replacing Index - Lower Higher ullblood Terminal Index - Lower Higher F1 Terminal Index - Lower Higher 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 50th Percentile is the Breed Avg. EBVs for 2019 Born Calves



#### BY JOF PETIT

A new sales platform for full blood wagyu semen has come onto the virtual market -- marblesemen.com. "The purpose of this website is to only offer full-blood wagyu semen to all breeders, but the unique thing is to also offer this to commercial cattle breeders," said Joe Pettit, owner. Marble Semen offers wagyu semen at commercially viable prices in exchange for large volumes of purchase.

All of the bulls offered by Marble Semen have been genomically tested. "These are breed-leading bulls that we can tell the exact markers and data points," Pettit said.

These markers include marble score, marble fineness, and eye muscle. Pettit said all of the bulls on the website have met these high expectations.

The unique partnership between breeders and Marble Semen is that all of the bulls that are being offered would normally be sold for between \$300 and \$500 dollars a straw. But in exchange, for large-scale commercial terminal production, those numbers are radically different.

Commercial cattlemen can access those bulls at \$40 a straw on large quantitative orders, with minimums between 500 -1000 a straw. In addition, breeders have agreed to run specials on their bulls periodically. "We've done significant discounts for our customers on the site," Pettit said.

For example, a recent weekend special offered a \$400 dollar straw, with a 10 straw minimum at \$95 a straw for the discount.

The website includes all information such as where the breeders are located, where the materials can be shipped, and all other information.

"We are really working with the top programs around the world," Pettit said. "These breeders are based in Australia, the USA, and around the globe." In addition to semen, embryos will also soon be available on the site as well as a commercial bull battery button in August 2021. Semen is not purchased at the auction but is available for purchase as needed.

Pettit said what really makes this site so special is the quality of what they are offering. In the United States, the highest quality beef can achieve is a grade of prime, but internationally (Japan & Australia) beef achieves a grade of prime or prime plus 80 percent of the time. These Bulls are the Bulls that necessitate a grading system that offers a numerical rating (1-9 in Australia) and (3-12 in Japan).

"The bottom line is the value of every carcass harvested is in the grade of prime, which brings a premium," Pettit said. "Carcasses with wagyu genetics have an even higher premium."

more information visit marblesemen.com email marblesemen@gmail.com

# **WAGYU-PEDIA**

WELCOME>

# FROM THE AUTHOR

## Pam Armstrong, LVT

any people consider Wagyu beef to be the most tender and flavorful beef in the world. The cattle used to produce this beef are docile with good temperaments, and they are known for their intense intramuscular marbling, high fertility rates and ease of calving. Why wouldn't a cattle farmer want to raise Wagyu?

The internet is flush with information about Wagyu, some of it is accurate and some of it is misleading. This handbook is designed to help breeders decide whether or not raising this breed is the right choice for them. Peer-reviewed journals and academic textbooks were used to create this handbook, and worldrenowned Wagyu experts were consulted. There are good opportunities for producers who are informed, careful and realistic. There are many variances within the Wagyu breeds and bloodlines; as well as differences between short and long-fed animals, and results of different feeding protocols. Wagyu are very special animals; they are considered a national treasure of Japan. I hope you enjoy and appreciate them as much as I do.



HISTORY >

## WHAT ARE WAGYU?

he Japanese word Wagyu (pronounced wdh-gyou) translated into English means Japanese cattle. When these cattle are bred, raised and fed properly, they are capable of producing some of the most tender and marbled beef in the world. These cattle evolved during the Meiji era (1898 – 1912), when an extensive, government-guided crossbreeding program occurred. The native working cattle were crossbred with European breeds to dilute the gene pool and expand the population. Once the initial dilution was complete, breeders within prefectures (jurisdictions in Japan) began improving their lines without crossbreeding. The resulting breeds were certified in the mid-1900s, and they are now soughtafter worldwide for their tremendous marbling capabilities. The 90th Statistical Yearbook of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries shows 1.6 million non-crossed beef cattle and 1.8 million crossed and dairy cattle in Japan in 2015. The Japanese non-crossed or fullblood breeds include: Japanese Black (90%), Japanese Brown (9%), Japanese Shorthorn (<1%) and Japanese Polled (rare). In the United States, these four Japanese cattle breeds are

HISTORY >

referred to as Waqyu.

