



Sheep Producers Intentions Survey
OCTOBER 2024



November 2024



Table of contents

About the research	3
State of play: an overview of the industry analysis	4
Observations and insights	5
Producer sentiment	
Sentiment: outlook for the wool sector	10
Sentiment: outlook for the sheepmeat sector	11
Sentiment trend of the wool and sheepmeat sectors	12
Expected changes in costs and prices	13
Expected changes on accessing skilled labour	15
Lamb flock profiles	
Estimates of the lamb and breeding ewe flock sizes	17
Lamb flock profiles	20
Lamb flock – breeds on hand	21
Lamb flock – lambs marked	24
Lamb flock – breeding ewes joined and marking rates	25
Lamb flock – sales	26
Lamb flock – expected sales with 35 days of grain	27
Lamb flock – sales channels	28
Producer intentions	
Producer intentions over the next 12 months – lamb flock	30
Lamb flock size intentions by producer outlook	31
How the forecast increase translates to lamb flock numbers	32
Factors influencing the expected increase in lambs in 2025	33
How the forecast decrease translates to lamb flock numbers	34
Factors influencing the expected decrease in lambs in 2025	35
Lambs forecast for 2025	36
Summary of results: state & flock size	37
Additional analysis	40
Attachments	45

The survey, undertaken by MLA and AWI, is used to help industry determine wool and lamb production forecasts and to understand the breed composition of the Australian flock on a national, state and regional basis. It is used by processors for budgeting purposes and allows import markets to ascertain short-term supply estimates.

The research has three primary objectives, namely to:

- ✓ **Measure and report** on flock population, demographics, sheepmeat and wool supply information and producer production intentions.
- ✓ Ensure estimates are reliable and based on sufficiently large sample sizes to ensure the **robustness and accuracy** of estimates. The sample should be representative or weighted to be representative of the producer population structure.
- ✓ Provide capacity to **explore and investigate results** at a smaller area and segment level. This will include – among other things – across states and MLA reporting regions.

The following report provides an overview of results for the **OCTOBER 2024** survey.

The October 2024 survey

Feedback was sought from producers over the period 1st October – 30th October 2024. Producers were initially invited to complete an online survey with the final sample complemented with a smaller number of phone interviews.

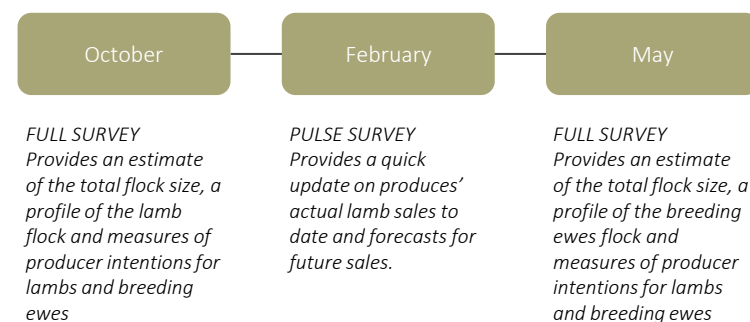
A total of 2,549 producers from across Australia respond to the survey invitation. The feedback was then weighted using the latest available information and data to produce industry estimates.

A full breakdown of the sample make up, plus a description of the information and data used to inform the weighting approach is included as an attachment to this report.

Please note that surveys undertaken from October 2022 onward are a significant departure from surveys before October 2022 in terms of design and questions asked. Care should be taken in comparing the results from this survey to surveys undertaken before October 2022.

An overview of the research design

Three separate but integrated surveys will be conducted across the calendar year. Each survey will have a specific focus and purpose and provide the required flock and producer intention estimates required.



More detail on the research design is included in the Attachments to this report.

A note on weighting and producer population estimates:

As detailed in the Appendices, the weighting structure was updated with the most recent available information and data on the estimated population of agricultural businesses with sheep and lambs across two factors: State and Total Flock Size. This change was required due to the cessation of the ABS Agricultural Census data.

With this update, the estimated population of businesses has increased from 40,949* to 41,994† (a 2.5% increase). Consideration of this increase in the estimated population of businesses should be taken when interpreting results in this report.

* Source: ABS Ag Census 2020-21 estimate adjusted upwards to account for EVAO under \$40k

† Source: Levy Payer Register for the most recent financial year (2023-24)

State of play...

The Australian wool and sheepmeat sectors continue to remain dynamic sectors with different factors impacting each sector in different ways.

Stronger lamb prices have incentivised some producers to take advantage of these improved prices while other producers are balancing the weaker feed supply to rebalance their flock to ensure adequate feed is available.

WA producers continues to face a raft of challenges as they establish a pathway forward following the announcement of the cessation of live sheep exports.

All producers continue to face the challenges of ongoing high on-farm costs (input costs), challenges around workforce shortages as well as supply chain and market pressures (domestic and global).

It continues to be a particularly challenging time for wool and sheepmeat producers.

The content opposite provides a brief overview of the wool and sheepmeat sectors by the agribusiness units within Rabobank and ANZ Agribusiness.

The discussion provides a useful context for interpreting the results in the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions Survey (SPIS).

RABOBANK Commentary

- ✓ Sheepmeat: Higher than expected sheep slaughter volumes were evident. Volumes in most states were up with WA and Vic volumes nearing 10-year highs. It is unclear if this is just a short term increase due to decisions made before summer or whether the high volumes will persist. Either way it raises questions on the impact of future lambing volumes.
- ✓ Wool: October marked a positive month for wool prices, with the EMI rising by 3%. The dramatic weakening of the AUD/USD exchange rate likely contributed to the price increase. The big question is whether this recent growth can be sustained against the backdrop of historically low consumer confidence.

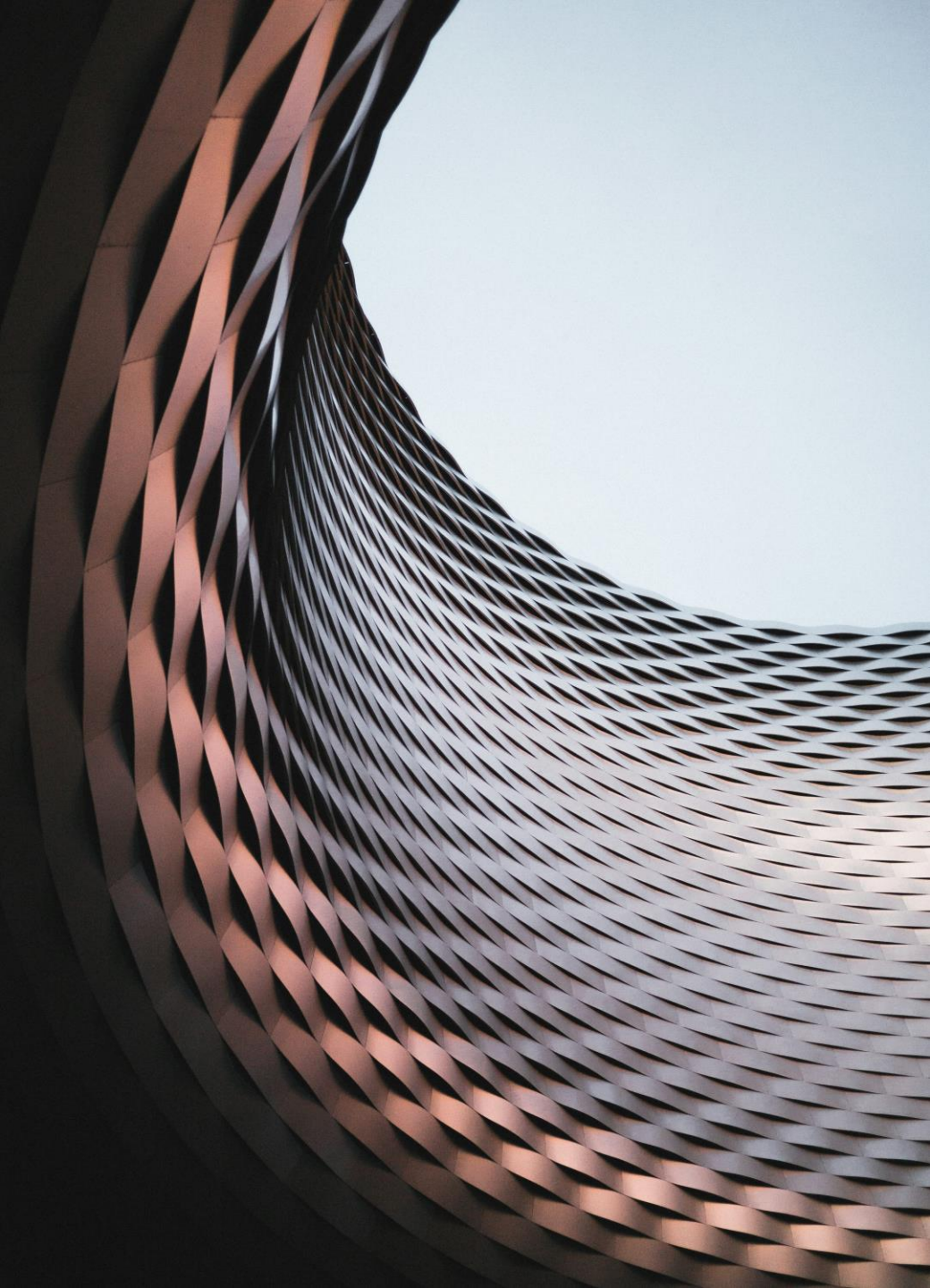
ANZ Agribusiness Commentary:

