

## Japanese Beef Products Guide Book



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1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan 100-8950 TEL: 03-3502-8111  
URL: <http://www.maff.go.jp>

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Guide Book Contact: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Agricultural Production  
Bureau, Livestock Industry Department, Meat and Egg Division  
TEL:03-3502-8473



# Japanese Beef Products Guide Book



Boasting a superior natural flavor,  
Japanese beef is high-quality, tender and juicy.



## Message from MAFF

### Greetings

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your loyalty towards Japanese beef.

Wagyu is a breed of cattle unique to Japan and can also be said to be part of Japan's heritage. The unrivaled quality and taste of Wagyu has been recognized around the world, and exports are increasing in line with the recent Japanese cuisine boom.

This guidebook has been prepared in an effort to introduce cutting and slicing methods so to optimize the characteristic qualities of each cut, including cuts that were previously uncommon overseas, and for a range of dishes including barbecue and hot pot recipes.

I hope that this guidebook provides more opportunities to enjoy the great taste of Wagyu.

MAFF, Agricultural Production Bureau  
Director-General: Kunio Naito



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JAPANESE BEEF PRODUCTS 2008

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# 匠

Wagyu – Refined  
by Japanese food culture

Including teppanyaki, sukiyaki and shabushabu, there is a wide variety of Japanese dishes that allow one to fully appreciate the tenderness and flavor of Wagyu. Teppanyaki is a simple method of drawing out the full flavor of the ingredients, while sukiyaki and shabushabu emphasize the delicate flavor and mouth-watering texture of thinly sliced beef. Japanese food culture places emphasis on enjoying the natural flavors of ingredients and has developed Wagyu into what it is today. Wagyu is unrivalled in its great taste and is now gaining popularity around the world as a luxury ingredient.



## Bringing the great taste of globally acclaimed Wagyu to dinner tables worldwide

The tenderness and delicate flavor of Wagyu is in high demand in Japan, where cuisine honors the inherent flavor of the ingredients. In response to such demand, Japan has refined its production technologies and the rest of the world, which is more accustomed to slightly more textured red meat, has been taken by surprise by the texture of Wagyu - a new style beef that once tried will not soon be forgotten. Wagyu, a relatively rare commodity, has the potential to increase the possibilities and value of food cultures around the world and bring with it significant change.



# 想

Raised with loving care for  
perfect Wagyu



Each and every head of Wagyu cattle is given time and attention, and raised lovingly by feeding specialists in the vast open spaces of Japan. In addition to a well managed environment – a carefully designed diet including rice, hay, wheat, and bran to raise cattle that are both healthy and produce great tasting beef, and cattle sheds kept in immaculate condition so as not to stress the delicate cattle – Wagyu cattle are bred with human compassion and attention. Outstanding production technologies and the pride of the master in pursuit of perfect Wagyu gives way to a superior quality found nowhere else in the world.

# 柔

## The melt-in-your-mouth texture is unique to Wagyu

Perhaps the most prominent characteristic of Wagyu is the marbled fat distributed through the muscle fibers known as “shimofuri” in Japan. The fine texture of Wagyu gives an extremely tender, melt-in-the-mouth quality. Wagyu is also known for its sweet, full-bodied aroma known as “wagyuko” or beef aroma. When cooking, Wagyu is known to give off an aroma that is likened to coconut or fruit. This beef aroma serves to further draw out the great taste of Wagyu. The flavor of Wagyu does not only satisfy the taste buds, but all five senses and has the potential to significantly change beef cuisine in countries around the world.







## The Wagyu brand is increasing in popularity all over the world

### Authentic Japanese Wagyu comes sealed with the universal Wagyu mark

Wagyu is increasing in popularity all over the world. This mark is only given to authentic Japanese Wagyu and we hope that you use it as a guide to selecting high-quality, great tasting authentic Wagyu meat products. Try one of the authentic Wagyu products today.

#### What breeds of cattle produce Wagyu?

Only breeds that satisfy the following conditions can be accredited as Wagyu beef.

##### ■ Breeds

1. Japanese Black Cattle
2. Japanese Brown Cattle
3. Japanese Shorthorn Cattle
4. Japanese Polled Cattle
5. Cross breeds resulting from interbreeding of 1.- 4. above
6. Cross breeds from the interbreeding of 1. – 5. or 5. above. Proof of the above must be able to be evidenced by means of a registration system in accordance with the Improvement and Increased Production of Livestock Act and through the cattle traceability system\*.

\* Japan has established a beef traceability system that provides production records of domestic cattle in Japan from the time they are born up until the time they reach the consumer.  
 Homepage Address: <https://www.id.nlbc.go.jp/english/top.html>  
 For more information, please see p.45 and 46, "High-level Measures to Ensure Meat Safety", of the guidebook

##### ■ Breeding environment

1. Must be cattle born and bred in Japan.
2. Ancestry of the cattle must be able to be confirmed by a traceability system.

##### High-grade Wagyu. Beef brands bred in specific regions of Japan.

Included under the category of Wagyu are beef brands that are extremely popular that have been bred using improved feeding methods and feed individually developed in specific regions throughout Japan. A large majority of these beef brands are given the name of the production area such as Matsuzaka Beef, Yonezawa Beef and Maesawa Beef.

### Grading system to clearly identify meat yield and quality

To ensure fair trading, beef in Japan is currently graded by the Japan Meat Grading Association. Beef is graded based on the yield grade and meat quality. The yield grade refers to the ratio of meat to total weight of the carcass and is classified into three grades from A to C with A being a grade of higher yield. Meat quality is classified into five grades from 5 to 1 based on beef marbling, color and brightness of the meat, firmness and texture of the meat and color and brightness of the fat. The lowest of the four individual grades is the final grade allocated to the meat. A thorough grading system of 15 grades through a combination of the above two elements ensures a clear indication of Wagyu meat quality and yield grade.

#### ■ Standard grades and how they are displayed <Example>

Yield Grade	Meat Quality Grade					B 3
	5	4	3	2	1	
A	A 5	A 4	A 3	A 2	A 1	
B	B 5	B 4	B 3	B 2	B 1	
C	C 5	C 4	C 3	C 2	C 1	



# Wagyu Product Guide

-A new range of selections-

This catalog, while also reviewing standard cuts that are popular in the marketplace, will also focus on introducing cuts that until now have been used with less frequency.

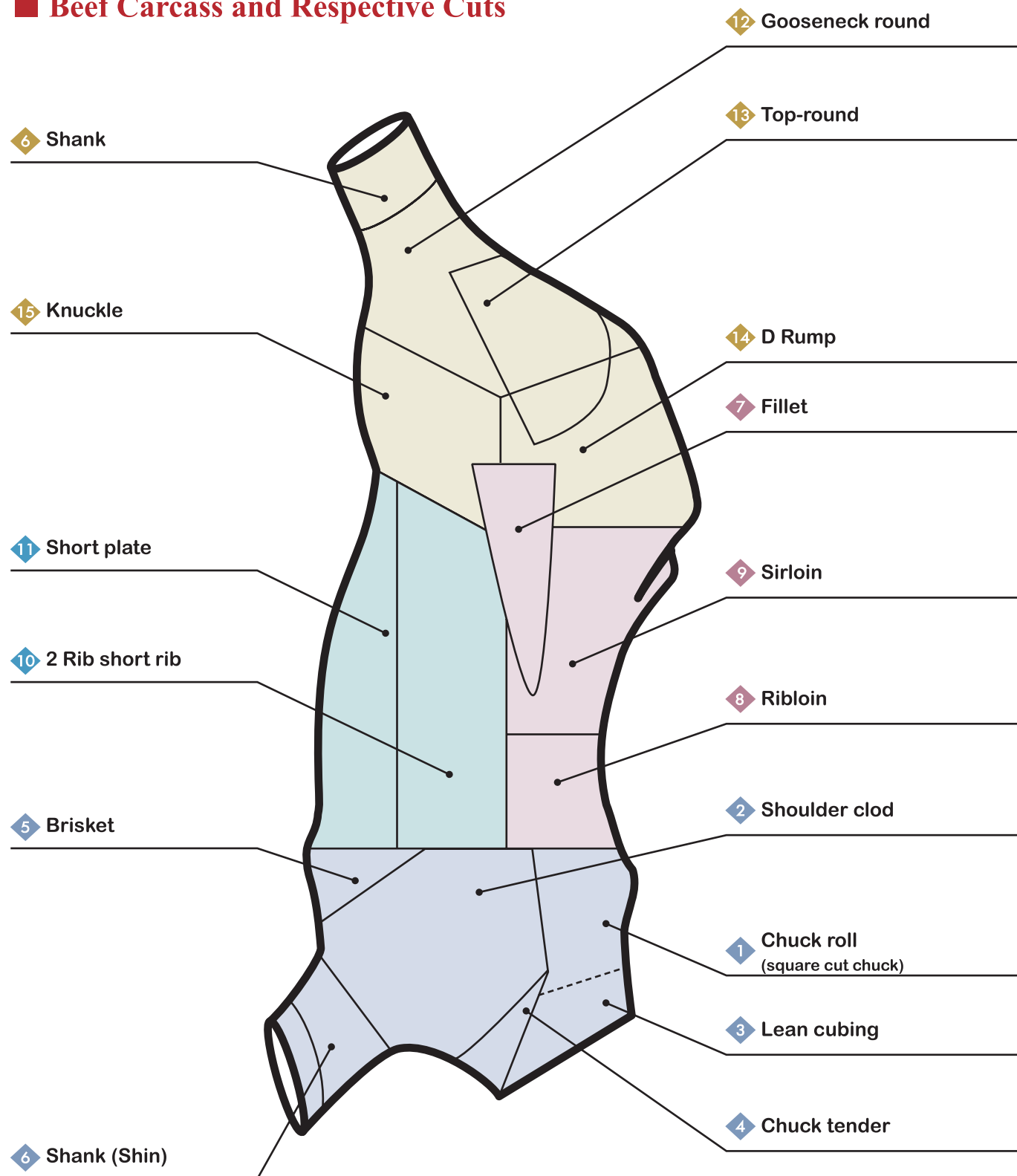
We hope that th]e catalog serves as a guideline to exploring the possibilities for new product development.





# Illustration of Beef Cuts

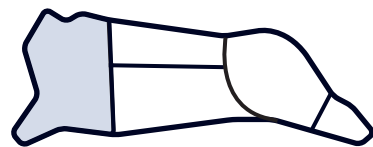
## Beef Carcass and Respective Cuts



## Recommended Cooking Methods for Each Cut

★ = Specially Recommended Cuts

Part of Meat		Steak	Barbecue	Roast Beef	Stewing	Sukiyaki	Shabu-shabu
Primal Cut	Sub-primal Cut						
Forequarter	1 Chuck roll ★ (Square cut chuck)	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙
	2 Shoulder clod	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙
	3 Neck		○		⊙	○	
	4 Chuck tender		⊙	⊙			
	5 Brisket		⊙		⊙	○	⊙
	6 6 Shank		○		⊙		
Loin	7 Fillet ★	⊙	⊙	⊙			
	8 Ribloin	⊙	⊙			⊙	⊙
	9 Sirloin	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙
Shortplate brisket	10 2 Rib short rib ★	○	⊙		⊙	○	
	11 Short plate ★	○	⊙		⊙	○	⊙
Round	12 Gooseneck round ★		○	○	⊙	⊙	○
	13 Top-round	⊙	⊙	⊙	○		⊙
	14 D Rump	⊙	⊙	⊙		○	○
	15 Knuckle	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	○



## Overview of Raw Meat

The chuck roll is the forequarter portion that is cut between the 6th and 7th rib perpendicular to the dorsal line excluding the shoulder clod and the brisket. It is divided into the chuck and the neck. The chuck roll can be well-marbled and the meat is tender and tasty making it perfect for sukiyaki and barbecuing.