## ORIGIN OF WAGYU IN THE USA

n 1976 four Wagyu bulls were imported into the U.S. Shortly following "A total of 167 Black Wagyu is known to have been exported. 21 Calves registered from Japanese Al sires were born after the arrival of the heifers. 16 Red Wagyu bulls and heifers were exported and 6 registered births resulted. A total of 221 Wagyu cattle brought genetics from the Japanese Black and Japanese Brown and they formed the basis of all Wagyu and Akaushi in USA, Canada and Australia." (Wagyu International)





# **WAGYU-PEDIA**

EACH ISSUE WILL BRING YOU A NEW SET OF ARTICLES TO INCREASE YOUR WAGYU KNOWLEDGE

SCIENCE >



# KNOW THE BREED

apanese Brown cattle are also known as Red Wagyu. This indigenous breed also received its certification in 1944 after crossbreeding native cattle with Korean Hanwoo, Devon and Simmental. They are raised primarily in Kumamoto and Kochi Prefectures. These cattle typically yield larger carcasses with meat that has a pleasantly firm texture and tasty, intramuscular marbling.



BREEDING >

# WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT BREEDING MY NEW FB WAGYU HEIFERS?

wagyu tend to grow at a slower rate than many other cattle breeds. Evaluate your heifers carefully to determine if they are large enough to breed, and use bulls with appropriate calving-ease traits to breed small heifers and cows. The earliest heifers should be bred is at 15 months and only if they weigh approximately 65% of their expected mature weight. Ex. A 15-month-old heifer that weighs 715 lbs and is

expected to weigh 1,100 lbs. at maturity may be bred with few potential complications.

Their gestation length is 283 days, which is similar to British breeds, and the twinning rate for Japanese Black is low at 0.11%. When making breeding decisions, use 16/16 analysis, EPDs or EBVs if available and any other data you can obtain to select for the traits you desire. (See Purchasing Wagyu in our next issue.)

### BY DANIEL COLLINS

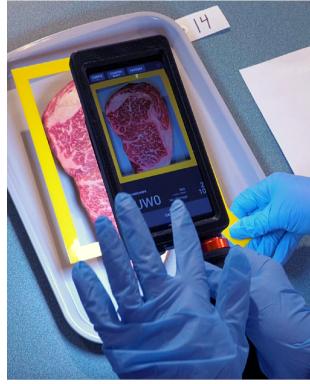
In 2020, Meat Imaging USA(MIUSA) was facing a market that did not understand how to interpret their above prime meat quality and struggled to demonstrate the advantages of carcasses that yielded higher marbling scores. MIUSA desired to move forward to engage the USDA to expand its beef quality grading system to accommodate the extraordinary quality of Wagyu beef. The demand for premium quality beef has proven to be an emerging market. The contribution of Wagyu cattle has increased marbling quality that is exceptional and far exceeds the USA Prime Grade. Meat Imaging USA's main objective is to help producers grade their beef with a standardized, uniform grading system developed by MIJ Japan.

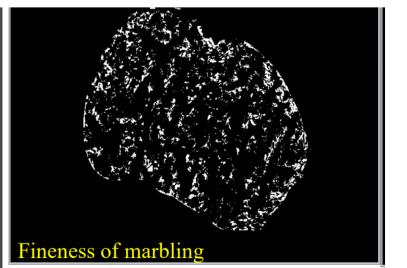
MIJ Japan has developed grading technology that is the most advanced digital analysis system for measuring carcass merit. The MIJ team is recognized the world over for its cutting-edge technology.