Sheepmeat

- ✓ All indicators have seen a rise as expected with low numbers heading into spring.
- ✓ A dry winter has seen producers offloading their older stock and in lamb ewes where feed has been scarce to hold their young stock through the winter and into the spring. Where winter saw an increase in yardings and slaughter numbers, it is expected that spring will see a drop in these numbers as producers hold their young stock, waiting for that early spring break before selling.
- ✓ Continuing dry conditions on the West Coast, coupled with the trade ban announcement has continued to push stock east. ANZ's own data demonstrates that where mixed farming operations in the west had historically carried a 60/40 split of cropping to sheep operations, these producers have already begun the process over the last couple of years, of changing their operations to closer to an 80/20 split with focus being more on grain production.
- ✓ Production has risen to 10-year record highs. This may come back through spring but expected to remain above 3-year records.
- ✓ US imports driven by lower imported lamb prices are absorbing much of the increase in production.

Wool

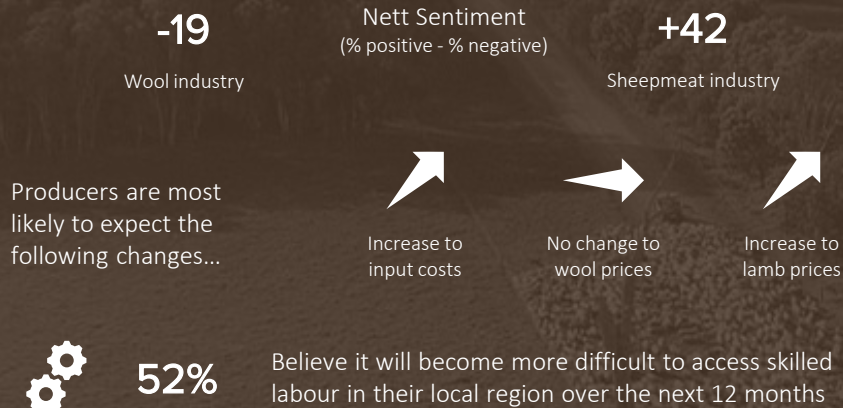
- ✓ Following the recess, prices have not shown any improvement.
- ✓ Prices leading into the winter recess were flat to down on closing prices last season.
- ✓ Currency movements continue to be a major driver of week-to-week fluctuations in price.
- ✓ Sluggish global demand for woollen apparel continues.
- ✓ Upside for prices is likely, and could be significant, however timing is highly uncertain.



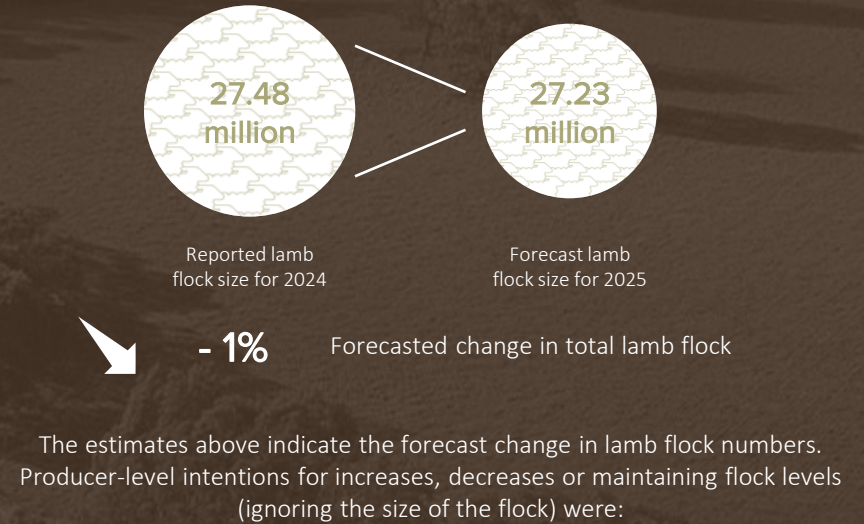
Observations and insights

We spoke to 2,579 producers about their industry sentiment and the profile and intentions for their lamb flock...

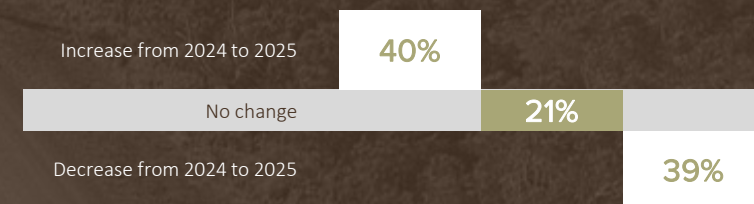
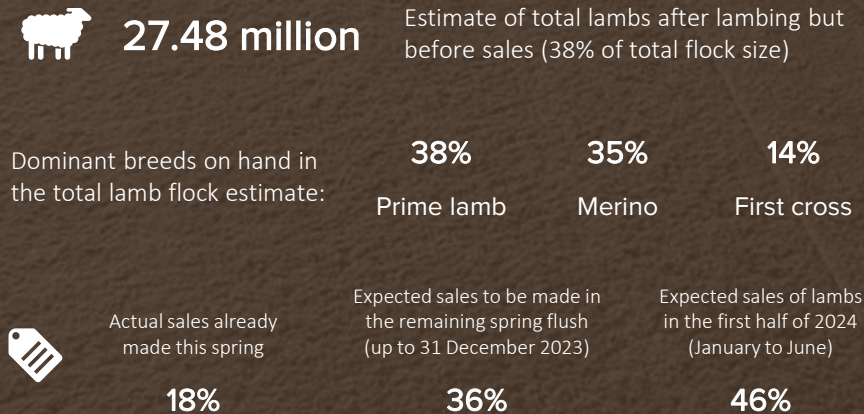
Sentiment



Lamb Flock Intentions



Lamb Flock Profile



Producers who forecast a decline in their lamb flock report three major factors influencing their plans for the next 12 months:



While the purpose of the research did not include an interpretation of the survey results, we provide some initial observations and insights in the following discussion.

Producer sentiment

Producers outlook for the *wool sector* remains subdued (down 4 points to a Nett Sentiment of -19). There are now almost twice as many producers with a negative outlook than a positive outlook (36% c.f. 17%).

The outlook for the *sheepmeat sector* has rebounded (up 84 points on Nett Sentiment from -42 to +42, noting the 2022 result was +67). There is a significant improved positive outlook with almost six in ten (58%) having a positive outlook. By comparison, just 15% of producers reported a negative outlook.

The rebound in prices has injected a more positive outlook and disposition towards the sector.

The positive outlook is consistent across most producer segments, with WA being somewhat of an exception. Faced with a raft of new challenges, sentiment among WA producers has been volatile over the last 18 months (+42 in Oct-22, -48 in May-23, -71 in Oct-23, -64 in May-24 and -2 in the latest result for Oct-24).

