Individual Cattle Identification and Beef Traceability System in Japan

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1. Turmoil after the BSE outbreak and the decrease of beef consumption

(1) Turmoil after the BSE outbreak
※ Japanese mass media covered it extensively.
※ Japanese consumers thought that beef was not safe because of BSE. Therefore, beef consumption decreased drastically.

(2) Decrease of beef consumption (Household consumption quantity per person)
(Ratio over the same month of previous year)

Source: The Ministry of Internal Affairs and communications, “Family Income and Expenditure Survey”
2. Series of measures after the BSE outbreak

① To prohibit the feeding of meat-and-bone meal, etc. to prevent further infection of BSE (Since October 4th, 2001).
② To implement BSE inspection of slaughtered cattle and removal of specified risk materials at abattoirs (Since October 18th, 2001).
③ To enforce reporting of dead cattle at farm 24 months of age or older and to implement BSE inspection of the cattle (Since April 1st, 2003).
The Japanese animal identification system complies with the rules in chapter 4.2 of the OIE terrestrial Code ‘Design and implementation of identification systems to achieve animal traceability’.
4. 1 Details of Beef Traceability System (from Birth to Slaughter)

Live Cattle

- Birth
- Transfer to other farmers
- Slaughter

- Reproduction farms, Dairy farms, etc.
  - ※ Attaching ear tags
  - Notification of birth
  - Notification of outgoing transfer

- Fattening farms, etc.
  - ※ Incoming transfer
  - Notification of incoming transfer
  - Notification of outgoing transfer

- Abattoirs
  - ※ Incoming transfer
  - ※ Slaughter
  - Notification of slaughter

Support bodies
(Agricultural cooperative, etc.)

- National Livestock Breeding Center
  - Individual Identification Registers (from birth to slaughter) and Public disclosure of the information

Individual Identification Registers:
- Individual Identification Number
- Date of birth, Breed, Sex
- Transfer History, etc.
4. 2 Details of Beef Traceability System (from carcass to Dressed meat)

- **Abattoirs**
  - ※ Maintenance of registers
  - Indication and relay of Individual Identification Numbers on Beef or its containers, etc.

- **Sellers · Designated Cuisine suppliers**
  - ※ Maintenance of registers
  - Indication and relay of Individual Identification Numbers on Beef or its containers, etc.

- **Consumers**
  - ※ Individual Identification Numbers make it possible to search for the transfer history of cattle.

- Search
  - Individual Identification data
5. 1 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(Ear tags and Individual Identification Number)

(1) Ear Tags for Individual Identification
Requirements of ear tags for Individual Identification are as follows.
(i) The tags should be manufactured in such a manner that they cannot
easily be detached after being attached.
(ii) The tags should be manufactured in such a manner that they cannot
be re-attached after removal.
(iii) The Individual Identification Number should be of an easily
identifiable color and size.
(iv) The Individual Identification Number should be manufactured in
such a manner that it cannot be easily tampered with, modified or
erased.

(2) Individual Identification Number
① The Individual Identification Number
consists of 10 digits.
② Only one Individual Identification Number
can be used during the lifetime of each animal.
If the ear tags become detached, a new ear tag
bearing the same Individual Identification
Number should be reissued.
### 5.2 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
( Notification of Individual Cattle Identification Information )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems of notification</th>
<th>Reference: Number of notifications in FY2007 is about 12 million. Note: 1) Figures in (   ) represent percentage of total notifications in FY2007. 2) Words in 【 】 represent main users.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Facsimile</strong></td>
<td>(18.3%) 【Farmers, Support bodies, Abattoirs】 Notification by filling in a report and sending it by facsimile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Computer Telephony Integration</strong></td>
<td>(5.7%) 【Farmers】 Notification by pushing numbers on a touch-tone phone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Mobile phone [Web]</strong></td>
<td>(0.6%) 【Farmers】 Notification by entering information in a form from a mobile phone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Personal computer [Web]</strong></td>
<td>(15.2%) 【Farmers】 Notification by filling in a form from a personal computer</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Local office system</strong></td>
<td>(20.4%) 【Support bodies, Abattoirs】 Notification via the internet (e-mail)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6. File transfer protocol</strong></td>
<td>(39.8%) 【Support bodies, Abattoirs】 Notification by connecting to the database of some agricultural cooperatives with the Individual Identification Registers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(Urgent search for BSE Cohort)

※ Urgent search for BSE Cohort

Abattoirs

BSE inspection of dead cattle

Farms

BSE inspection

Prefectural Governments
(Livestock Hygiene Service Centers)
(Meat Hygiene Inspection Centers)

BSE positive

Contact Information

The infected cattle information

The information of the farm keeping the infected cattle

The list of cattle born from the infected cow

The list of cohort

The Japanese Government
(The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries,
the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare)