## Culinary Applications

Steak	Barbecue	Stewing
Sukiyaki	Shabu-shabu	



## PRIMAL CUT

■ Photo Trimmed      Removing the neck

For the neck, see P.13

Cross-section between the 2/3 thoracic vertebrae: Marbling can be clearly seen in this cut and shows that it has been cut perpendicular to the muscle fiber.

Cross-section between the 7/1 cervical vertebrae: The point from which marbling starts is used as the partition line.

Cross-section between the 4/5 thoracic vertebrae: The portion where inter-muscular fat is significant and the core of the chuck is smaller is used as the partition line.

Cross-section between the 6/7 thoracic vertebrae: Cross section between the chuck and the ribloin. The core of the loin is large with a proportionate balance of lean meat and fat.

Cross-section between the 3/4 cervical vertebrae: Interface between the neck and chuck (May differ depending on standards)

## RETAIL CUT

■ Cut A: This portion is closest to the neck. The meat is a little tough and fibrous however has a strong flavor with little fat. (high proportion of lean meat)

Machine slicing: When packaging, take extreme care as the fold is subject to cracking

Fold the upper and bottom portions back when packing

Shabu-shabu slices

■ Cut B: Dividing into the chuck eye log and the chuck flap

Inserting a cleaver between the intercostal muscle and the chuck eye log

Dividing

Chuck eye log and chuck flap

■ Chuck eye log

Slicing

Steak cuts

Barbecue cuts

■ Chuck flap Trimmed

Slicing

Steak cuts

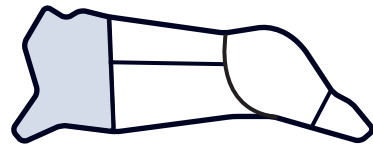
Barbecue cuts

■ Cut C

Removal of cap muscle: Cutting along the connective tissue

Steak cuts





## Overview of Raw Meat

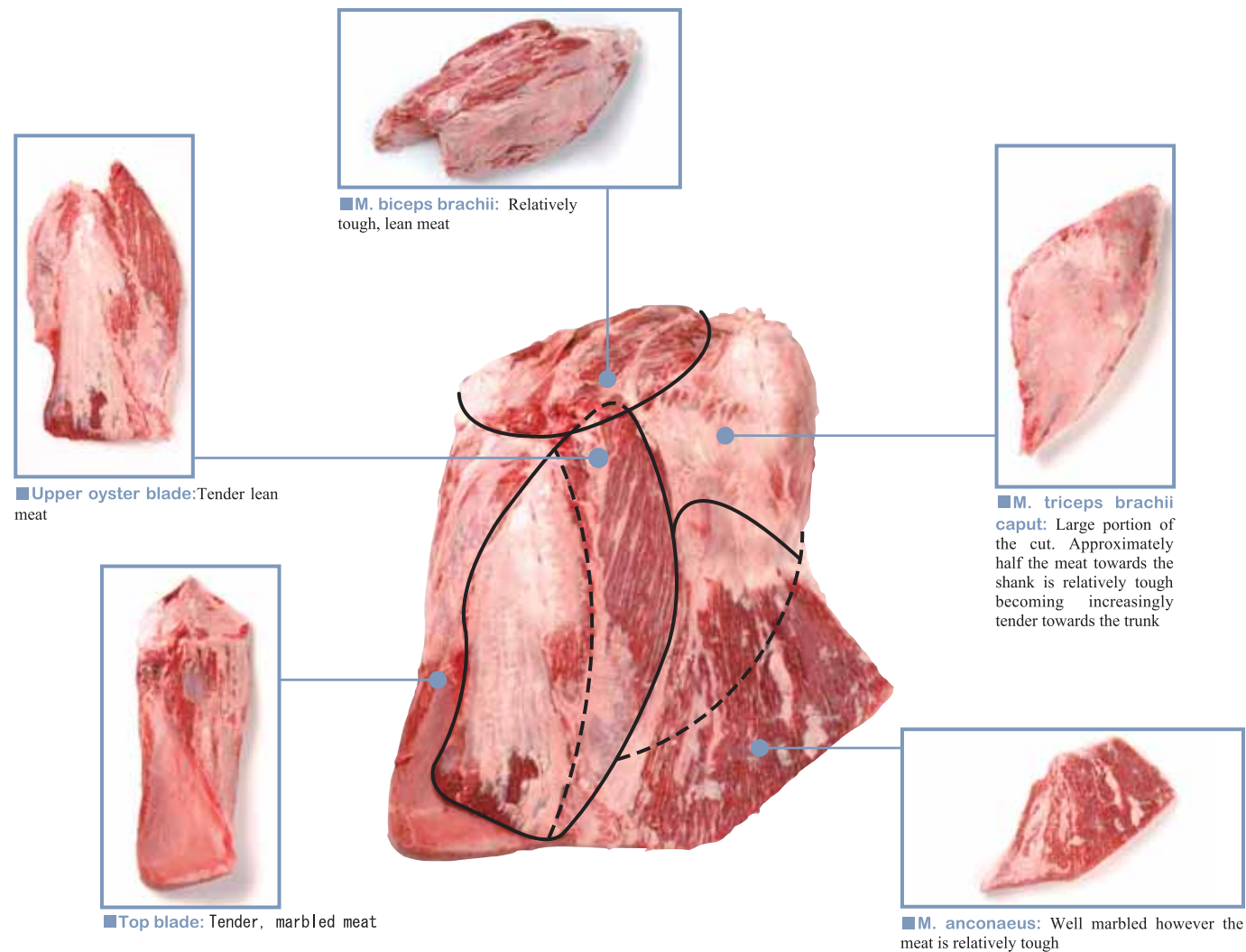
The shoulder clod is a well-muscled area with a large proportion of muscle and muscle tissue and is made up of both tough and tender meat. The meat typically has a deep color and a strong flavor. It can be divided into cuts for sukiyaki, barbecuing and steak etc.



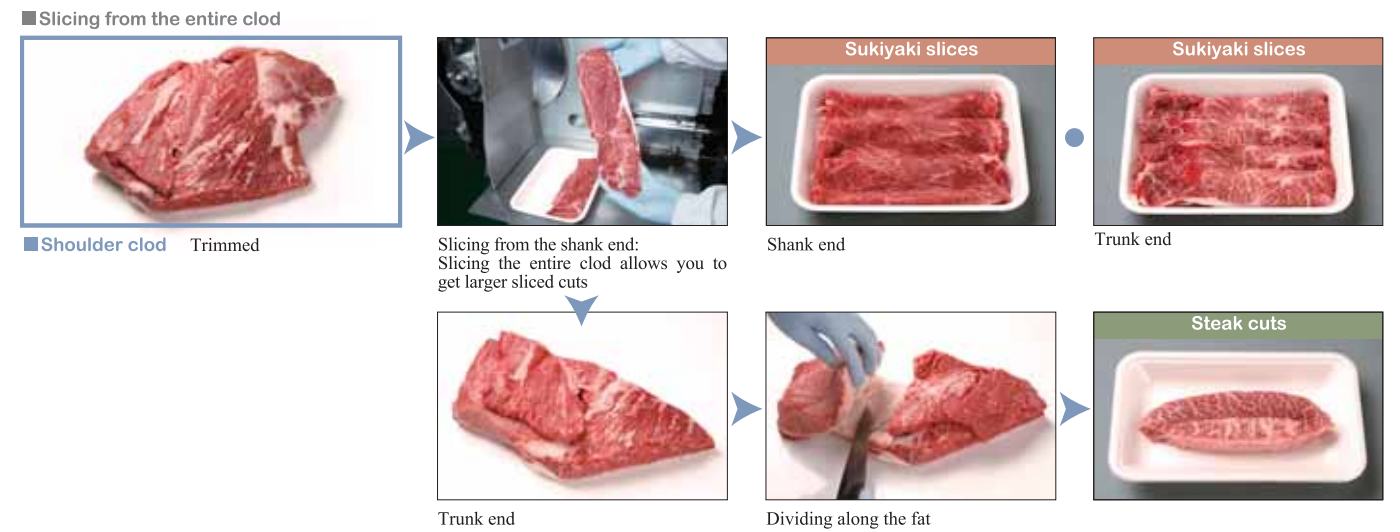
## Culinary Applications

Steak	Barbecue	Stewing
Sukiyaki	Shabu-shabu	

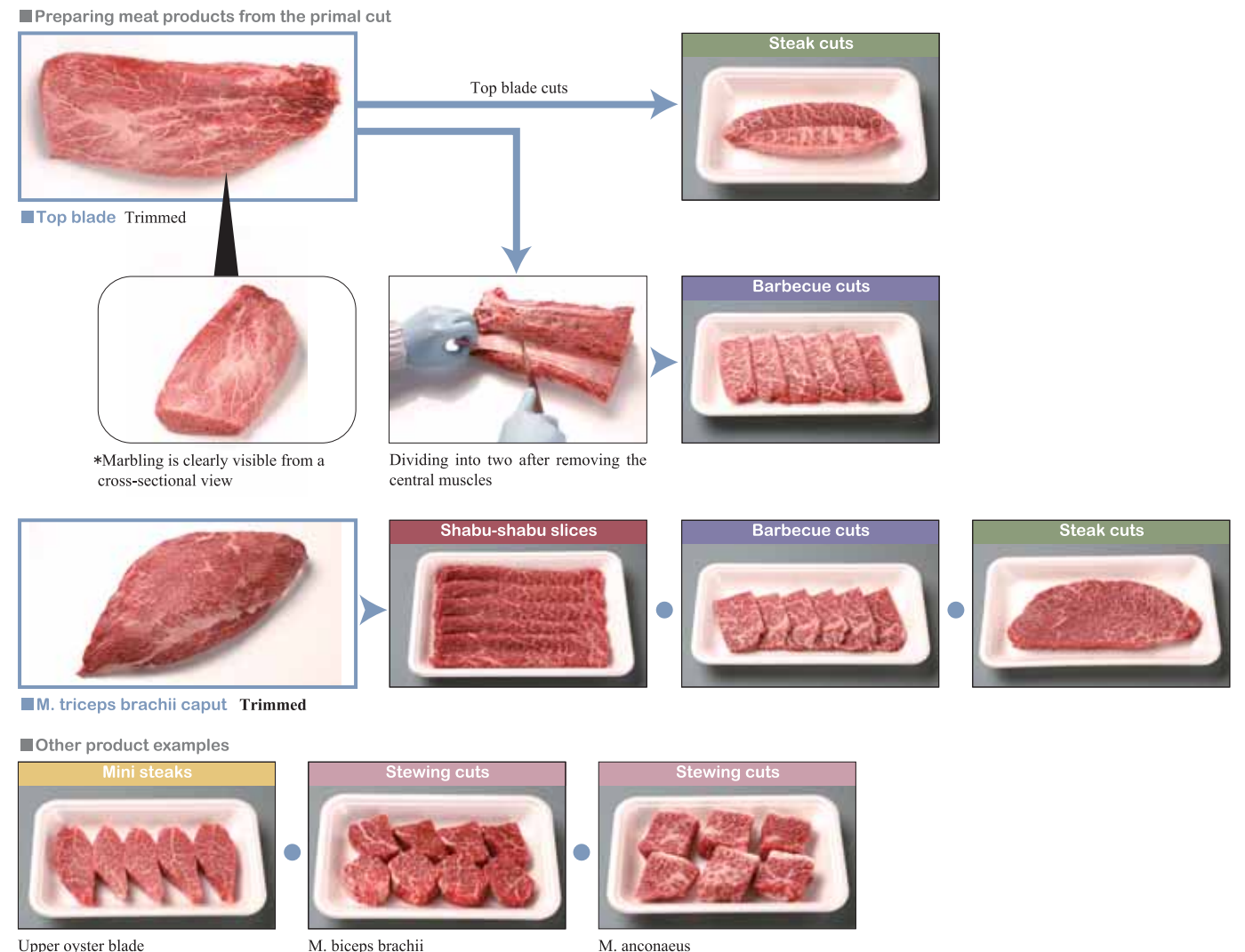
## PRIMAL CUT

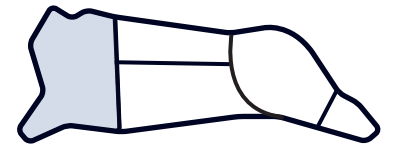
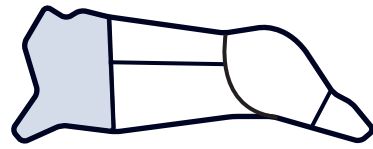


## RETAIL CUT 1



## RETAIL CUT 2





### Overview of Raw Meat

The neck meat comes from the portion of the neck that is well-muscled. The meat is tough, rough-textured, and lean. The meat is also comprised of a large proportion of muscle tissue making it ideal for stewing. It can also be combined with other cuts for BBQ cuts and slices for stewing.