A watching brief on these sentiment results is warranted to see if the current improved levels can be sustained over the mid-term.

Profile of the lamb flock

The October 2024 survey had a specific focus on understanding the profile of Australia's lamb flocks. Of the estimated 27M+ lambs on hand:

- Merinos (35% of total lamb flock) and prime lambs (38%) remain the dominant breed types on hand (accounting for 73% of the total lamb flock). The feedback from producers suggests that there are more producers holding prime lambs (38%) than there are holding Merinos (estimated at 35%).
- There are signals that producers are shifting their flock profiles – in October 2022, 40% of producers held Merino's in their flock, whilst in October 2024 this was 35%. In October 2022, 4% held shedding lambs, in October 2024 this was 8%.
- The survey has estimated that:
 - An estimated 54% of the lambs to be sold are forecast to be sold in the 2024 calendar year, with an estimate 18% of this forecast volume already sold (up from 13% estimated for the same period in 2023). The results indicate producers have placed more lambs into the market (at this time) than in previous years.
 - Producers continue to report that most of the lambs scheduled to be sold in 2024 will be sold through saleyard auctions (55%, up 5% from 2023 and 3% below that reported in 2022) and over the hooks (28%, down 1% from 2023). Not surprisingly, smaller producers are more likely to use just a single sales channel with the larger producers using more than one. For the larger producers, forward price contracts and online auctions are used more often than other segments.
- Based on the feedback provided by producers, it is estimated that approximately 87% of Merino lambs had been marked up to the time of the October 2024 survey.

Intentions – lamb flock

Analysis of the feedback provided shows that:

- At the producer level (that is considering each producer equal), the signals indicate there is likely to be little change in flock sizes over the next 12 months.
 - 40% (34% in 2023 and 46% in 2022) indicating they would increase their lamb flock size;
 - 21% (22% and 28%) indicating it would remain unchanged; and
 - 39% (44% and 26%) indicating they would decrease their lamb flock size.

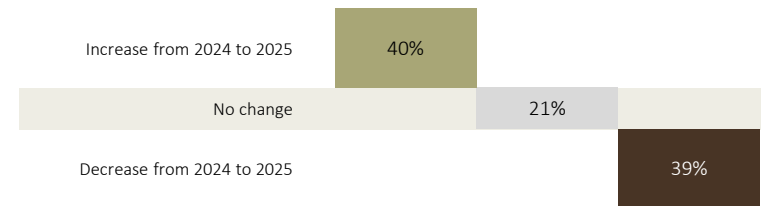
The more positive posture was largely consistent across small and large producers.

- Analysis of the forecast change in the number of lambs suggests an expected reduction of approximately 250K lambs over the estimated 2024 flock size (equating to a forecast decrease of 1% on 2024). This result highlights the importance of considering the reported changes in flock size rather than just producers’ disposition to change.

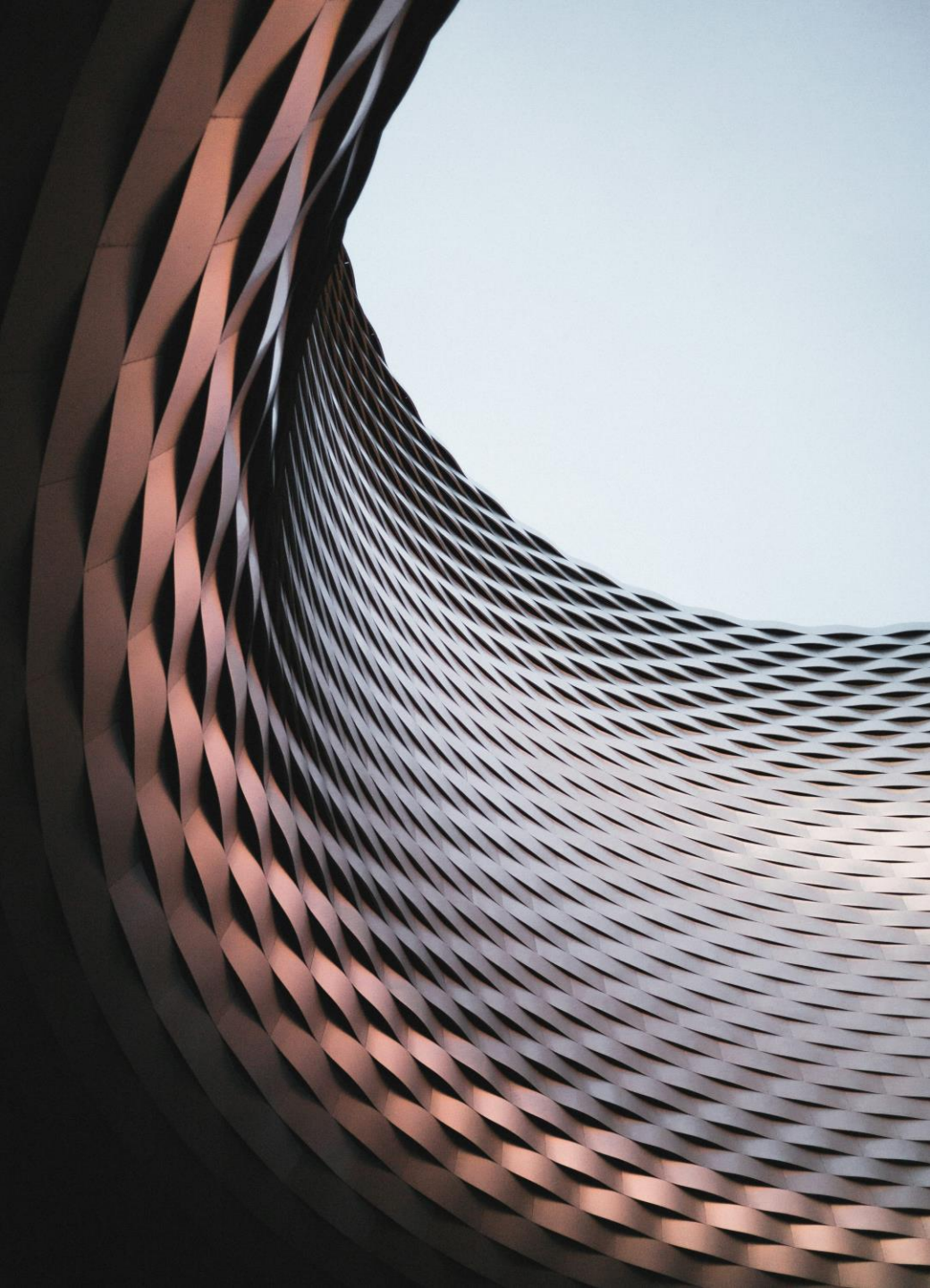
Details on the forecast change estimate – showing the impact from producers who have reported an increase as well as producers who were forecasting a decrease in their lamb flock – is shown opposite.

In WA, an estimated 51% of producers indicated they would decrease their flock size over the upcoming 12 months. The data provided by producers indicates this will represent a 7% decline in numbers. The feedback also indicates that SA and Victorian producers indicate an intention to reduce their lamb flocks over the next 12 months – the data suggest this will translate to a 3% and 2% drop in numbers in these states. By contrast, 45% of QLD producers are indicating they will increase their flock size with the estimates suggesting this will increase the state flock size by 31% (still off a small base nationally).

The detailed results from the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions Survey now follow.