In 2020, Australia recognized the significance of this technology developed by Dr. Kiego Kuchida. They organized a thorough research study that would compare the traditional process with the new technology provided by MIJ labs. Impressively, they found that the MIJ cameras not only mirrored the results collected traditionally but provided more comprehensive and accurate measurements. The partnership between Japan and the Australian Wagyu Association proved MIJ camera to be,

"A ROBUST COMMERCIAL GRADING TOOL, IDEAL FOR ROUTINE INDUSTRIAL USE IN SUPPLY CHAINS ACROSS THE FULL RANGE OF MARBLE SCORE VARIATION.[1]"







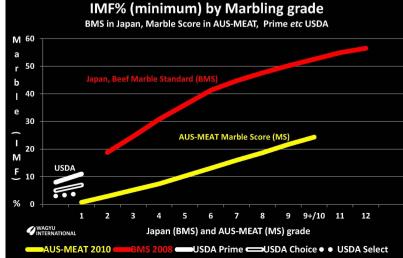




Photo (left to right): Gerry Gulli, Desi Cicale, Yoichi Sakaguchi

# **MEAT IMAGING USA**

CONT.



Since the completion of the study, the Australian Wagyu Association has now outfitted multiple processing plants with a MIJ Carcass Camera.

Presently Australia and Japan lead the Wagyu market with genetic combinations based on marbling potential from the carcass camera data. The USA is now onboard distributing cameras in the US. The MIJ objective technology is now accessible to even the smallest ranches with the launch of the new MIJ Mobile. We have the means to make American Wagyu a competitive powerhouse poised for a unique opportunity to close the gap.

The MIJ technology provides 2 pages of information with each carcass capture. This detailed information provides wagyu breeders the ability to scientifically quantify how above Prime their product is and thereby strengthen their brand and provide more accurate descriptions of the expected palatability and tenderness (indicated by higher IMF% and DMf, respectively).

We stand on the precipice of a momentous movement. If the United States can raise our grading standards to that of Japan and Australia, we can compete in a global market and start getting compensated for the time and investment with this incredible Wagyu breed.

[1] Dr. Matt McDonagh, Beef Central, Feb 2021

# **COMING SOON**

# MEAT IMAGING WILL BE PRESENTING A NEW PUBLICATION



Topic: Meat and Poultry Quality and Composition - Measurement and Prediction

# PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE MEAT IMAGING JAPAN (MIJ) BEEF GRADING SMART PHONE APPLICATION AS IT COMPARES TO A CURRENT USDA VALIDATED BEEF GRADING CAMERA VISION SYSTEM

J.M. Lancaster, M.J. Colle, B.S. Epperson, J.H. Smart, K.F. Oliver, A. Kano, Y. Sakaguchi, K. Kuchida, D. Cicale, and P.D. Bass

**Objectives:** Camera vision beef grading systems can be cost-prohibitive to smaller beef processers which results in limited advanced technology grading capabilities. The objective of this study was to compare an alternative beef carcass grading technology with a commercially available USDA-approved beef grading camera (VBG2000, E+V Technology).

**Results:** The marbling scores obtained by the MIJ camera observations had a strong correlation to the currently validated beef grading vision system (r = 0.71; P < 0.01). The ribeye areas of the evaluated carcasses ranged from 61.87 cm2 to 127.55 cm2. The ribeye areas observed by the MIJ camera were moderately correlated to the currently validated beef grading vision system. (r = 0.56; P < 0.01).

**Conclusion:** The initial validation of an alternative beef grading system suggests an opportunity to pursue additional validation for further use in USDA processing facilities. Ultimate utilization of the MIJ camera vision system will allow for more beef producers and processors to capture objective beef carcass data across a wider range of processing facilities.