### Culinary Applications

Barbecue

Stewing

Sukiyaki



Longus colli



Neck



Removing the longus colli + thoracic vertebrae should serve as the partition line



Longus colli



Barbecue cuts



Neck



Stewing cuts



Slices for stewing



Mince

### Overview of Raw Meat

The chuck tender is rare because only 2kg can be obtained from each animal. This is the part of the forequarter running from the forequarter to the shoulder clod however the meat is similar to round. The chuck tender is well marbled with a subtle, sweet taste that grows stronger the more it is chewed.

### Culinary Applications

Barbecue

Roast beef



Chuck tender Trimmed



Dividing into two halves along the central muscle



Roast beef block



Cutting in half

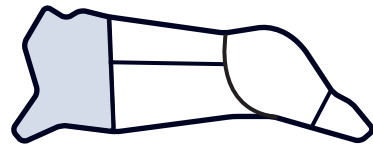


Bisecting the larger half and then cutting into blocks for individual sale



Barbecue cuts





## Overview of Raw Meat

The brisket refers to the chest area of the cow and is made up of cuts with very different meat qualities including fatty and tough pectoral meat, the brisket (A) located under the rib, brisket (pectoral meat) that is lean and tender, and chuck short rib (chuck rib) that has more flavor, marbling and a good appearance.

\* Cut perpendicular to the muscle



## Culinary Applications

Barbecue

Stewing

Sukiyaki

Shabu-shabu

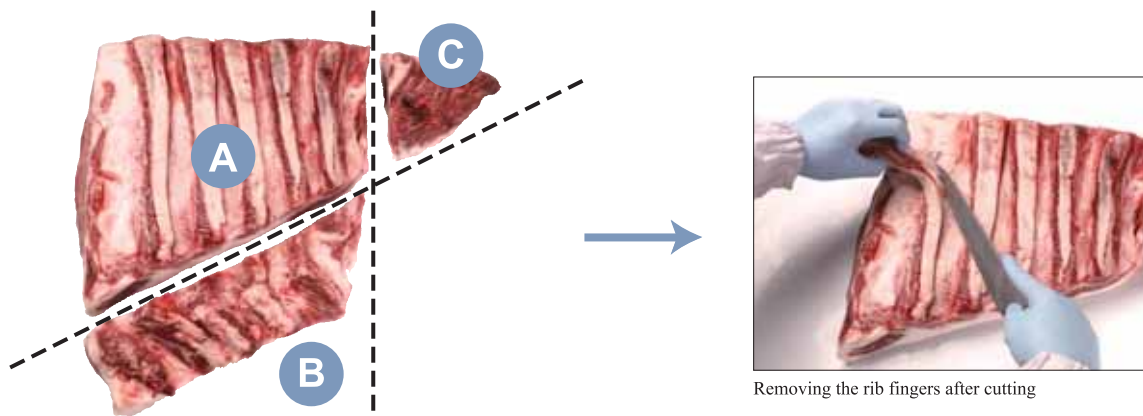


■ Chuck short rib

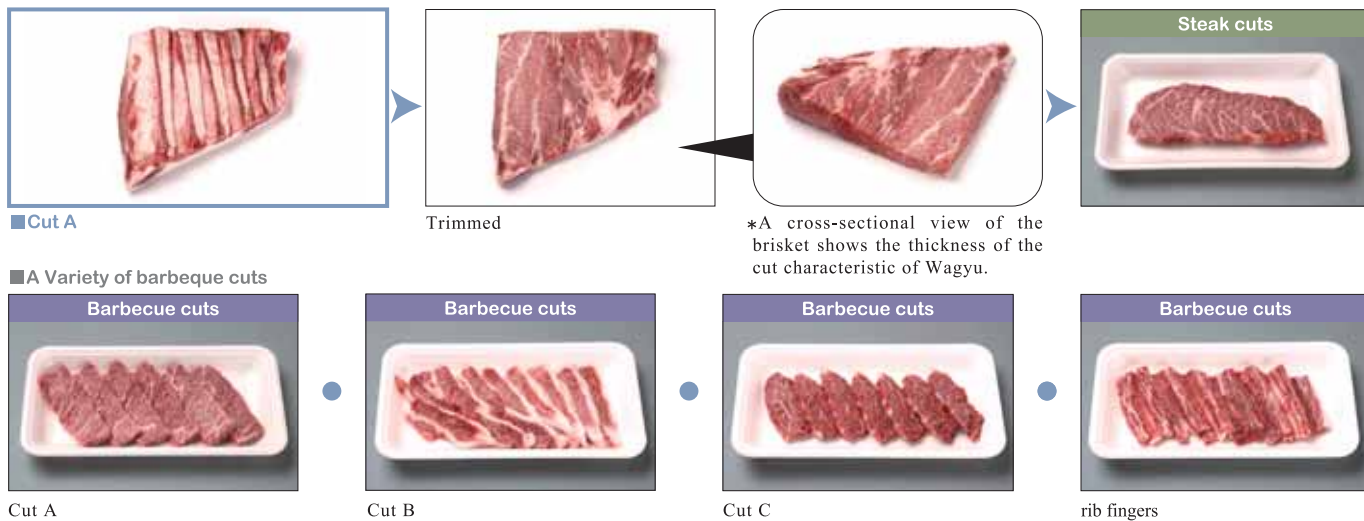


■ Brisket

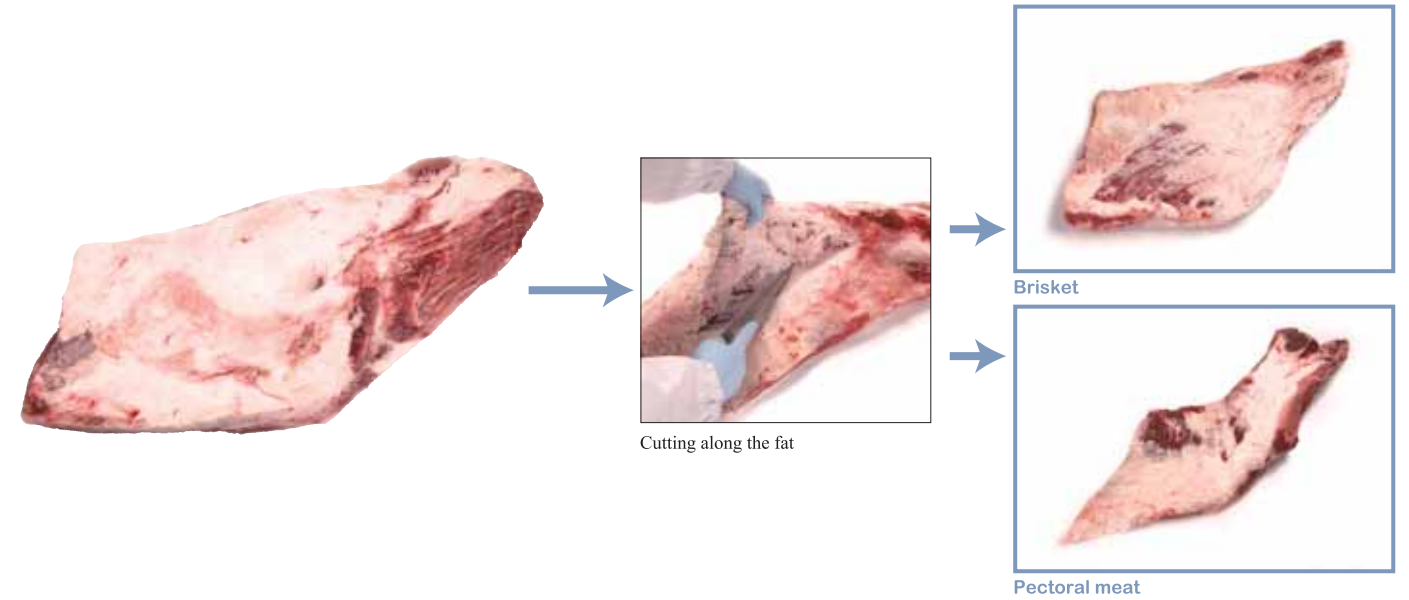
## PRIMAL CUT 1 (Chuck short rib)



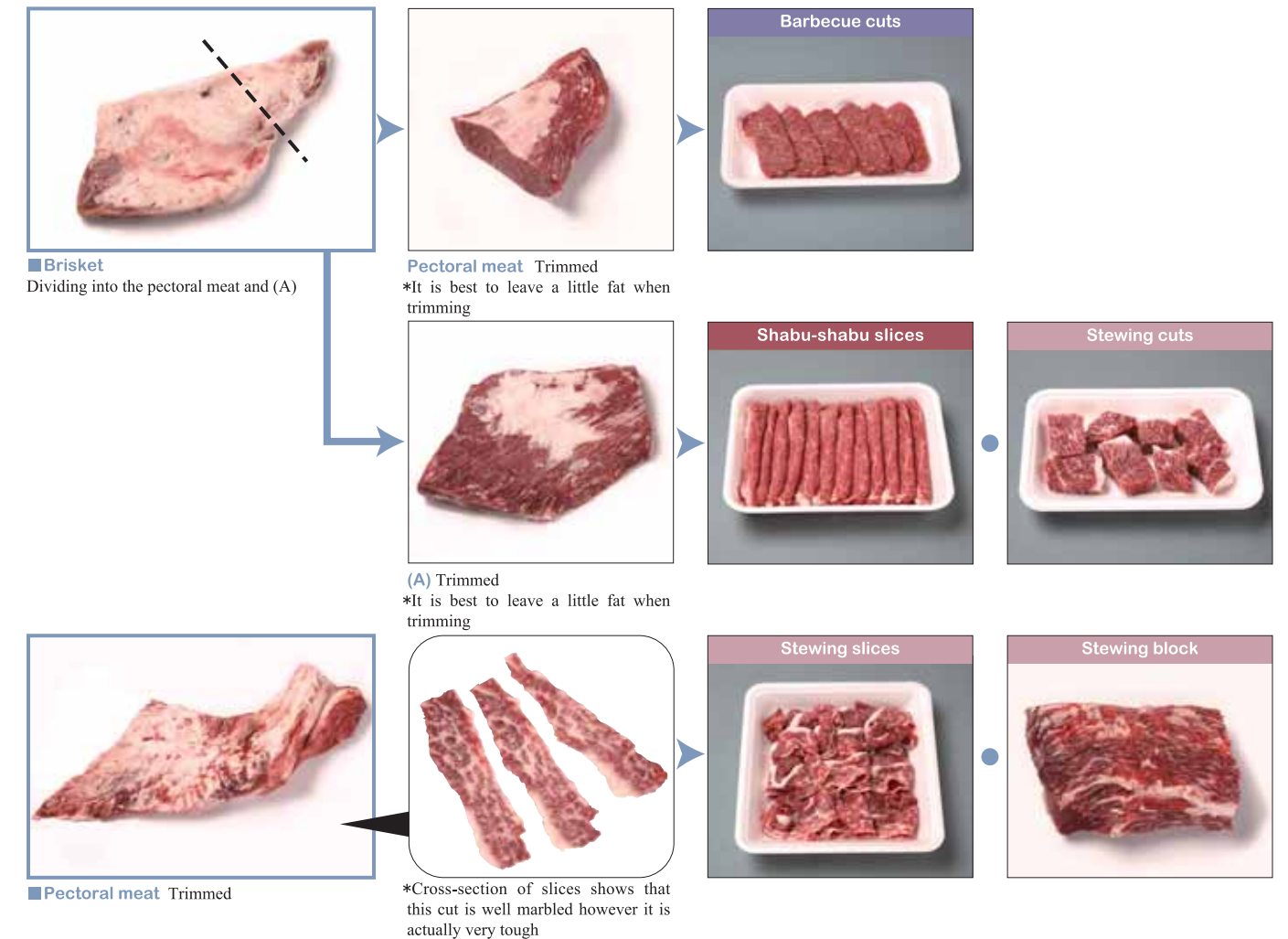
## RETAIL CUT 1 (Chuck short rib)