2025 LAMB FLOCK FORECAST	
Total reported flock size for 2024:	27,484,676
Total expected flock size for 2025:	27,233,001
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #ccc;"/>	
Difference of:	- 251,675
<hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #ccc;"/>	
% forecast change on 2024:	-1%



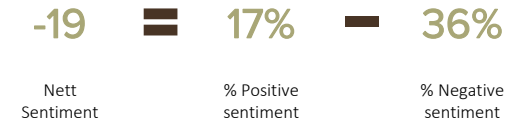
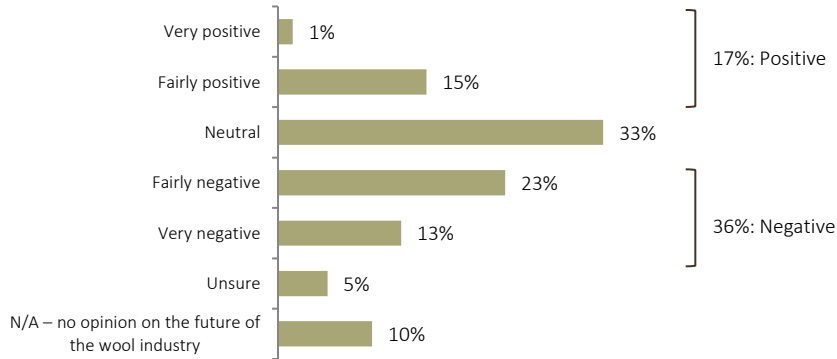
Producer sentiment

Sentiment: outlook for the wool sector

Q1. Firstly, how do you feel about the future of the wool industry over the next 12 months?
Would you say you feel...?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

Nett Sentiment
(scale of -100 to +100)



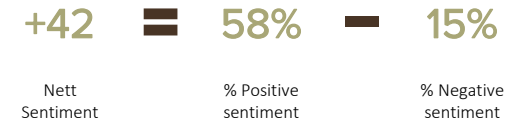
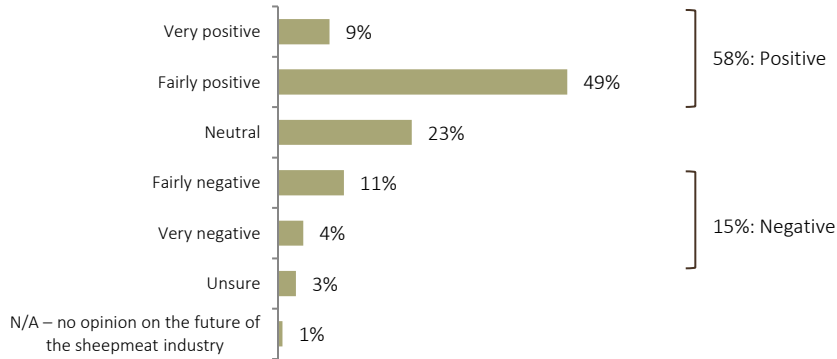
	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Nett Sentiment	-17	-12	-17	-21	-19	-30	-7	-23	-28	-30	-33	-41	-35	-25

Sentiment: outlook for the sheepmeat sector

Q2. And how do you feel about the future of the sheepmeat industry over the next 12 months? Would you say you feel...?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

Nett Sentiment
(scale of -100 to +100)



	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Nett Sentiment	+55	+41	+31	+27	+52	-2	+39	+46	+48	+42	+38	+49	+54	+76

The comparative Rabobank measure. . . .

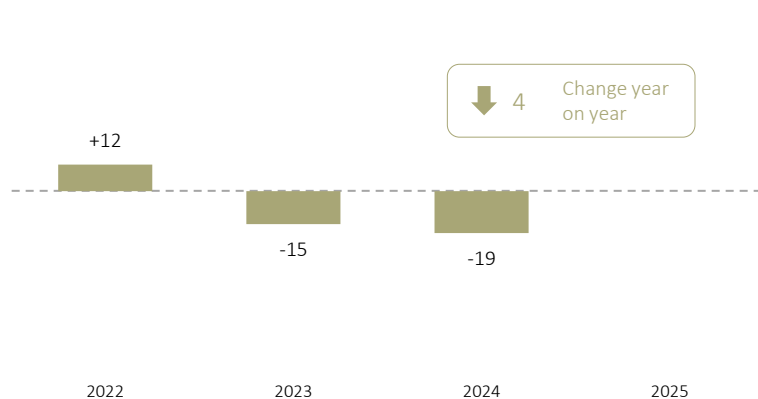
Sheep producer confidence took a leap forward this quarter, riding on the back of an improved seasonal outlook and commodity prices.

“Net sentiment tipped back into positive territory (one per cent, was -37 per cent) for the sheep industry, with more favourable seasonal conditions in many regions and the prospect of stronger prices giving them hope for the coming year,” Mr van Doremaele said. “However, sheep producers remain very concerned about government policies – especially the threat to live export – with WA’s sheep industry in particular bearing the brunt on the long-awaited, finally received hard deadline for live exporting sheep, which was handed down prior to this survey.”

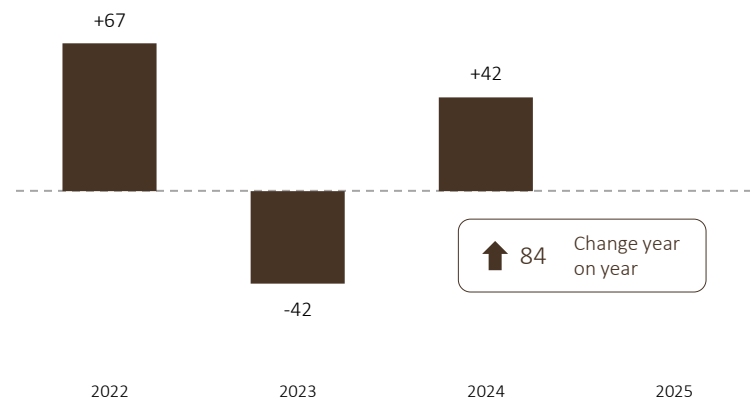
Source of Rabobank commentary: [Rabobank Rural Confidence Survey](#)

Sentiment trend of the wool and sheepmeat sectors

Trend of Nett Sentiment of the wool industry



Trend of Nett Sentiment of the sheepmeat industry

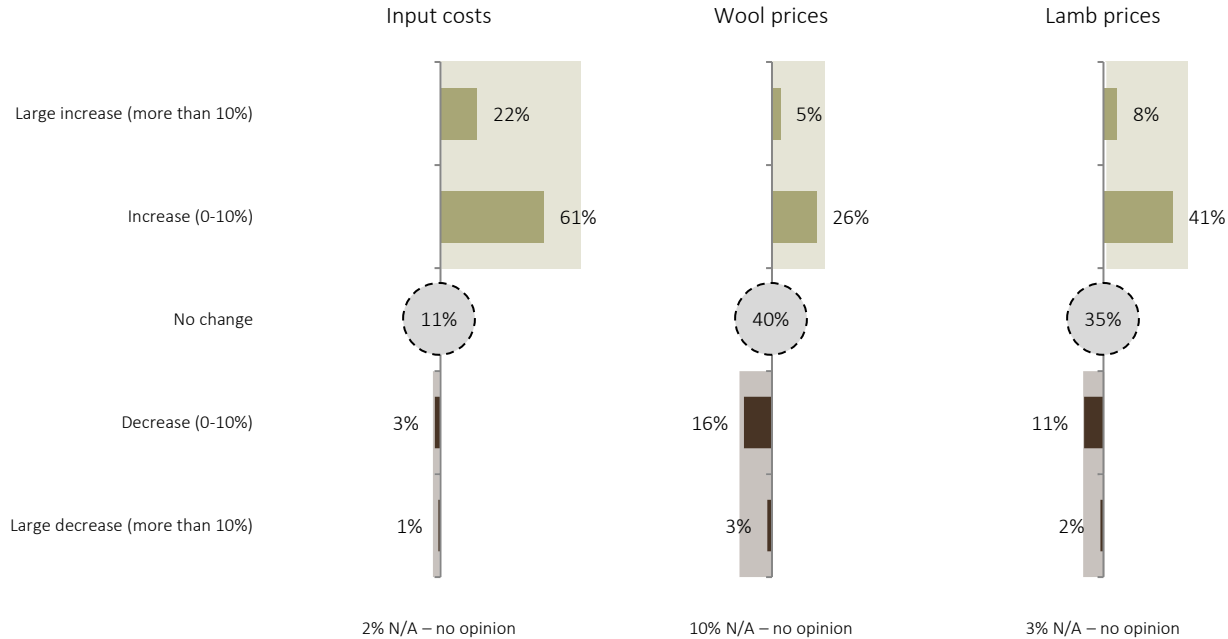


	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Nett Sentiment – Wool – 2023	-12	-7	-5	-64	-14	-30	-12	-9	-17	-28	-21	-23	-19	-19
Nett Sentiment – Wool – 2024	-17	-12	-17	-21	-19	-30	-7	-23	-28	-30	-33	-41	-35	-25
Change	Down 5	Down 5	Down 12	Up 43	Down 5	No change	Up 5	Down 14	Down 11	Down 2	Down 12	Down 18	Down 16	Down 6
Nett Sentiment – Sheepmeat – 2023	-43	+22	-55	-42	-30	-71	-31	-47	-53	-52	-49	-49	-63	-42
Nett Sentiment – Sheepmeat – 2024	+55	+41	+31	+27	+52	-2	+39	+46	+48	+42	+38	+49	+54	+76
Change	Up 98	Up 19	Up 86	Up 69	Up 82	Up 69	Up 70	Up 93	Up 101	Up 94	Up 87	Up 98	Up 117	Up 118

Expected changes in costs and prices

Q3. In your opinion, what changes do you expect to occur across input costs, wool prices and lamb prices over the next 12 months?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547



Most producers continue to report that **input costs** are likely to **increase** over the next 12 months. The result is largely consistent with last year and paints a somewhat pessimistic outlook for input prices. This view is consistent across states and farm businesses of various flock sizes.

