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**Wagyu Project at Washington
State University (ワシントン州に
おける和牛プロジェクトについて)**

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The presentation described the efforts of an interdisciplinary team of researchers at Washington State University to develop a new cattle production/marketing system in the State of Washington whose objective is to improve the quality of beef being exported to Japan. A critical part of this project is the development of a new breed of cattle based on Japanese *Wagyu* genetics, as well as the formation of an altered set of feeding practices which more closely mirror those practiced in Japan. The objective is to develop beef products better suited to the Japanese grading system and Japanese consumer tastes and thus ensure the State's continued role in the increasingly competitive beef export market to Japan. A secondary objective is to produce high quality beef for Japanese-style restaurants throughout the United States.

This project, which is being sponsored by Washington State University's International Marketing Program for Agricultural Commodities & Trade has a number of components. These include; experiments comparing the growth patterns, marbling capabilities and other quality attributes of *Wagyu*, Angus and Longhorn steers, a line of genetics research aimed at determining which United States beef breeds can be most effectively crossed with the *Wagyu*, a progeny test of 21 percentage *Wagyu* bulls

now alive in the United States, research to ascertain the break-even price of feeding cross-bred *Wagyu* strains for the Japanese market, and research which monitors ongoing transformations in the Japanese beef market.

At the time the presentation was made, only preliminary results were available. These indicated that limited *Wagyu* genetics were available in the United States, that the composition of *Wagyu* fat was different from that in current U.S. breeds, and that when fed identical diets, *Wagyu* steers have Average Daily Gain and Feed Efficiency rates which are different from control groups being used in the study.