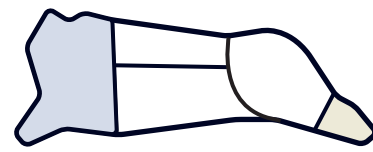


## PRIMAL CUT 2 (Brisket)



## RETAIL CUT 2 (Brisket)





### Overview of Raw Meat

The shank includes the shin and the shank. The shin is well-muscled and consists primarily of lean meat. Generally it is prepared for ground or chopped meat. The shin can be divided into the shin body and the (C). The shank is also well-muscled and the meat lean.



Shin

### Culinary Applications

Barbecue

Stewing



Shank



Photo of shin

Shin Trimmed

Removing the (C) from the shin

(C) Trimmed

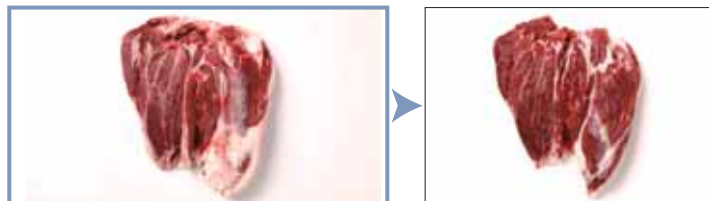


Photo of Shank

Shank Trimmed



Barbecue cuts

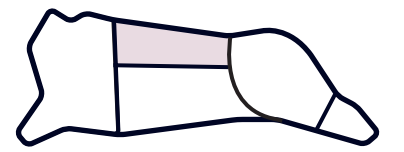
### Shank meat products (Shin and shank)



Stewing cuts

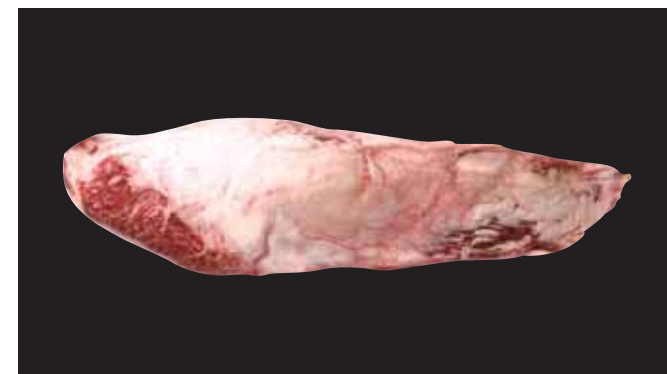
Fibrous meat for stewing

Mince



### Overview of Raw Meat

The fillet is located on the inside of the loin, contains practically no muscle and is characterized by its fine texture, tenderness and low fat content. It accounts for only 2% of the entire dressed carcass and it is a luxury item making it the most expensive cut of beef available. Care needs to be taken as the color of the meat degrades rapidly.



### Culinary Applications

Steak

Barbecue

Roast Beef



Preparation: Remove any flap meat from the short plate

Trimmed

Side view: The thickness of this cut is characteristic of Wagyu



A: (D)



Steak cuts



Diced steak



B: Châteaubriand



Steak cuts 01

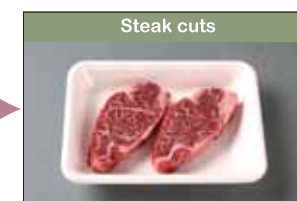


Steak cuts 02

The sinew has been removed from the previous cut leaving only the tender portion giving it a higher commercial value.

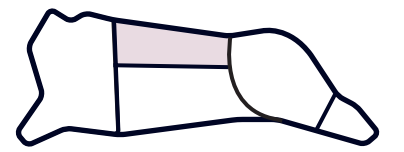
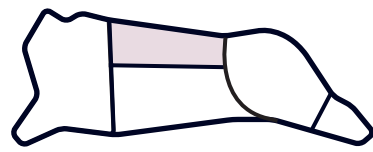


C: Fillet Mignon



Steak cuts





### Overview of Raw Meat

The ribloin is the loin located next to the chuck at the dorsal side of the rib area. The meat is thick and fine textured. It is often well marbled giving it a full-bodied flavor.

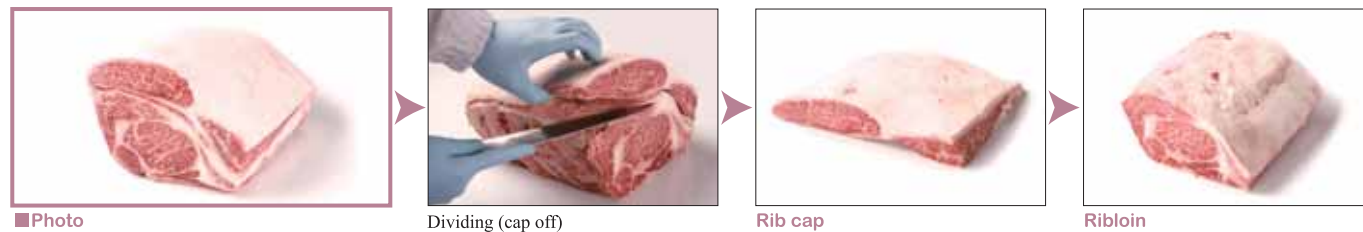


### Culinary Applications

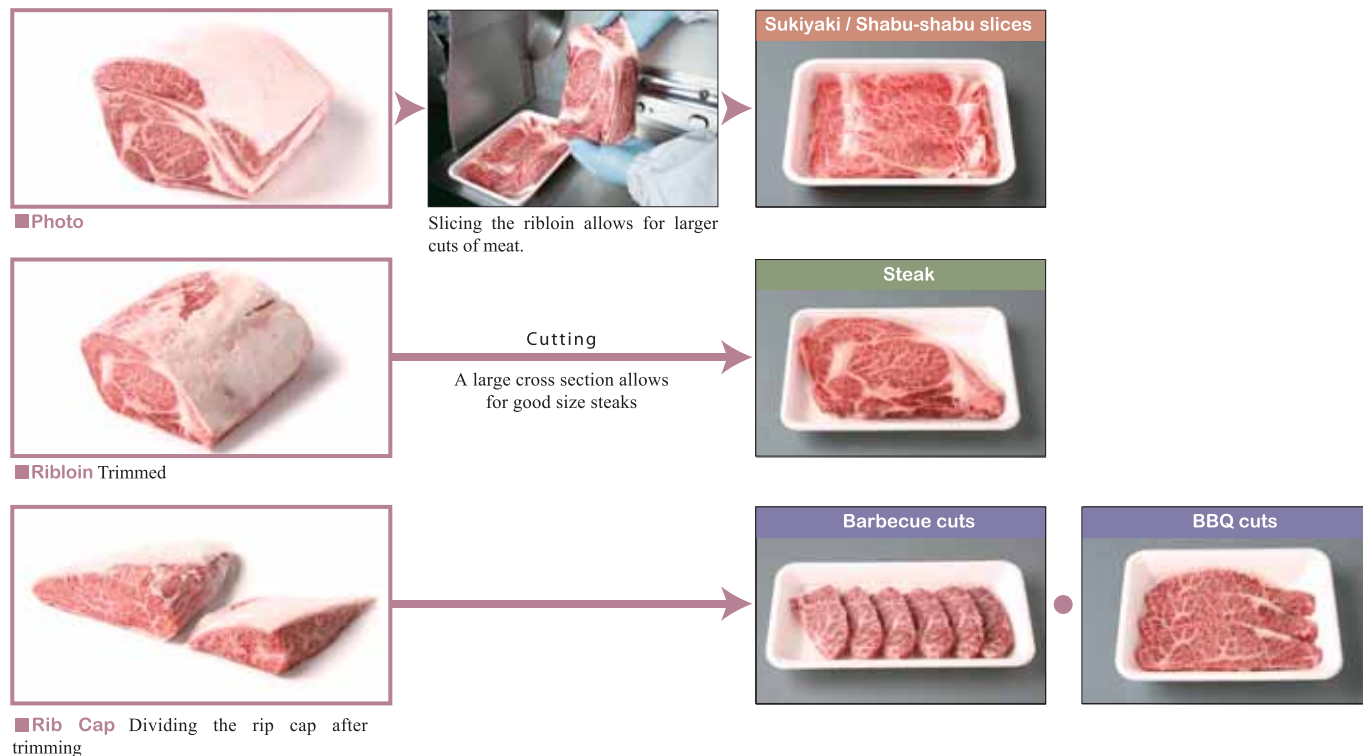
- Steak
- Barbecue
- Sukiyaki
- Shabu-shabu



### PRIMAL CUT



### RETAIL CUT



### Overview of Raw Meat

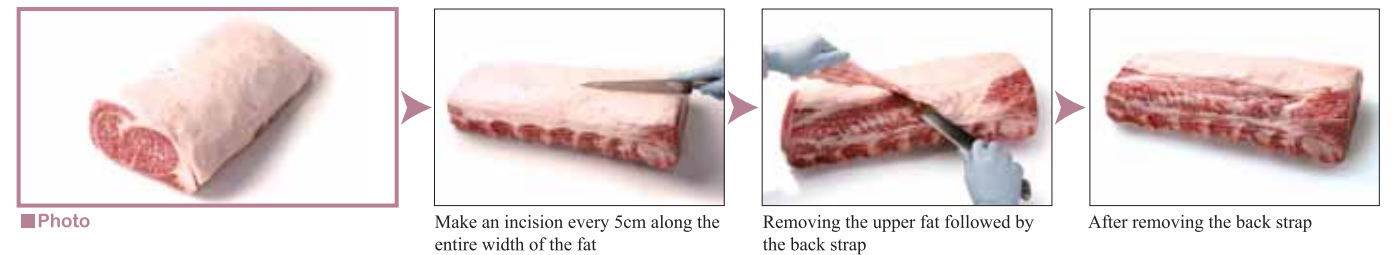
The sirloin, similar to the fillet is considered a high-quality cut and is located behind the ribloin. Its meat is finely textured and tender. It holds its shape well and it is possible to obtain identically sized cuts making it ideal for steak.