As noted in 2022 and 2023, there is a more **mixed response** to wool and lamb prices.

On wool prices, producers continue to hold different views on whether prices will increase, decrease or remain around the same level.

On lamb prices, almost one in two producers are expecting prices to increase over the next 12 months. This year, far fewer producers are expecting lamb prices to decrease (13% compared to 37% last year).

Expected changes in costs and prices

Q3. In your opinion, what changes do you expect to occur across input costs, wool prices and lamb prices over the next 12 months?

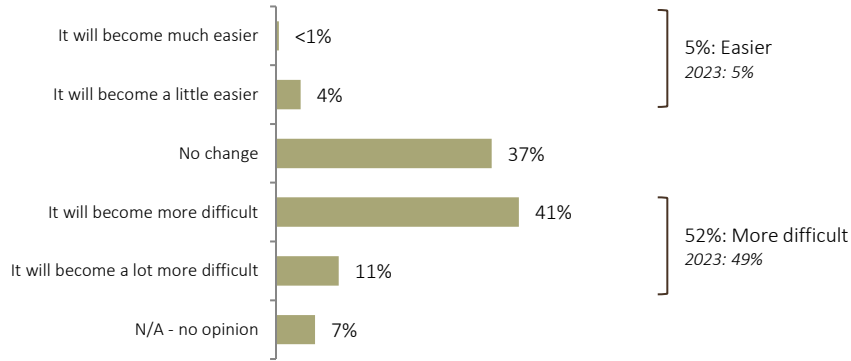
Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
INPUT COSTS														
Increase	82%	78%	88%	79%	81%	86%	80%	84%	84%	85%	88%	87%	85%	87%
No change	11%	9%	8%	12%	12%	10%	10%	10%	12%	10%	9%	11%	13%	10%
Decrease	5%	7%	3%	9%	5%	3%	6%	3%	3%	5%	2%	1%	1%	3%
WOOL PRICES														
Increase	34%	18%	31%	23%	29%	33%	31%	30%	27%	36%	30%	36%	32%	56%
No change	37%	39%	42%	49%	42%	38%	35%	42%	46%	42%	44%	44%	53%	27%
Decrease	19%	16%	21%	17%	18%	21%	17%	20%	22%	21%	23%	19%	12%	15%
LAMB PRICES														
Increase	48%	34%	54%	51%	47%	55%	48%	47%	48%	47%	51%	57%	56%	72%
No change	36%	51%	28%	27%	38%	28%	32%	38%	38%	38%	36%	35%	36%	22%
Decrease	13%	10%	15%	20%	11%	15%	15%	13%	13%	12%	11%	7%	8%	3%

Expected changes on accessing skilled labour

Q4. Over the next 12 months, how easy will it be to access skilled labour in your local region?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

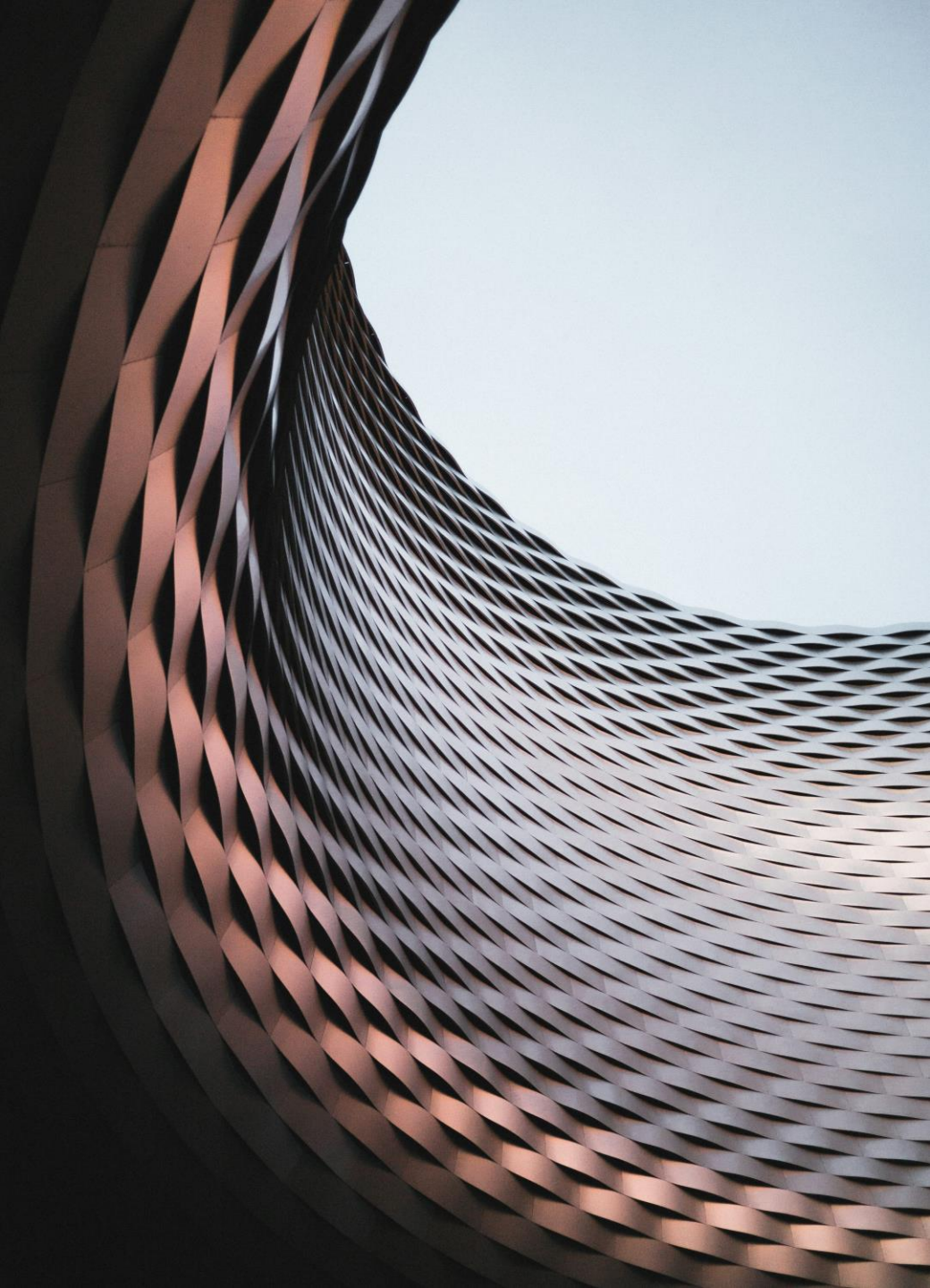


Across the last three years, producers have consistently reported that **accessing skilled labour** will continue to become even more difficult.

Despite all the other changes that are impacting producers, accessing skilled labour remains a challenge for most producers.

This view about labour challenges will undoubtedly continue to impact those wool-focused producers.

