



**Executive Vice President,
American Angus Association**



It appears in the next few years that relaxed import quotas and a hunger for quality beef will offer a new and renewed market for Angus cattle and Certified Angus Beef in the Far East.

Japan will likely lead the way when the import quotas from the U.S. are lifted on April 1, 1991. Already, consumers and cattlemen are seeing more Certified Angus Beef and registered Angus imports from the U.S.

Angus in Japan offers yet another opportunity for the Angus breed and U.S. breeders. A growing number of trade companies and private firms envision Angus as the U.S. breed to provide quality and consistency to a growing hunger for beef. Last year alone Japanese consumption of beef increased by 7 to 8 percent. By the year 2000, Japanese consumption of beef is expected to double.

What this all means to the American Angus Association and its members remains to be seen but a few observations can be made now.

First, the present growth of American-style steakhouses throughout Japan has raised the question of whether the younger generation in Japan will choose western style food over more traditional eating habits.

Second, black Angus cattle have a good reputation in Japan because of their ability to adapt and also produce well-marbled carcasses. Many production areas of Japan are on the same latitude as our upper Midwest and Northern states, so cattle adapted to rain, snow, cold and heat fit well on the Japanese farms.

Third, a general Japanese policy provides that registered cattle can be imported with no import duty and registered cattle have first priority at Japanese quarantine stations. This accounts for the present interest in most Japanese firms wanting to import registered bred heifers. The two-in-one package makes sense, considering the cost of shipping livestock from the U.S.

The Japanese potential has not gone unnoticed by other large beef producing countries. For example, Canada and Australia are heavy players in the Japanese market and their presence is evident. We can be proud, however, of our own Meat Export Federation who has promoted our product well and persuaded more than 600 department stores to install American beef corners to their basement food section.

The Federation also promotes beef through beef fairs and cooking seminars. Last year it sponsored a Japanese contestant to the National Beef Cook-Off in the U.S.

A quick tour of Japan doesn't make one an expert, but it's apparent that as Japanese demand builds, the Angus breed in the U.S. has the most to gain. In a time of fairly stable beef consumption patterns in the U.S., it's promising to see a country of more than 100 million people taking a strong liking to our product and to identify Angus as a means of meeting that demand.

4j