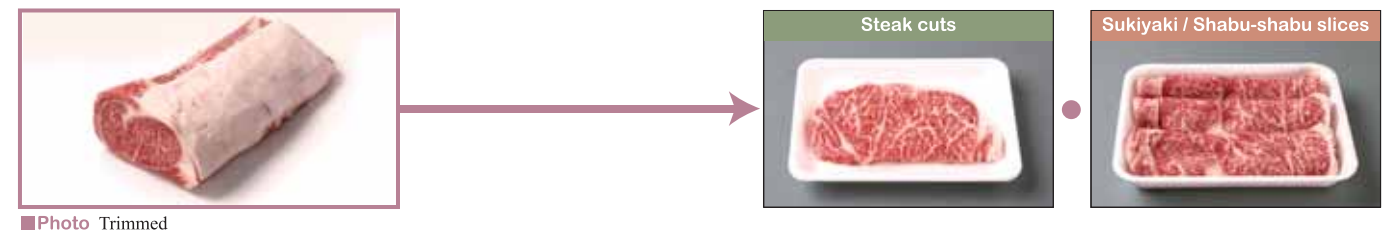
### Culinary Applications

- Steak
- Barbecue
- Sukiyaki
- Shabu-shabu
- Roast beef

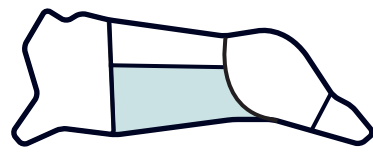
### PRIMAL CUT



### RETAIL CUT



# 2 Rib short rib\*



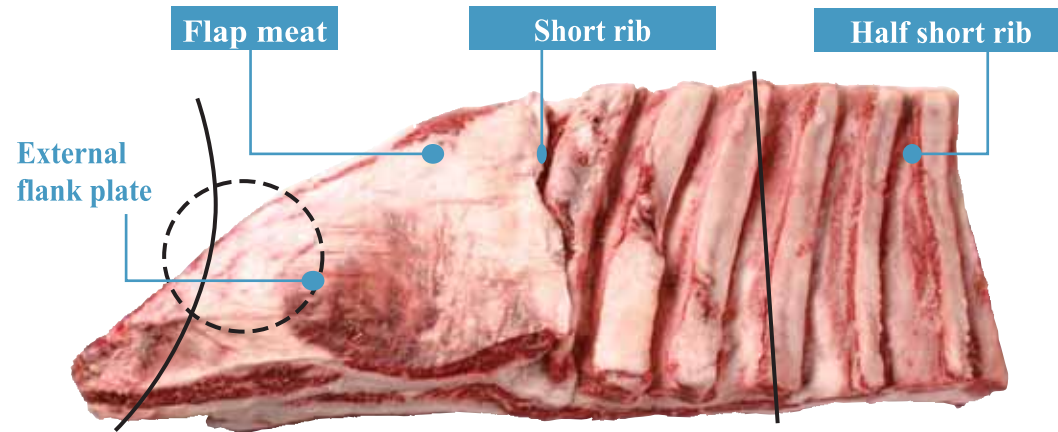
## Overview of Raw Meat

The 2 Rib short rib is the upper half of the short plate located at the belly. The short plate is well-muscled making the 2 Rib short rib fibrous with a proportionally large amount of connective tissue. The meat has a rough texture however the lean meat and fat are proportionately mixed giving it a rich taste and flavor. The 2 Rib short rib is also made up of a cut known as the flap meat that has a large proportion of lean meat that is well marbled.

\*Cut perpendicular to the muscle

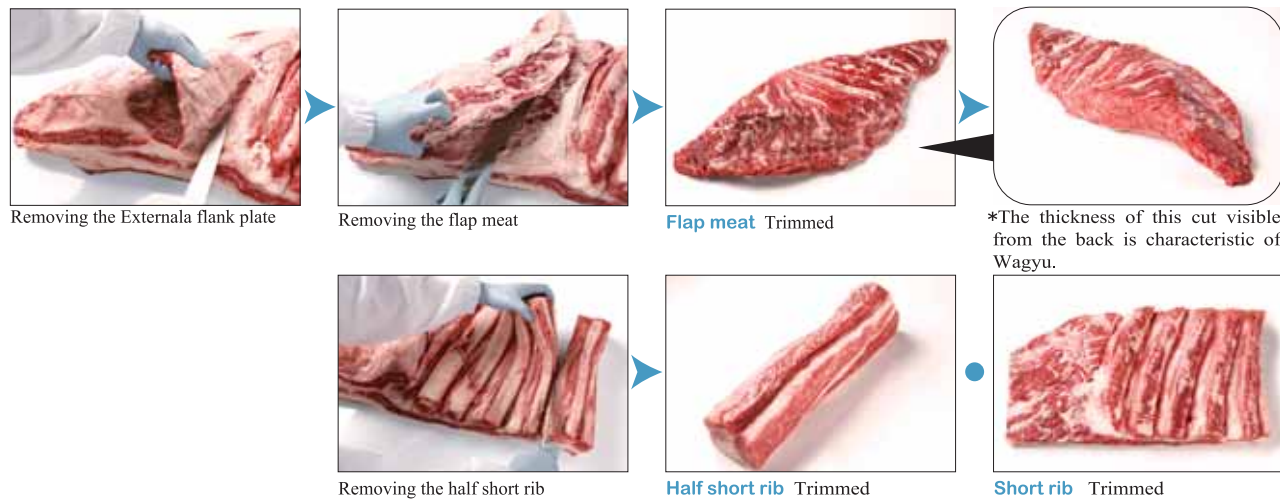


## PRIMAL CUT

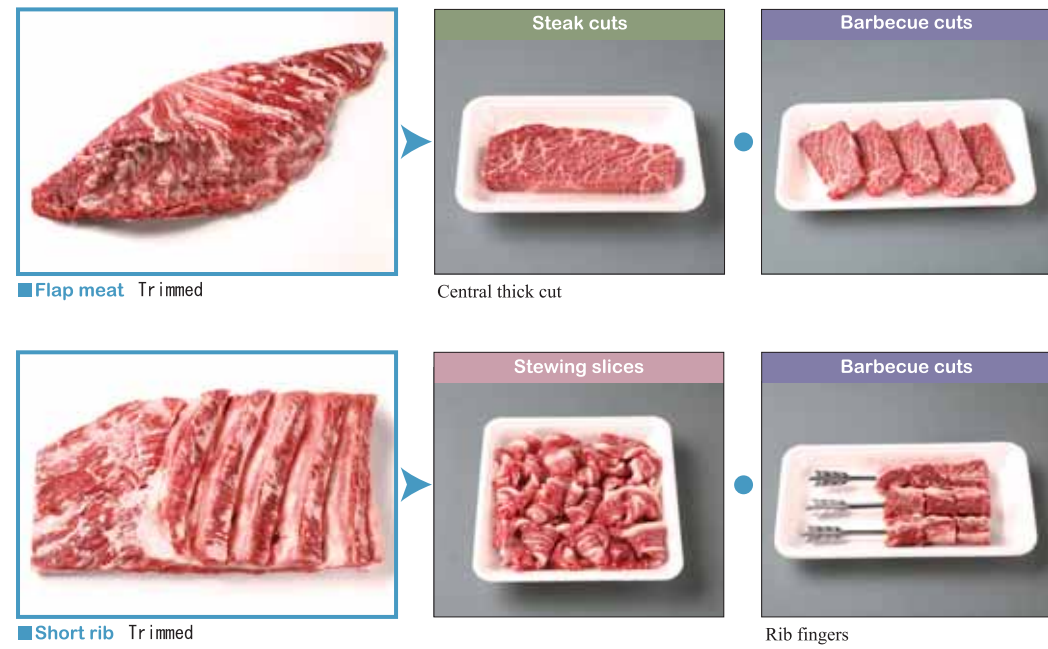
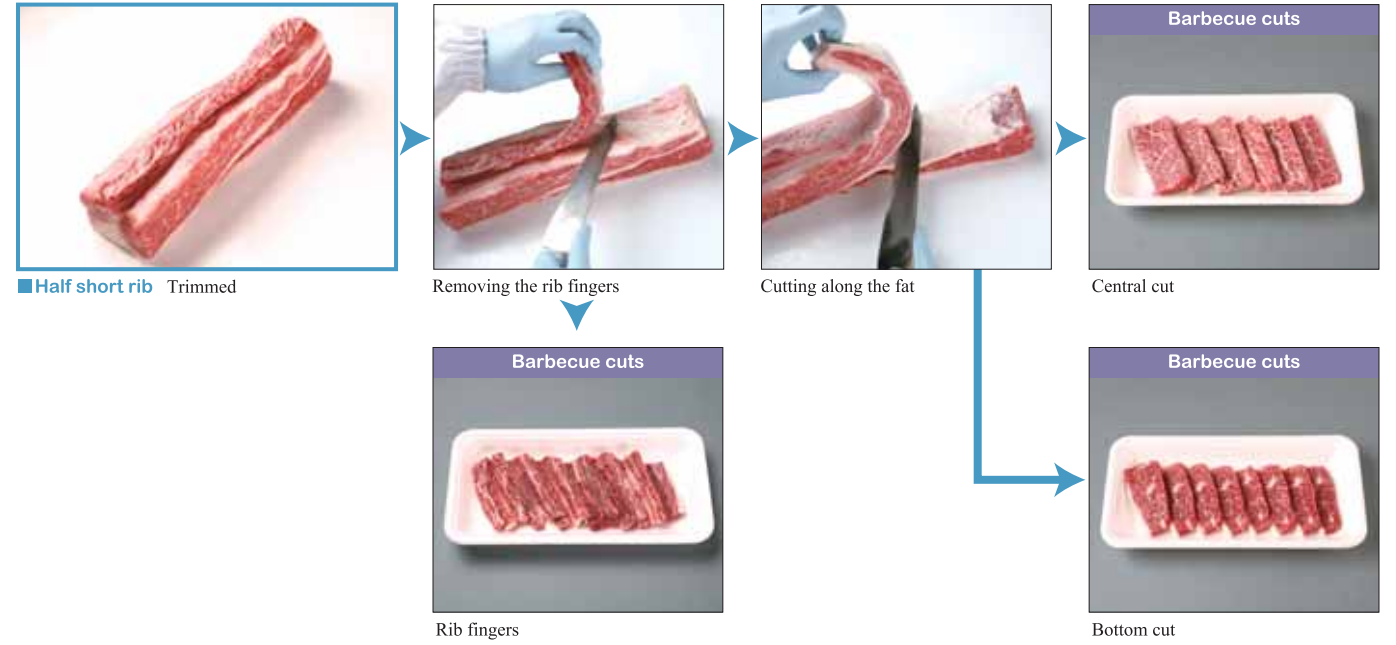


## Culinary Applications

- Steak
- Barbecue
- Stewing
- Sukiyaki

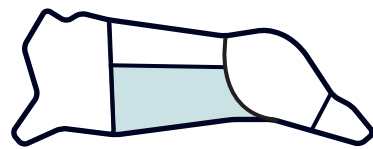


## RETAIL CUT





# Short plate\*



## Overview of Raw Meat

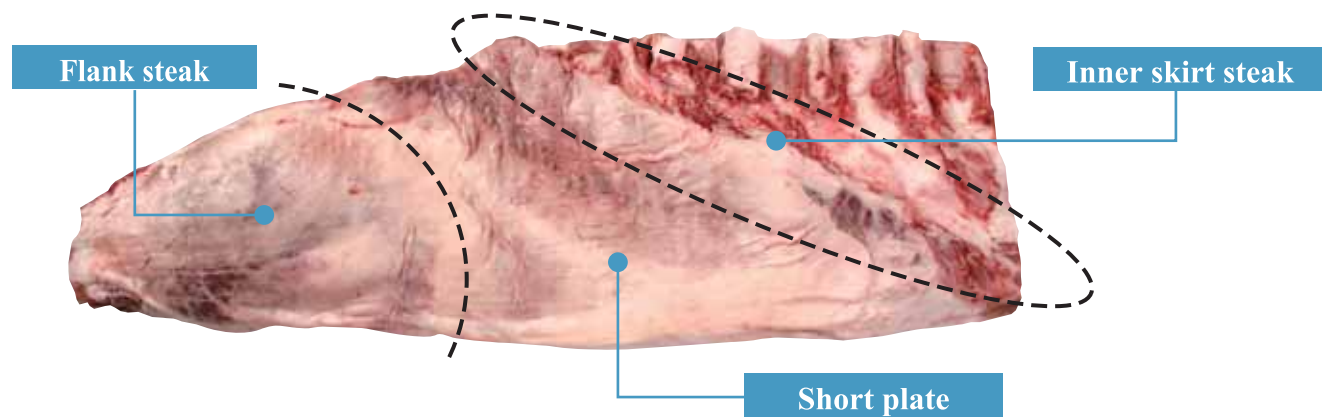
The short plate is the bottom half of the short plate located at the belly. The meat, similar to the 2 Rib short rib, has a rough texture however is characterized by its rich flavor. The short plate includes a cut known as the flank steak with a proportionate distribution of lean meat and fat.