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
% more difficult + % a lot more difficult	55%	60%	48%	48%	48%	55%	54%	49%	52%	50%	50%	49%	47%	30%



Lamb flock profiles

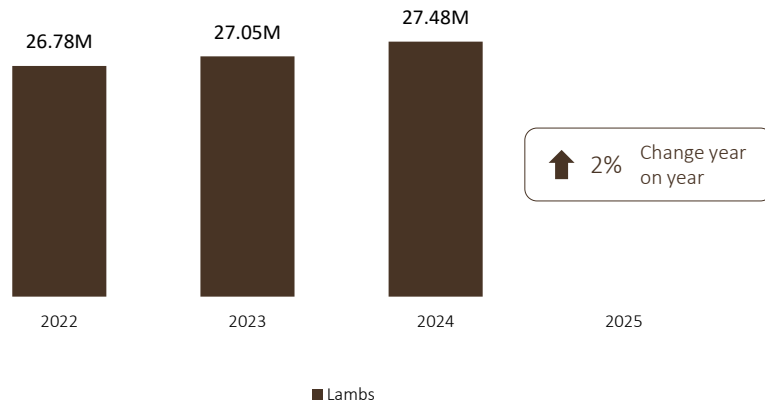
Estimates of the lamb and breeding ewe flock sizes

Q5-Q7. What were the total number of breeding ewes you had on hand at 30 September 2024 and lambs you had after lambing but before sales (not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding)?

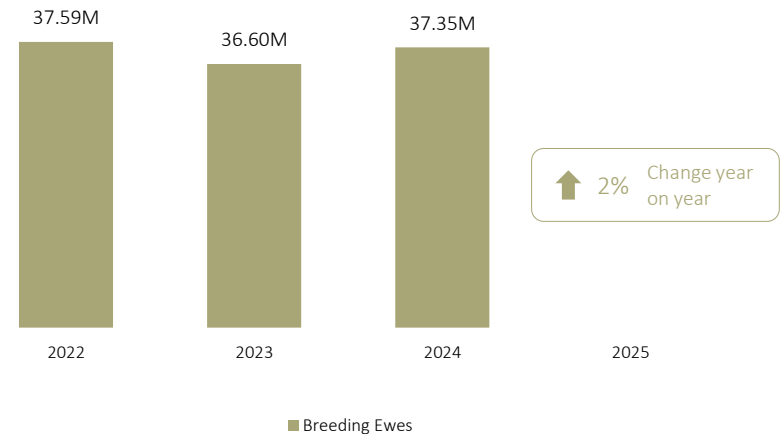
Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

		% of producers with type
Breeding ewes (including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding) on hand at 30 September 2024:	37,348,841	96%
Lambs after lambing but before sales (not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding):	27,484,676	92%

Trend of lamb flock size estimates

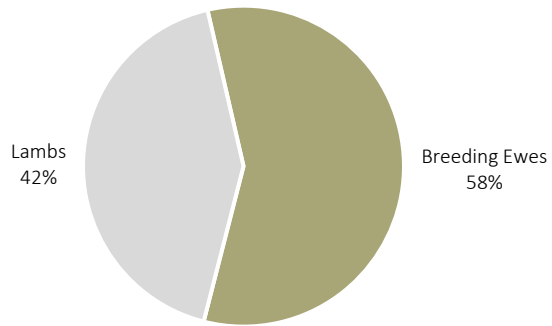


Trend of breeding ewe flock size estimates



Estimates of the lamb and breeding ewe flock sizes

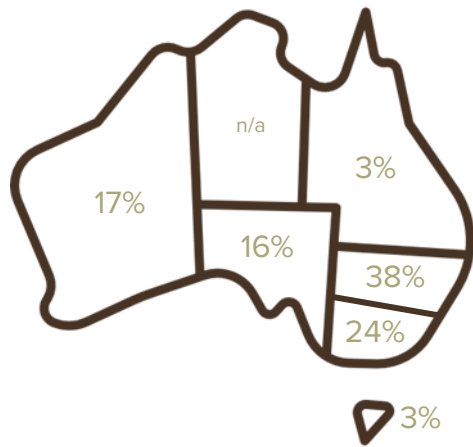
Proportion of breeding ewe and lamb flock sizes



	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
% of total flock size														
Breeding ewes	58%	68%	58%	57%	54%	60%	55%	56%	57%	58%	58%	57%	60%	59%
Lambs	42%	32%	42%	43%	46%	40%	45%	44%	43%	42%	42%	43%	40%	41%

Estimates of the lamb and breeding ewe flock sizes

Proportion of total flock size across states



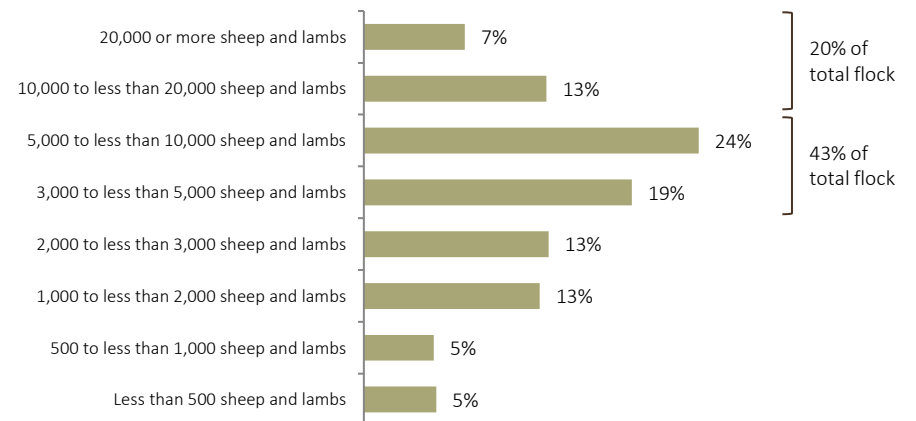
NSW and VIC account for an estimated 62% of the total flock size.

SA and WA account for 33% with QLD, TAS and the territories estimated to account for just a small proportion of the total national flock.

While there are many smaller producers (for example 36% of producers have less than 3,000 sheep) it is the larger producers which have a greater proportion of the national sheep flock (64% of the total flocks held by producers with 3,000 or more sheep and 20% with producers who have 10,000 or more sheep).

It will inevitably be then the decisions made by these larger producer cohorts that will shape and influence national trends.

Proportion of total flock size across total flock size categories



Lamb flock profiles

Q7. What were the total number of lambs you had after lambing but before sales (not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding)?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547

Lambs after lambing but before sales
(not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding):

27,484,676

% of total flock size:

38%

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Lamb flock size	10,137,440	555,411	4,361,964	766,448	7,234,972	4,399,549	1,506,841	1,440,368	3,570,434	3,694,659	5,263,970	6,773,171	3,370,627	1,864,606
% of total flock size	37%	26%	39%	39%	42%	36%	40%	40%	39%	39%	38%	39%	36%	36%

Lamb flock – breeds on hand

Q11 and Q12. Of these [Q7 ANSWER] lambs you mentioned earlier, please tell us which of the following types of lamb breeds you have across your properties (after lambing but before sales, not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding).

Base: All respondents with lambs, n = 2,383

Total lamb flock size reported: **27,484,676**

		% of total lamb flock	% of producers with breed			<i>Definitions of breeds presented to producers:</i>
Prime lamb	10,524,456	38%	41%	-----	Prime lamb	Animal entirely focused on meat (lamb) production e.g. Composite, Terminal, Suffolk or Dorset.
Merino	9,548,800	35%	32%	-----	Merino	Main breed of sheep for wool production.
First cross	3,793,251	14%	22%	-----	First cross	Merino crossed with a long-haired sheep of a different breed.
Shedding	2,134,528	8%	23%	-----	Shedding	Breeds of sheep that shed their wool without shearing e.g. Australian White or Dorper. Could also be referred to as hair sheep.
Dual purpose	1,226,225	4%	7%	-----	Dual purpose	Animal with no more than 50% Merino content geared towards both meat and wool production equally.
Other	257,416	1%	3%	-----	Other	Any breeds that do not fit into the definitions above.

Lamb flock – breeds on hand

Q11 and Q12. Of these [Q7 ANSWER] lambs you mentioned earlier, please tell us which of the following types of lamb breeds you have across your properties (after lambing but before sales, not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding).

