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國境之南，草青牛肥

Yellow Cattle Prosper in Southern Taiwan

文 編輯部

墾丁大尖山的山坡上有個開闊牧場，肥壯的牛群在草原中優游自在。來訪的遊客都聽說過此處牛群由行政院農業委員會（簡稱農委會）畜產試驗所恆春分所飼養，不過，鮮少人知道這裡也是重要的保種場所，保存了正港臺灣黃牛的香火。

臺灣黃牛肉質鮮美，但和國外品種相比體型較小、生長速度慢，過去曾因市場需要，大量雜交而面臨絕種危機，農委會為維持畜產種原多樣性，自76年起推動國家級保種計畫，將保存黃牛種原的任務託付給畜產試驗所恆春分所。所內同仁從民間收集黃牛，逐步進行血統純化，讓黃牛在墾丁落地生根，族群穩定在數百頭。近年來，更進一步將黃牛推廣給業者，希望「牛轉乾坤」，為國產牛開拓一片天。

「臺灣黃牛都是黃色的嗎？」

「其實，牠們也有黑、褐、紅、白等顏色，甚至還有混合色呢！」

Well-fed cattle roam leisurely on a sloping side of Dajian Mountain in Kenting. Visitors might know the ranch is run by the Hengchun Branch of the Livestock Research Institute under the Council of Agriculture (COA), but few know that the ranch is also home to a breed conservation center for Taiwan's purebred yellow cattle.

The yellow cattle is a beef breed characterized by tasty flavor. However, its size and pace of growth compare poorly with foreign breeds. Though crossbreeding was introduced, it nearly caused extinction of the original pure breed. The COA in 1987 started a breed conservation program to help maintain the diversity of livestock breeds and the Hengchun Branch was tasked with yellow cattle breed conservation. The branch started to collect Taiwan yellow cattle from different areas to purify the breed and let the cattle take root in Kenting. Their population is stabilized at a few hundreds. In recent years, the branch has been trying to promote the raising of the breed by private farmers, hoping to start a “bull market” in the Year of the Ox.

“Do all Taiwan yellow cattle look yellow?”

“They actually appear in other colors as well—black, brown, red, white and even multi-colored.”

