



## MLA hosts “Iron Beauty” Japanese female meat industry representatives for Australia study tour

*“Iron Beauty” program aims to raise awareness of the health benefits of iron-rich beef among women in Japan*

Tokyo (21 October, 2011) – Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA), as part of its “Iron Beauty” program to promote the importance of iron-rich beef in a healthy diet, announces a new round of study tours to Australia for female representatives from Japan’s leading Australian beef users. The inaugural tour this past June proved such a success that the meat trade in Japan requested an opportunity for a follow up visit, and MLA has responded with the second tour from 18 to 23 October 2011.

MLA research shows there is awareness of widespread iron deficiency across Japan’s female population and the related health risks, but there is a lack of knowledge among consumers that beef is a good source of iron. Sixty five per cent of female consumers surveyed said that iron deficiency causes anemia, fatigue and other problems but seventy per cent did not know that lean beef is rich in iron. Ninety six per cent said they would purchase lean beef more often, once aware that it is iron-rich.

As a result, MLA has committed to actively promote the iron-rich health benefits of beef, with cooperation from influential health professionals and the Japanese trade, which sees great potential in communicating such positive attributes to consumers. “Iron Beauty” study tours for female industry professionals are part of an integrated “Iron-Beauty” program that links retail, foodservice, online and social media marketing activities. Highlights of the study tour spanning Sydney, and across Australia, include inspections of local retailing and foodservice operations and processing facilities, farm visits, beef cutting seminars and blind tasting. A valued aspect of the tours remains the ability to exchange knowledge with MLA executives and Australian businesses that supply safe and trusted quality beef to international destinations, including the biggest export market for Australia - Japan.

MLA hosted its first study tour with participation by female representatives from leading Australian beef users including Daiei, Higashi Nippon Food, Nichirei Foods, Prima Ham, Uny, Starzen and Yokado. The second tour will include representatives from Aeon, CGC, Itoham, Kinrei, McDonalds Japan, Nipponham, Prima Ham, Saizeriya, Seven&I Food Systems and Yonekyu. Together, these sixteen companies represent a very significant amount of Australian beef distributed and consumed in the Japanese market.

Following the initial tour, Ms Kurumi Koike of Uny was appointed Head of the “Iron Beauty” initiative. Ms. Koike commented, “Through the trip, we really connected with each other and the ties we established continue to play a role in developing our industry in Japan. Learning about the beef industry in Australia was really eye opening, and we continue to make use of the lessons and share the knowledge gained with our customers and business partners across Japan.”

MLA Japan Regional Manager Melanie Brock commented, “In Japan, the meat trade has traditionally been run by men – from procurement to marketing. Yet, women are the ultimate decision makers in the family when it comes to diet, and many large Japanese companies are recognising this by including more women in the purchasing and product development areas. MLA is supporting these women by giving them an opportunity to learn more about the health benefits of lean beef, while at the same time networking and building relationships with industry professionals as we strive to find the best, most nutritious and healthiest solutions. We decided to call the campaign ‘Iron Beauty’ to draw attention to beef as an important source of iron. And the energetic and hard working women taking part are certainly ‘Iron Beauties’ themselves, coming so far in such a competitive industry.”

In addition to the tours, the “Iron Beauty” campaign encompasses regular meetings in Japan among tour alumni to share knowledge and expertise. Other initiatives in the “Iron Beauty” program include the development and dissemination of recipes for iron-rich food, and educational initiatives such as the “Iron Website” and “Iron Visual Identity Manual”.



7 to 12 June 2011 inaugural Iron Beauty tour to Australia

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**About Meat and Livestock Australia**

*Who we are*

Meat & livestock Australia (MLA) is a producer-owned company, working in partnership with industry and government to achieve a profitable and sustainable red meat and livestock (cattle, sheep and goats) industry in Australia.

*What we do*

MLA has the unique responsibility of providing marketing and research and development services to over 47,000 cattle, sheep and goat producer members and the broader red meat industry to help them meet community and consumer expectations.

MLA is committed to fostering world leadership for the Australian red meat and livestock industry by creating opportunities for its stakeholders, the environment, red meat consumers and the community.

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