Base: All respondents with lambs, n = 2,383

Total lamb flock size reported: **27,484,676**

		% of total lamb flock	2023	% of producers with breed	2023
Prime lamb	10,524,456	38%	38%	41%	41%
Merino	9,548,800	35%	37%	32%	36%
First cross	3,793,251	14%	13%	22%	24%
Shedding	2,134,528	8%	5%	23%	17%
Dual purpose	1,226,225	4%	5%	7%	9%
Other	257,416	1%	1%	3%	4%

Lamb flock – breeds on hand

Q11 and Q12. Of these [Q7 ANSWER] lambs you mentioned earlier, please tell us which of the following types of lamb breeds you have across your properties (after lambing but before sales, not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding).

Base: All respondents with lambs, n = 2,383

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	749	87	401	72	606	465	594	310	408	267	322	302	135	45
Total lamb flock size	10,137,440	555,411	4,361,964	766,448	7,234,972	4,399,549	1,506,841	1,440,368	3,570,434	3,694,659	5,263,970	6,773,171	3,370,627	1,864,606
% of total lamb flock														
Prime lamb	33%	8%	34%	61%	56%	27%	38%	50%	43%	38%	34%	36%	35%	46%
Merino	37%	49%	41%	15%	21%	46%	11%	16%	27%	34%	39%	38%	49%	35%
First cross	16%	3%	13%	16%	13%	13%	16%	11%	13%	14%	14%	16%	12%	11%
Shedding	10%	37%	6%	2%	5%	8%	28%	16%	10%	6%	6%	6%	1%	7%
Dual purpose	4%	1%	5%	6%	4%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	7%	4%	2%	1%
Other	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	<1%	1%	1%	<1%

Lamb flock – lambs marked

Q13. Of these [Q7 ANSWER] lambs across each breed type, how many have been marked up to this point?

Base: All respondents with lambs, n = 2,383

	Total lambs marked:	% of lamb breed marked	2023
Prime lamb	9,937,249	94%	92%
Merino	8,500,177	89%	87%
First cross	3,388,958	89%	90%
Shedding	1,833,690	86%	89%
Dual purpose	1,167,854	95%	87%
Other	233,225	91%	90%

Calculation of % of lamb breed marked (example: Merino):

Estimated total number of marked up breed:	8,500,177
	÷
Estimate of total number of breed in flock:	9,548,800
	=
% of lamb breed marked:	89%

Lamb flock – breeding ewes joined and marking rates

Q14. Of the [Q12 BREED ANSWER] lambs that have been marked to this point, how many breeding ewes were joined to produce these lambs?

Base: All respondents with lambs and breeding ewes joined to produce lambs, n = 2,203

	Total breeding ewes joined to produce lambs:		Marking rate	2023
Prime lamb	8,648,827	113%		112%
Merino	10,450,231	81%		84%
First cross	3,565,247	93%		96%
Shedding	1,962,269	92%		93%
Dual purpose	1,190,722	95%		97%
Other	213,691	108%		104%

Calculation of marking rate (example: Merino):

Please note: This analysis has been undertaken only on respondents who could provide an answer to both Q13 (number of lambs marked) and Q14 (number of breeding ewes joined to produce marked lambs)

Estimated total number of marked up breed:	8,426,223
	÷
Estimate of total number of breeding ewes joined to produce these lambs:	10,450,231
	=
Marking rate:	81%

Q15. Now we would like you to think about the lamb sales already made and those expected to be made. Could you please provide the number of lamb sales across the following time periods, both actual and expected:

Base: All respondents with lambs, n = 2,377 (n = 6 could not provide an answer)

Total actual and expected sales

22,430,112

2023: 21,020,959

4,044,924

Actual sales already made this spring
(from 1 July 2024 to now)

8,108,777

Expected sales to be made in the remaining spring
flush and the period up to 31 December 2024

10,276,410

Expected sales of lambs in the first half of 2025
(January to June)

% of total sales

18%

2023: 13%

36%

2023: 37%

46%

2023: 49%

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	747	87	399	72	604	465	592	310	408	266	320	301	135	45
Total actual and expected sales	8,207,423	476,465	3,628,959	721,697	5,838,341	3,532,597	1,500,056	1,345,536	3,193,497	3,030,073	4,232,178	5,158,034	2,492,229	1,478,508
% of total sales														
Actual sales already made	26%	29%	18%	13%	8%	15%	19%	19%	21%	18%	19%	18%	15%	16%
Expected sales to be made up to Dec-24	30%	23%	42%	21%	44%	36%	36%	36%	34%	36%	35%	35%	38%	44%
Expected sales from Jan-25 to Jun-25	44%	48%	39%	66%	48%	49%	45%	45%	45%	46%	46%	47%	47%	40%

Lamb flock – expected sales with 35 days of grain

Q16. Of the expected lamb sales to be made in the second half of 2024, what proportion will have spent at least 35 days with grain as their primary food source (continual access to supplement grain, excluding trail feeding or grazing on stubble)?

Base: All respondents with lambs sold or expected to sell in 2024, n = 1,767



78%
Proportion of producers with 0% expected sales in 2024 with 35+ days with grain as primary food source

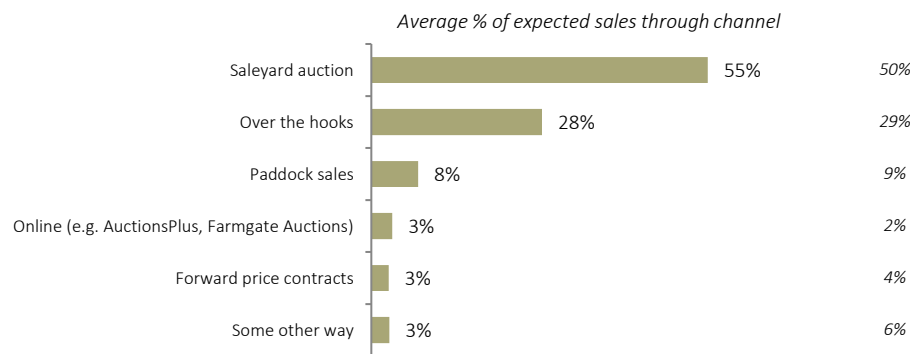
2023
84%

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	567	57	312	52	433	345	387	231	308	204	249	242	107	39
Proportion of producers with 0% expected sales in 2024 with 35+ days with grain as primary food source	82%	64%	73%	99%	78%	74%	80%	85%	76%	77%	71%	76%	78%	84%

Q17. Of the expected lamb sales to be made in the second half of 2024, what proportion will be made through the following sales channels?

Base: All respondents with lambs sold or expected to sell in 2024, n = 1,764 (n = 3 did not answer)