ID number

Instructions of search

Reply to the Instructions

National Livestock Breeding Center

Preparation
5.4.1 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information  
(Utilization of Individual Cattle Identification Information)

- Various notification: Birth, Incoming transfer, Outgoing transfer, Slaughter, etc.
- Farmers • Abattoirs
- Utilize Cattle Registration System
- Utilize Livestock Insurance System
- Provide to Public Organizations
- National Livestock Breeding Center

Individual Identification Registers (from birth to slaughter) and Public disclosure of the information

- Individual Identification Registers
  - Individual Identification Number
  - Date of birth
  - Breed
  - Sex
  - Transfer History, etc.

- Herd information of Individual farmers and Statistics
- Individual Identification information
- Individual Identification information

- Provide to Public Organizations
- Utilize Cattle Registration
- Utilize Livestock Insurance System
5.4.2 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information (Utilization of Individual Cattle Identification Information)

- **Provide to Public Organizations**
  ※ Provide prefectural governments with herd information of individual farmers for establishing administrative policies and statistics.

- **Utilize Cattle Registration**
  ※ Provide the Holstein Cattle Association of Japan with Individual Cattle Identification Information (Date of birth, Sex, Breed, Name of Manager, etc.) for publishing registrations automatically.

- **Utilize Livestock Insurance System**
  ※ Provide Livestock Insurance Cooperative with Individual Cattle Identification Information (Date of birth, Sex, Breed, Name of Manager, etc.) for the sake of proper and efficient procedure of underwriting agreement, accident, etc.
5. 5.1 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(Public disclosure of Individual Cattle Identification Information)
5.5.2 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(Public disclosure of Individual Cattle Identification Information)

Search number of heads per day: about 90,000 to 110,000

Search via a web site on a personal computer

(URL) https://www.id.nlbc.go.jp/english/
5.5.3 Supervision of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(Public disclosure of Individual Cattle Identification Information)

Search via a web site of a mobile phone

※ Japanese site only

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牛の個体識別番号検索

個体識別番号

1. 検索 (0/50回)
9. 戻る

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<牛個体情報>
1個体識別番号: 11964 42315
2出生の年月日: H15.09.08
3雌雄の別: メス
4母牛の個体識別番号: 1128694102
5種別(品種): 黒毛和種

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<履歴1>
A飼養県: 福島県
B異動内容: 出生
C異動年月日: H 15.09.08
D飼養施設所在地: 石川郡平田村
E氏名または名称: 和馬牧場(三本松善郎)

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<履歴10>
A飼養県: 東京都
B異動内容: と畜
C異動年月日: H 18.06.28
D飼養施設所在地: 港区
E氏名または名称: 東京都立芝浦と場

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Search number of heads per day : about 6～7 thousand
6. Rate of recognition of Individual Cattle Identification System

※ Rate of recognition of Search service of Individual Cattle Identification Information
(survey in June 2008)

- "I do not know." 34.3%
- "I know, and I have used the service." 2.9%
- "I know, but I have never used the service." 62.8%

Source: The Japan Meat Information Service Center, “Survey of Trends in consumption (Survey of Consumer)"
Note: Result of the questionnaire survey administered to 2,102 families
7. The understanding of the Beef Traceability System by the Japanese Population

※ Necessity of Beef Traceability System (Survey from Dec. 2006 to Jan. 2007)

- "The system is necessary." 81%
- "The necessity of the system is undecided." 10%
- "No interest on the system." 3%
- "The system is not necessary." 6%

※ Reason of "The system is necessary." - Results (Multiple responses)

- Can eat domestic beef with a feeling of security 72%
- Proper labelling of beef 51%
- A prevention against spreading of BSE 41%
- There is no specific reason 2%
- Others 9%

Note: Result of the questionnaire survey administered to 1,575 people
8. Requests from Consumers, Farmers, Distributors, etc.

【Consumers】
※ Have an interest in place of origin (longest rearing prefecture), supplied feed and medicine, etc., when they buy beef

【Farmers, Farmer’s Bodies】
※ Possible merits from the Individual Cattle Identification System such as,
  ▪ Introduction of a Radio Frequency Identification system for the purpose of the automatic Individual Identification registries and reduction of labor for notifications, etc.
  ▪ Linking of Individual Identification Registers with other information (Pedigree Information, Carcass Grading Information, Vaccination Information, etc.)

【Distributors】
※ Want to utilize Individual Identification Information as a measure to confirm the indication of the place of origin which is based on the JAS (=Japanese Agricultural Standard) law ※
※ If they prefer the indication of prefecture name to that of domestic, it should indicate the prefecture name where the cattle was raised for the longest period.