## Culinary Applications

Steak	Barbecue	Stewing
Sukiyaki	Shabu-shabu	

## PRIMAL CUT



Removing the inner skirt steak



Inner skirt steak Trimmed

\* It is recommended that the skin be left on the inner skirt steak unless for immediate use as the meat color changes quickly once the skin is removed.



Removing the flank steak

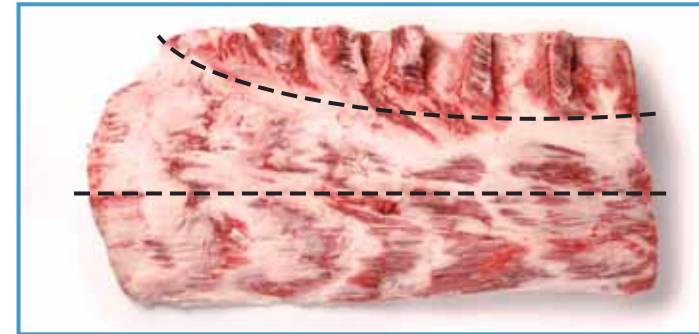


Flank steak Trimmed

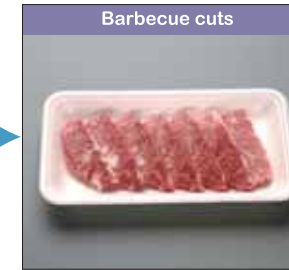


Short plate Trimmed

## RETAIL CUT



Short plate Trimmed  
Cut along the muscle fibers



Barbecue cuts



Blocks for stewing

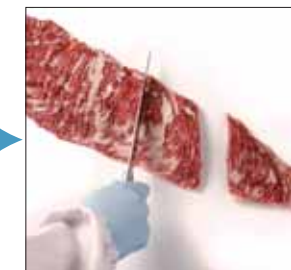
Slicing the whole cut allows for larger slices.



Sukiyaki cuts



Inner skirt steak Trimmed



Cut along the muscle fibers



Barbecue cuts



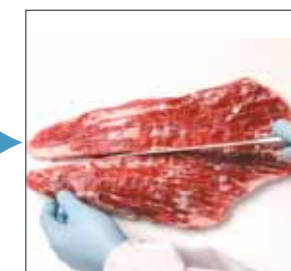
Rolled and skewered



Kabobs



Flank steak Trimmed



Cut along the muscle fibers



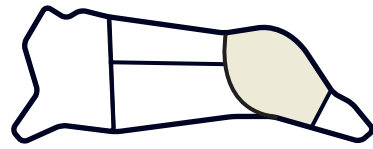
Barbecue cuts



Diced steak

Steak cuts

# Gooseneck round\*



## Overview of Raw Meat

The gooseneck round is the lean, well-muscled part of the round. The meat generally has a rough texture and is relatively tough. The gooseneck round is divided into three parts: eye of round, a cut that is paler in color and more elastic than other parts; the heel, a cut prepared for sale after removal of the M. flexor digitorum superficialis located in the center; and the outside round (gooseneck round) that is commonly used for stewing.

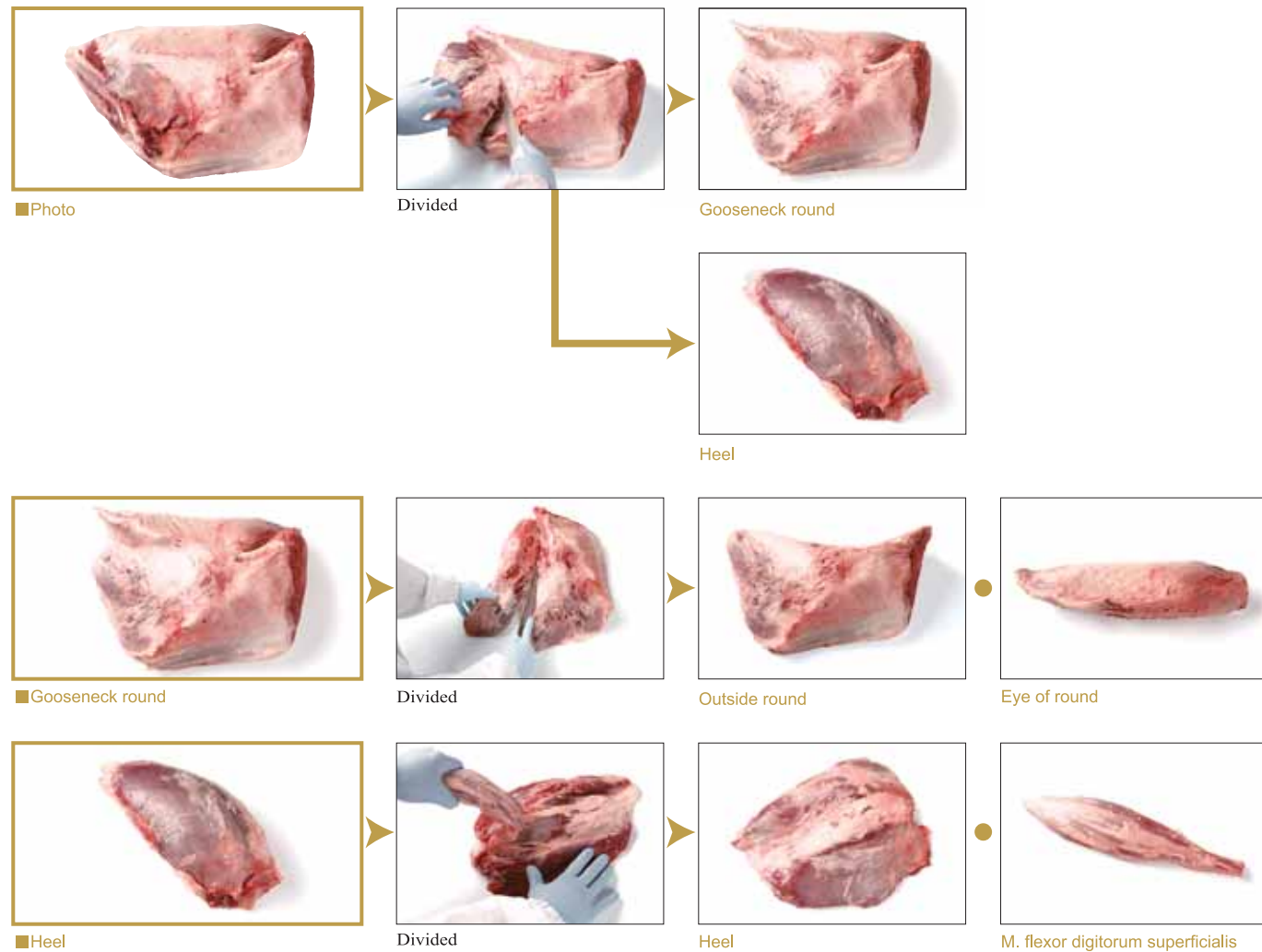


## Culinary Applications

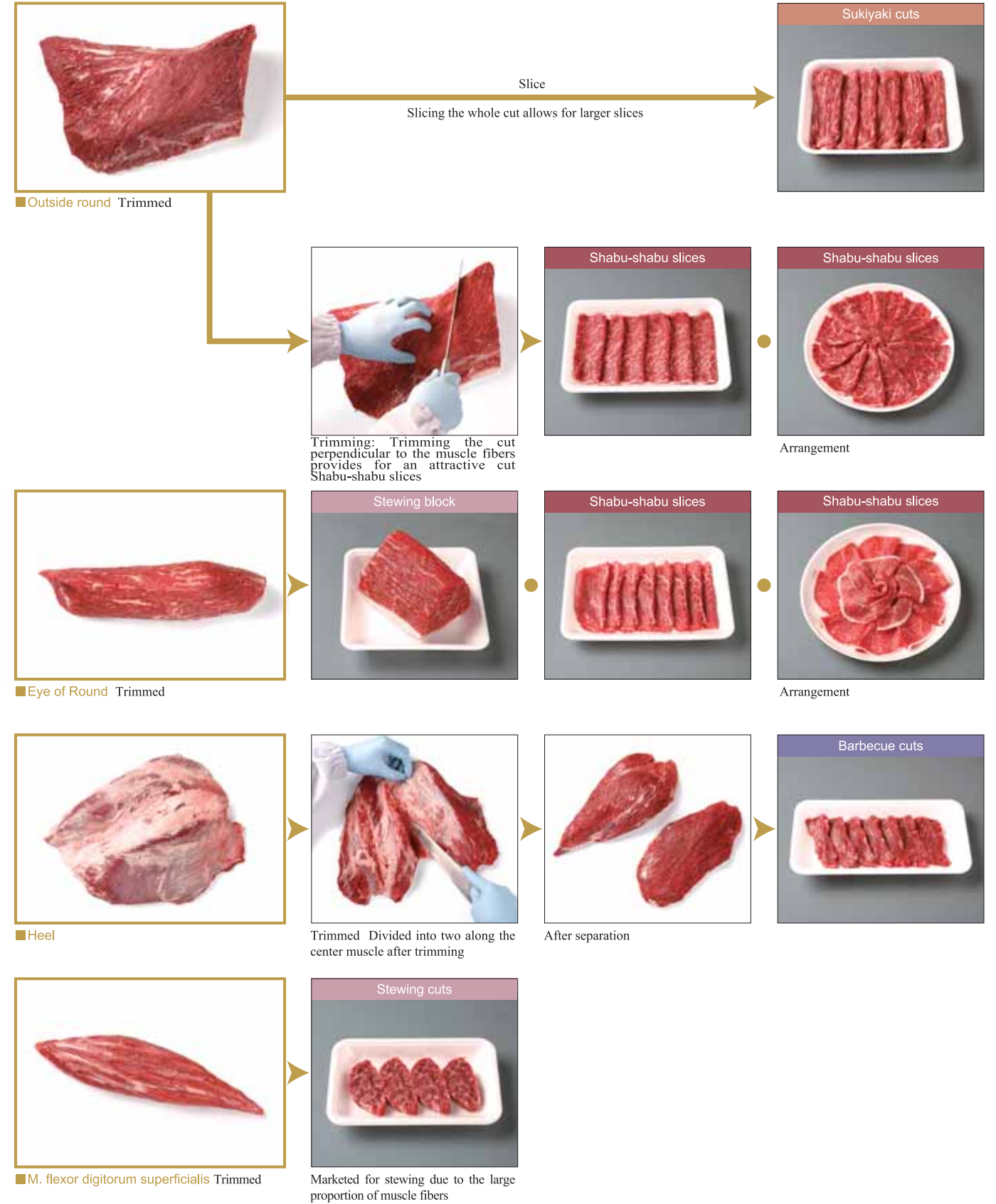
Barbecue	Stewing	Sukiyaki
Shabu-shabu	Roast beef	



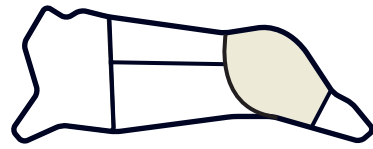
## PRIMAL CUT



## RETAIL CUT







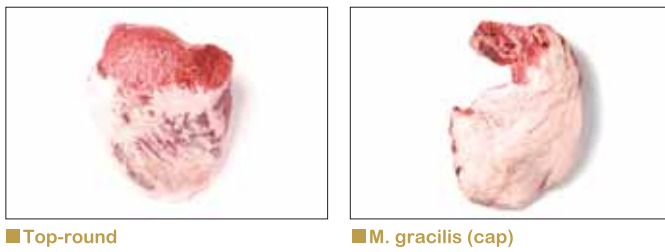
### Overview of Raw Meat

The top-round consists of a large block with a proportionately large amount of lean meat. It has a cover of fat however very little underneath. Meat quality can vary from the outside, towards the gooseneck round to the inside, towards the knuckle. Towards the gooseneck round the meat contains proportionately more fat, however has a rough texture with slightly tough meat. On the other hand, meat towards the knuckle is characteristically tender.

