# Quarterly production and slaughter volumes

MLA MARKET INFORMATION
MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA

## March Quarter 2024 data

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| | | Slaughter (head) | Production (tonne) | Carcase weight (kg) | Live export (head) | Total turnoff (head) | Seasonal estimate (Full Year Run Rate*) | Value of production (A$) | Value per animal (A$) | Why** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Beef** | Figure | **1,811,300** | **570,681** | **315.07** | **149,071** | **1,960,371** | **8,239,258** | **3,203,575,151** | **1,769** | Total cattle turnoff remained relatively stable this quarter driven by steady climate events flattening slaughter and production levels. 12-month comparisons against the tail of the rebuild period show robust figures. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | -2% | -1% | 1% | -25% | -4% | 7% | 10% | 12% | |
| | Year on year change | 17% | 15% | -2% | 25% | 18% | 18% | -7% | -21% | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 5% | 9% | 3% | -31% | 1% | 6% | -3% | -6% | |
| **Male cattle** | Figure | **959,200** | **331,335** | **345.43** | — | — | — | — | — | Bull, bullock and steer slaughter eased on last quarter, though still elevated on last year. Supply of processor-ready animals remained stable with little change to carcase weights supporting a maturing herd. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | -2% | -2% | 1% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Year on year change | 8% | 6% | -2% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 9% | 11% | 2% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| **Female cattle** | Figure | **852,200** | **239,346** | **280.86** | — | — | — | — | — | Female carcase weights lifted above 280kg for the first time in 12 months as quarterly slaughter plateaued. Supply-driven turnoff has supported the increase in carcase weights as producers continued to manage a maintenance period. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | -2% | -1% | 0% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Year on year change | 30% | 29% | -1% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 2% | 6% | 3% | — | — | — | — | — | |

| **Female slaughter rate (FSR)** | **FSR** | **47.0%** |
|---|---|---|
| | Quarter on Quarter change | 0% |
| | Year on year change | -1% |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | -1% |

**Rebuild Status**

The Female Slaughter Rate (FSR) measures the percentage of female cattle slaughtered relative to the total cattle slaughtered. Since records began, the average quarterly FSR sits at 47.6%. Industry uses this as a technical lead indicator for gauging whether the national cattle herd is undergoing liquidation or a rebuild phase, though it is not a scientific tipping point. This quarter the FSR tipped above 47%, though has not been above for two quarters so the herd is not in a technical destock.

| | | Slaughter (head) | Production (tonne) | Carcase weight (kg) | Live export (head) | Total turnoff (head) | Seasonal estimate (Full Year Run Rate*) | Value of production (A$) | Value per animal (A$) | Why** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sheepmeat** | Figure | **9,720,600** | **236,710** | **24.35** | **226,022** | **9,946,622** | **41,709,229** | **1,257,317,283** | **129.35** | Record quarterly sheepmeat production, driven by high supply and prices. Value of production lifted quarter on quarter, driven by volumes rather than value, as the value per head remained below 5-year averages. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | 4% | 6% | 2% | 32% | 4% | 18% | 41% | 36% | |
| | Year on year change | 21% | 20% | -1% | 16% | 21% | 21% | 9% | -10% | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 30% | 29% | -1% | 22% | 30% | 35% | 6% | -17% | |
| **Lamb** | Figure | **6,935,700** | **167,263** | **24.12** | — | — | — | — | — | Lamb carcases bounced back, despite elevated supply. Producers holding onto stock over summer, holding out for improved weight and prices, led to late-season lambs lifting average weights. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | 4% | 9% | 5% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Year on year change | 24% | 23% | -1% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 25% | 25% | -1% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| **Sheep** | Figure | **2,784,900** | **69,447** | **24.94** | — | — | — | — | — | The lift in sheep slaughter was countered by easing weights. This reflects the seasonality of sheep production, as producers tend to turn off old stock during Q1, regardless of weight, in preparation for the emerging season. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | 4% | -1% | -5% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Year on year change | 14% | 14% | 0% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 44% | 42% | -2% | — | — | — | — | — | |
| **Goat** | Figure | **744,621** | **11,654** | **15.65** | **2,116** | **746,737** | **2,741,267** | — | — | Goat slaughter and production reached records in Q1. This countered a dip in live exports, leading to a 21% lift in quarterly turnoff. If global demand remains for goatmeat, 2024 is on track to beat the record 2023 goat production year. |
| | Quarter on Quarter change | 22% | 24% | 2% | -19% | -12% | -2% | — | — | |
| | Year on year change | 45% | 43% | -2% | 8% | 38% | 42% | — | — | |
| | Comparison to 5 year average | 86% | 82% | -3% | 15% | 60% | 56% | — | — | |

Source: MLA/ABS
*NB: Based on historical seasonality (2000–2022)

**** Note: The reasoning behind these figures are not solely attributed to the brief explanation in this doucment. For further justification of the drivers of these figures, contact insights@mla.com.au**