# WORLD LEADERS

**CARCASS CAMERA TECHNOLOGY** 





## **CALF CAM CUTENESS**









# #CUTENESS

Do you have great pictures of your new calves? We'd love to see them! Although we definitely have a special place in our heart for Wagyu, we welcome all species of calf photos, as long as they're CUTE! Send your submissions to info@wittmagazine.com.

"Be crazy, be silly, be weird. Because life is too short to be anything but happy."

# WHAT ARE EBVS?

#### SUMMARIZED BY KENNY LANDGRAF

#### **EBVs or Estimated Breeding Values:**

An assessment that expresses the difference between an individual animal and the herd or breed benchmark to which the animal is being compared. They are expressed in units of measured genetic traits either above or below average.

Presently there are two major reporting services, Australian Breedplan program (operates through Pedigree Cattle services) & Signet/BASCO (Edinburgh Genetic Evaluation Services). EBVs are no longer seen as a waste of time and money but as an accurate estimation of how the progeny of an individual should perform based on measured genetic traits. If you appreciate the technical side of things the equation for EBVs is as follows:

{Individual Performance + Performance of relatives + Linked traits \* Heritability} = EBV

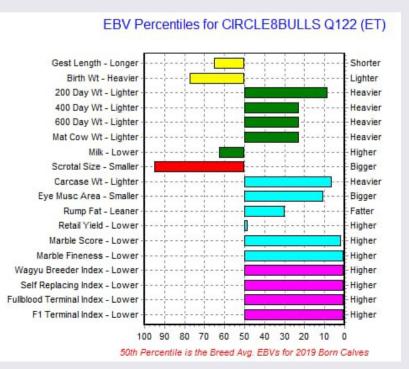
#### Benefits to using EBVs in your business:

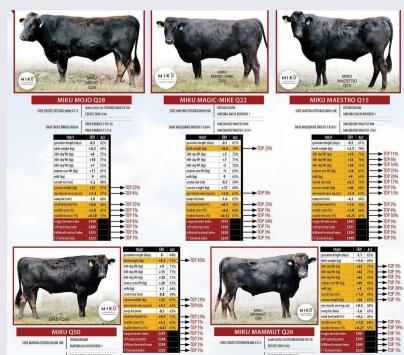
- All cattle within a herd are raised onto a common platform- so you can compare like with like when coming up with your breeding plan- regardless of the system or location, they are produced in.
- · Helps measure the parts of the animal the eye cannot see
- Draws information from many sources in addition to animals' own performance.
- For small herds, the use of AI bulls can rapidly improve the EBVs and accuracy of your predictions
- Most Importantly, helps predict the merit of the carcass

#### Data to collect to improve the accuracy of your EBV's:

- Birth weight(all measured NOT estimated)
- · Birth Date
- · Calving ease score
- · Accurate/ Honest Weights at 200 days, 400 days, & 600 days
- · Scrotal circumference (bulls only)
- Ultrasonic measurements of back-fat, rump fat, and muscle depth
- Dam weights collected at weaning time(contributes to mature weight EBV)
- Disposition is collected in some countries
- The data from siblings and other family members can also make a contribution
- · Retail beef yield
- · Marble Score
- Marble Fineness

\*\*(Accurate carcass characteristics are invaluable, and now becoming accessible to all with the MIJ Mobile Carcass Camera)





# **EBVS CONTINUED**

#### YOUR DATA IS INVALUABLE

#### Things to keep in mind when interpreting your data:

- Each parent contributes half the resulting calf's genetic make-up
- EBV is a performance estimate or prediction for the PROGENY and not their own performance
- EBVs measure the Genetic (genotype) component- does not bring in the management and environment
- Environment(i.e. grass quality, disease burden, parasites, feeding plan, management ability, etc) is the part that herd keepers have influence over and the ability to compensate for or enhance
- Linked traits: the traits that share a common connection with each other
- Heritability: how a specific characteristic is transferred from parents to progeny
- The higher the value, the faster genetic improvement can be made and positive benefits within your meat observed
- Scientists are finding that genetics are often affecting how the non-genetic component(i.e feeding) is used.
- No two animals are the same- the more data can be collected(size, carcass quality, etc) the more accurate the EBVs can be to account for individual variation.