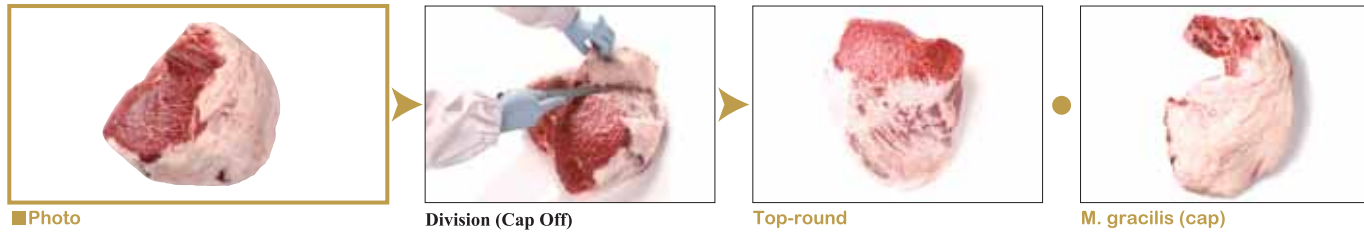


### Culinary Applications

Steak	Barbecue	Stewing
Shabu-shabu	Roast beef	



### PRIMAL CUT

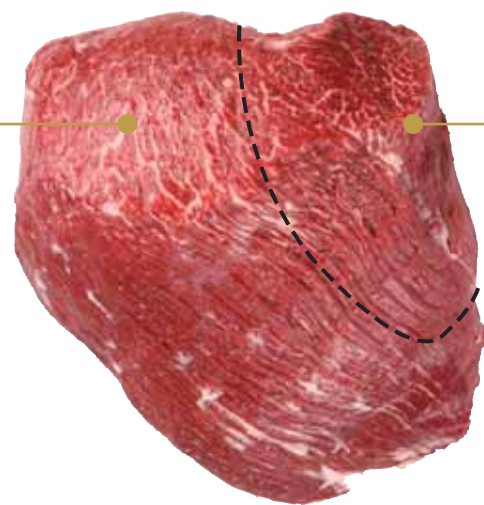


Photo

Division (Cap Off)

Top-round

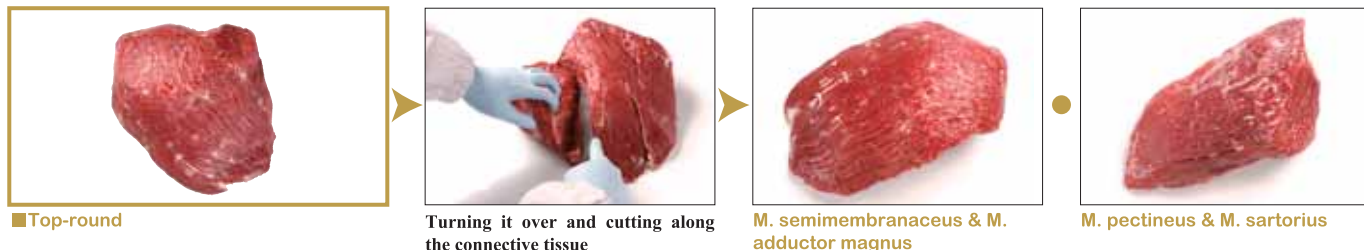
M. gracilis (cap)



M. semimembranaceus & M. adductor magnus Cross-section: This cut is well marbled however the meat is relatively tough



M. pectineus & M. sartorius Cross-section: This cut contains little marbling however the meat tender



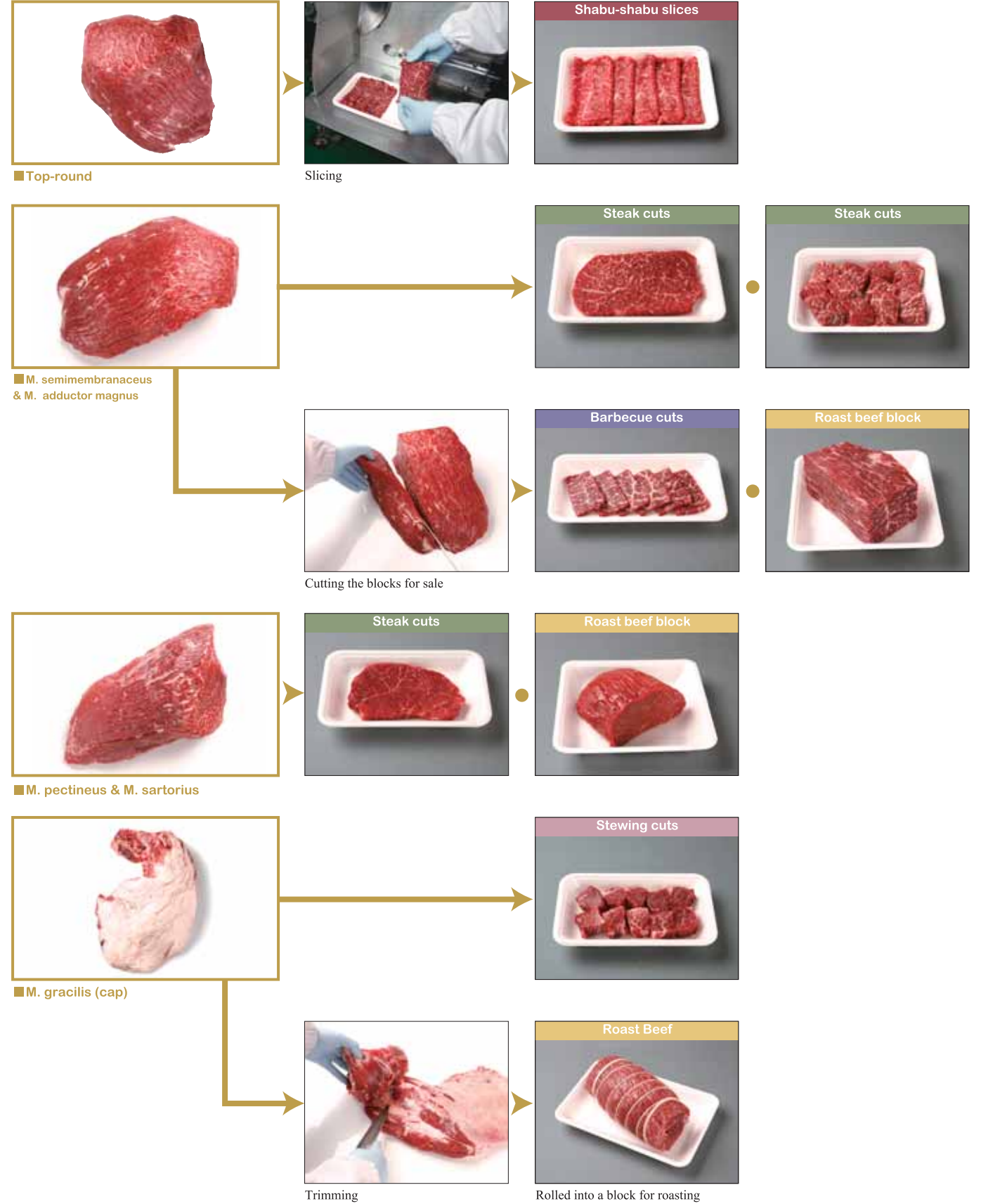
Top-round

Turning it over and cutting along the connective tissue

M. semimembranaceus & M. adductor magnus

M. pectineus & M. sartorius

### RETAIL CUT



Top-round

Slicing



Shabu-shabu slices



M. semimembranaceus & M. adductor magnus



Steak cuts



Steak cuts



Cutting the blocks for sale



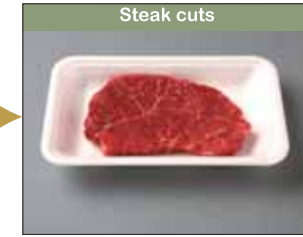
Barbecue cuts



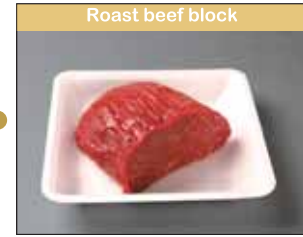
Roast beef block



M. pectineus & M. sartorius



Steak cuts



Roast beef block



M. gracilis (cap)



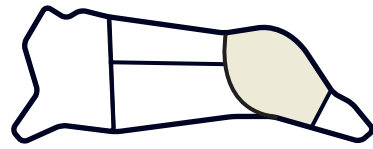
Stewing cuts



Trimming



Rolled into a block for roasting



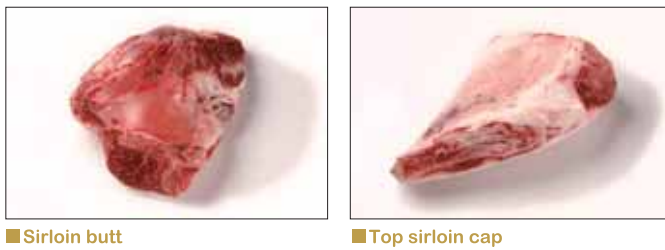
## Overview of Raw Meat

The D Rump can be divided into the sirloin butt that runs into the sirloin and the top sirloin cap that runs into the gooseneck round. The D Rump has a very attractive color, is lean, finely-textured and is characterized by the proportionate fat and tender quality. The top sirloin cap has a deep color and a strong flavor however it is important to pay attention to the direction of muscle fiber when cutting it for retail.

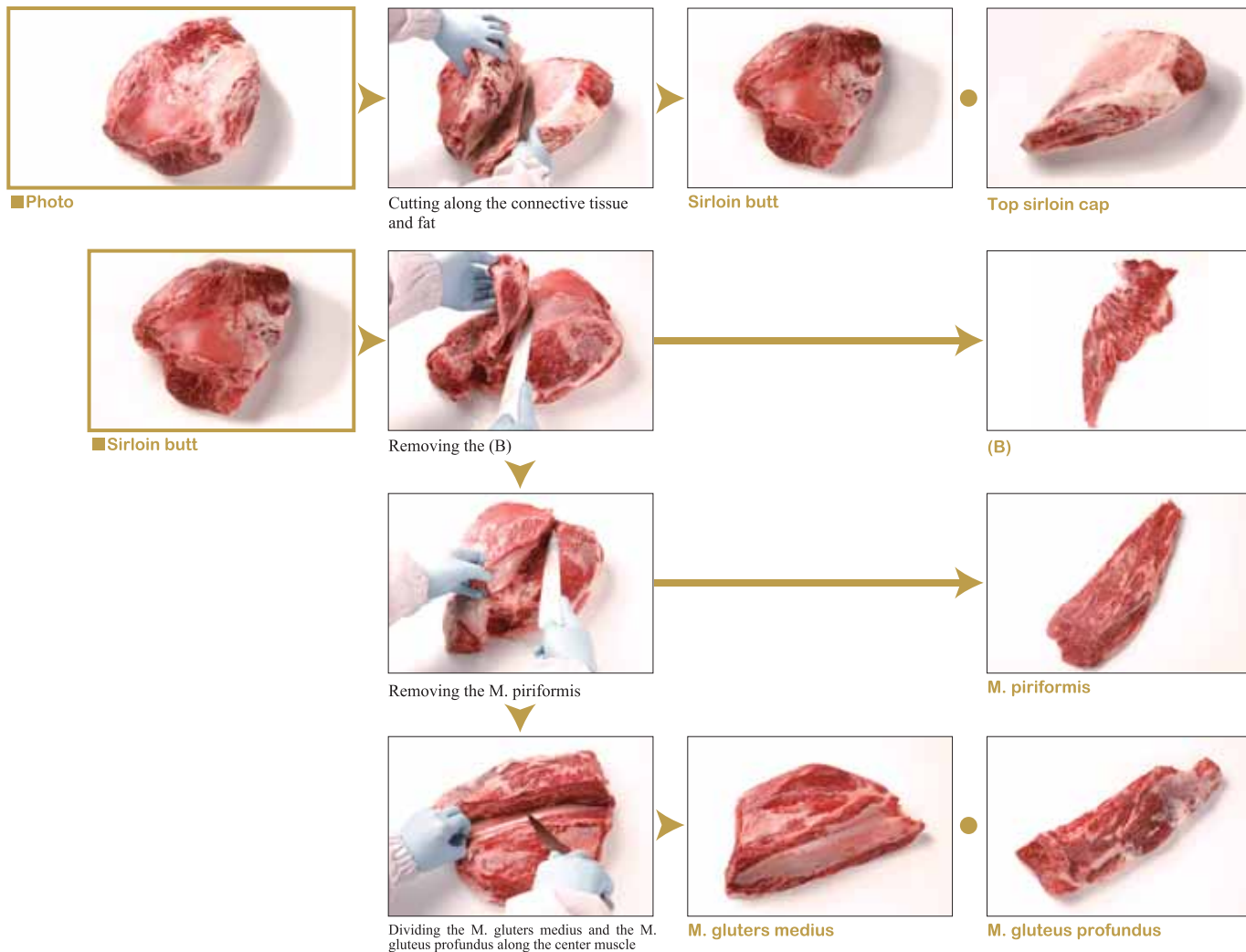


## Culinary Applications

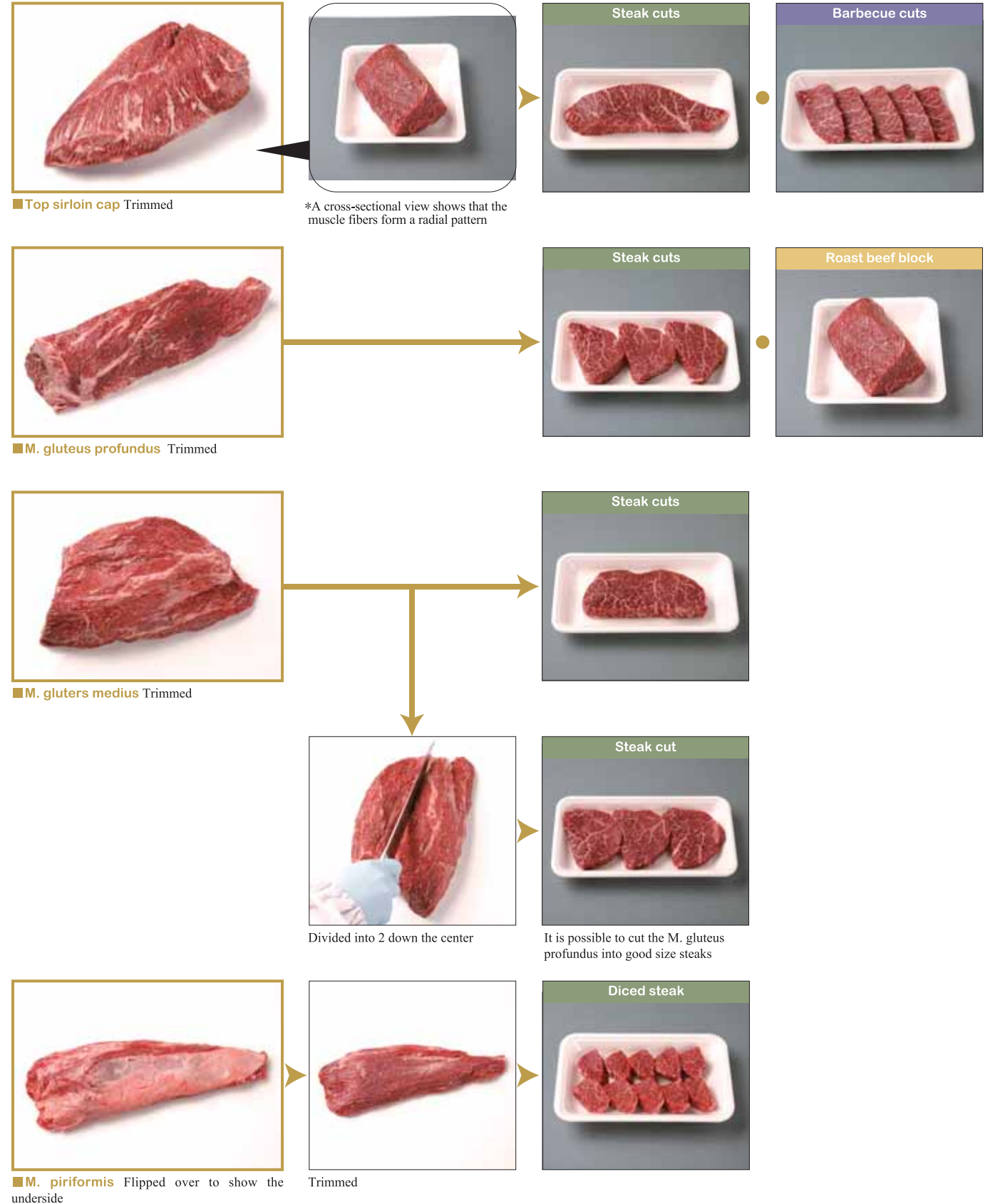
Steak	Barbecue	Sukiyaki
Shabu-shabu	Roast beef	



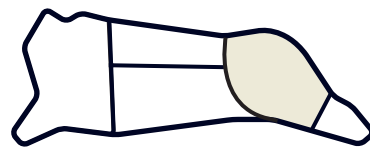
## PRIMAL CUT



## RETAIL CUT







### Overview of Raw Meat

The knuckle is spherically-shaped and consists primarily of lean meat. It consists of four parts: the inside knuckle muscle, slightly deep in color and tender; the knuckle main muscle that has muscle running into the center, is fine textured and tasty; the outside knuckle that is deep in color and slightly tough; and the tri-tip that has some marbling but is not as tender as would be expected from the appearance.



### Culinary Applications

Steak	Barbecue	Sukiyaki
Shabu-shabu	Roast beef	



Knuckle



Tri-tip

### PRIMAL CUT



Photo

Dividing

Knuckle

Tri-tip



Knuckle



Removing the inside knuckle muscle



Inside knuckle muscle



Dividing into the knuckle main muscle and the outside knuckle along the center muscle



Knuckle main muscle



Outside knuckle

### RETAIL CUT



Knuckle Trimmed



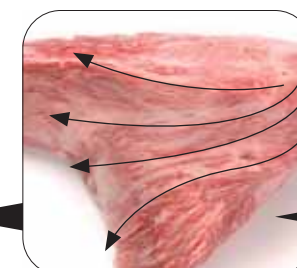
Slicing the whole cut allows for larger slices



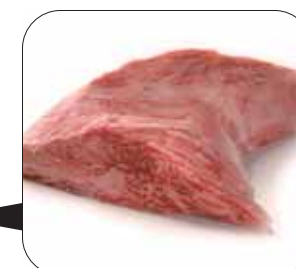
Sukiyaki slices



Tri-tip Trimmed



\*The muscle fibers fan out in a radial pattern



\*A side view shows that Wagyu is significantly thick



Barbecue cuts



Inside knuckle muscle Trimmed



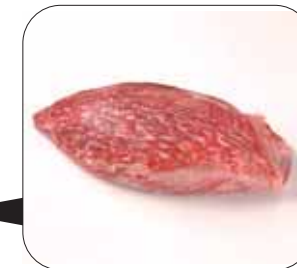
Divided into three along the center muscle



Diced steak



Knuckle main muscle Trimmed



\*Marbling is clearly visible in a cross-sectional view from the back



Steak cuts



Outside knuckle Trimmed



Shabu-shabu slices



# How to slice Wagyu to achieve maximum value

In addition to general cutting methods, there is a technique to slice Wagyu and optimize its fine texture and tenderness with a special slicer. Following are some guidelines to using the slicer and arranging the sliced meat effectively.

## Slices and Off-cuts

Slices are thin slices taken from large blocks of one particular cut. Off-cuts are smaller pieces or slices from a combination of differing cuts and are used in accordance with the cooking method and the particular cut. Slices are ideally suited to dishes like shabu-shabu and sukiyaki while off-cuts are perfect for stewing. Off-cuts in particular produce a full-bodied flavor in just a short time making them convenient for use in quickly prepared meals such as stews.

## Guidelines for arranging sliced meat

### Point



Fold both the right and left sides inwards



Fold the top and bottom edges under the slice

### Examples of effective arrangement



Sukiyaki/Shabu-shabu slices



Sukiyaki/Shabu-shabu slices

## Guidelines to using the slicer

### Setting cuts onto the slicer (Good Example)



Lean cuts and fatty cuts are placed alternately. This will help to achieve uniform cuts.



Seen from above: The topmost front side of the meat will form the "face" of the product so it is best to use attractive looking cuts.

### Setting cuts onto the slicer (Bad Example)

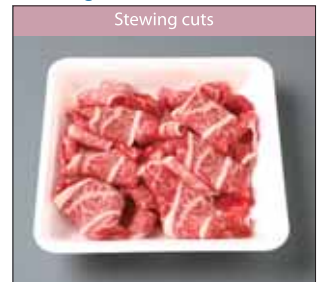


Lean cuts and fatty cuts are placed in groups. This will result in inconsistent lean and fatty cuts in the finished retail product.



Be careful not to try and slice too much meat at one time. The blocks in the photo to the left have also been placed with the muscle fibers sitting parallel to the blade. This will result in an unfavorable texture when eating. (The meat will be tough)

### Arrangement



Stewing cuts

### Slicer to help expand product range (1 example)



American  
Italian  
Korean  
Chinese  
Japanese

## Tasty Suggestions for Wagyu in Cuisine from Around the World

■ American Cuisine ■ Italian Cuisine ■ Korean Cuisine ■ Chinese Cuisine ■ Japanese Cuisine

The following pages introduce recipes incorporating Wagyu into signature dishes from around the world.

In particular, recipes take a diverse approach to incorporate relatively unused cuts, expanding your possibilities in the kitchen giving rise to a new dimension of flavor.