- EBV's must reach a certain level of accuracy before they can be reported, ensuring the information is as relevant as possible.
- The power of the EBV in your herd can be limited if you have a small herd size or lack of genetic diversity
- Imperative to have a compact calving pattern- any data collected within the herd needs to be collected on the same day (do not collect data on animals fed for a show, if they are sick, etc)
- · MUST record all calves- the good, the bad, and the uglythis will give you the most accurate picture
- A weigh scale and Mobile Carcass Camera are the most important pieces of equipment on your livestock farm.

#### **Additional Resources** if you want to dive in more:

- wagyuinternational.com/images/understandingEBVs.pdf
- wagyu.org/uploads/page/A%20Basic%20Guide%20to%2 0BP%20EBVs%20(Complete).pdf
- https://wagyu.org/uploads/page/Interpreting%20BREEDP LAN%20EBVs.pdf



# HOMEGROWN FLAVOURS

# COCONUT RUM WAGYU STEAK FAJITAS

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 LBS WAGYU FLANK STEAK
- 1 TBS OIL
- 1.5 OZ COCONUT RUM
- 1 MED YELLOW ONION, SLICED
- 3 TRICOLORED PEPPERS, SLICED
- 1 TSP GARLIC SALT
- 1/2 TSP CRACKED BLACK PEPPERCORN
- FLOUR OR CORN TORTILLAS

#### DIRECTIONS

Pan sear the Wagyu on medium-high heat with oil until brown.

Pour the coconut rum over beer and increase heat.

Add onions and peppers.

Season with garlic salt and cracked black pepper.

Divvy up steak, onion, and pepper mix into warm tortillas.

Suggested toppings shredded cheese, guac, salsa creme freche.

## What's Your Beef?

We believe in power of family traditions and memories made around good quality food. We know that you really are what you eat, so we choose to eat and promote food that will help and not hurt.

We seek to feature not only time-honored recipes but even those that may be a new tradition for your family holidays.



Do you have a recipe your family loves? Send it to us today, and it may be featured in the next issue! info@wittmagazine.com

### INGREDIENTS

#### SMOKED WAGYU BRISKET

- 4 lb brisket "point"
- 2 tbsp beef base (i.e. Better Than Boullion)
- 2 tbsp garlic salt
- 2 tbsp fresh ground pepper
- 2 tbsp Chile powder
- 1 tbsp light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika

## WRAP SAUCE, AKA THE "TEXAS CRUTCH"

- 2 tbsp light brown sugar (I prefer bourbon barrel smoked brown sugar)
- 2 tbsp chopped shallots
- 2 tbsp apple juice or sweet tea

#### GLAZE

- 3/4 cup your favorite BBQ sauce
- 2 tbsp light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar

# SMOKED WAGYU BRISKET

## RECIPE BY CHEF DAVID HARKER

## **DIRECTIONS**

- Remove fat cap(fatty areas) and score the meat on both sides to increase absorption. Rub the beef base into the brisket on all sides. Combine the garlic salt, pepper, chile powder, brown sugar and smoked paprika and generously "rub" into the meat. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- Prepare your smoker to 225° F. Put your brisket on the smoker and let it smoke for 5 hours or until internal temperature reaches 170°F. Roll out a large piece of foil and double it up so you can fold the brisket into a foil "packet". Remove the brisket, put it on the foil and pour on the Wrap Sauce. Seal up the foil packet and put it back on the smoker. Cook in foil for 2 hours, until internal temp is 190°F.
- Remove the foil and put the brisket back on the smoke. Brush with glaze and let the meat continue to cook for 30 min to absorb the glaze.
- Once you pull the brisket off, "tent" it in foil for 30 min. Cut against the grain into 1/4" slices and serve.