1.3 - Mean number of channels used by each producer

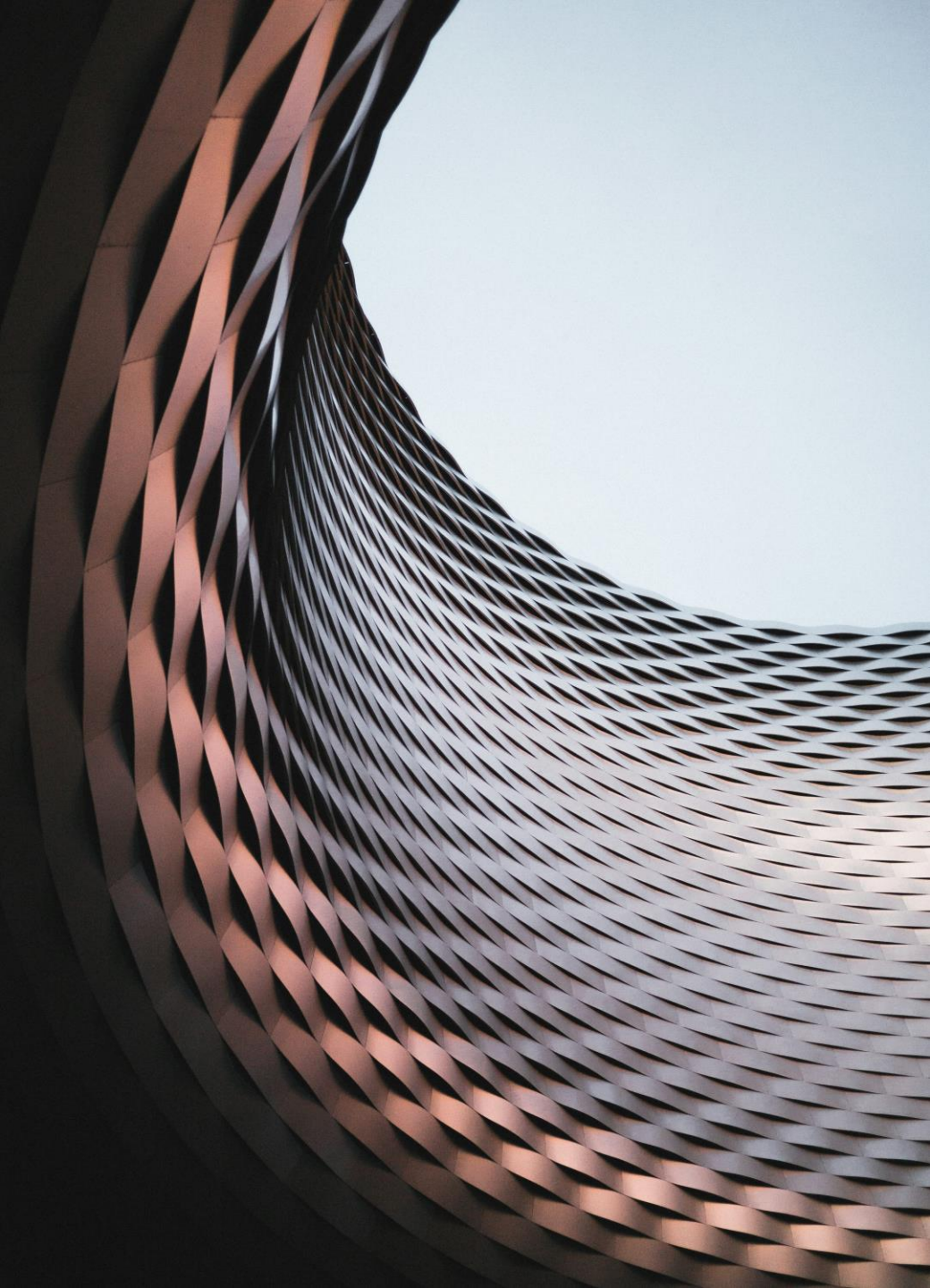


Producers responding to the October 2024 survey have indicated saleyard auctions and over the hook sales will be the two primary channels for lamb sales this year.

Year on year, there appears to have been a slight shift back towards saleyards (up 5%) as the expected sales channel.

Smaller businesses continue to be more likely to use a single sales channel with the larger producers likely to use two or more sales channels.

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)								
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more	
Base:	566	57	311	52	432	345	385	231	308	204	248	242	107	39	
Mean number of channels used	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.8	
<i>Average % of expected sales through channel. . .</i>															
Saleyard auction	72%	52%	34%	31%	61%	22%	73%	61%	51%	41%	33%	22%	15%	13%	
Over the hooks	15%	23%	38%	51%	26%	56%	14%	29%	33%	42%	40%	45%	47%	58%	
Paddock sales	4%	14%	16%	16%	3%	15%	7%	4%	7%	8%	11%	11%	14%	12%	
Online	4%	2%	4%	0%	4%	<1%	1%	3%	5%	2%	6%	10%	13%	8%	
Forward price contracts	2%	<1%	5%	1%	4%	3%	1%	1%	2%	6%	6%	9%	12%	6%	
Some other way	3%	8%	4%	0%	2%	4%	4%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	<1%	3%	



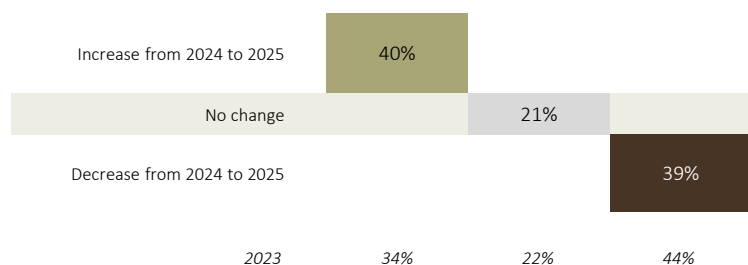
Producer intentions

Producer intentions over the next 12 months

Lamb flock

Q19. And how many lambs (as defined earlier) are you expecting to have at the same time next year, in 2025 (30 September 2025)?

Base: All respondents, n = 2,547



Producers provided an indication of their intention for their lamb flock over the next 12 months.

Among the producers responding to the October 2024 survey, four in ten (40%, up from 34% in 2023 and down from 46% in 2022) reported they would be increasing their flock, with 39% (down from 44% in 2023 and up from 26% in 2022) indicating some level of downsizing of their flock.

This provides a useful producer sentiment, with the following analysis exploring the impact of this stated intention on the forecast lamb flock sizes (remembering producers have different flock sizes).

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Increase from 2024 to 2025	47%	45%	37%	43%	36%	31%	42%	39%	35%	37%	42%	42%	50%	46%
No change	22%	26%	15%	15%	23%	18%	21%	20%	21%	24%	18%	20%	25%	22%
Decrease from 2024 to 2025	31%	29%	49%	42%	41%	51%	38%	40%	44%	39%	40%	39%	25%	31%

Lamb flock size intentions by producer outlook

↑ Of those who expect an increase in lambs
Of those who expect no change in lambs
↓ Of those who expect a decrease in lambs

Q1. Firstly, how do you feel about the future of the wool industry over the next 12 months? Would you say you feel...?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Nett Sentiment	-10	-19	-28
Q2. And how do you feel about the future of the sheepmeat industry over the next 12 months? Would you say you feel...?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Nett Sentiment	+51	+43	+33
Input costs – Q3. In your opinion, what changes do you expect to occur across input costs, wool prices and lamb prices over the next 12 months?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Increase	82%	83%	83%
No change	10%	11%	11%
Decrease	5%	4%	4%
Wool prices – Q3. In your opinion, what changes do you expect to occur across input costs, wool prices and lamb prices over the next 12 months?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Increase	37%	29%	26%
No change	35%	45%	43%
Decrease	18%	16%	22%
Lamb prices – Q3. In your opinion, what changes do you expect to occur across input costs, wool prices and lamb prices over the next 12 months?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Increase	54%	46%	45%
No change	32%	37%	37%
Decrease	11%	13%	15%
Q4. Over the next 12 months, how easy will it be to access skilled labour in your local region?			
Base:	1,004	518	1,025
Easier	5%	4%	5%
No change	38%	34%	37%
More difficult	49%	55%	54%

Perhaps not surprisingly, producers' stated intentions are correlated with their overall outlook for the sector.

Input costs are front of mind for most producers, but this does not appear to be a significant influence on their decisions about the lamb flock over the next 12 months. The upward trend of input costs may well have been 'baked into' producers' budgets and considerations.

Consistent with the result reported in the 2023 report, producer forecasts for prices (for wool and sheepmeat) appear to be different for those with a growth posture versus other producers.

While access to skilled labour is an important issue, the results don't indicate this to be a major obstacle to the plans for the lamb flock over the next 12 months.

How the forecast increase translates to lamb flock numbers

40% of producers reported they are likely to have MORE lambs next year

We asked these producers what they forecast the increase in lamb flock numbers would be...

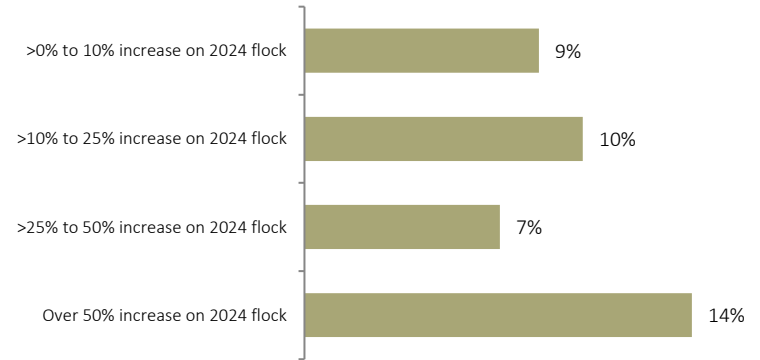


Of those who forecast an **increase** in lambs...

Total reported flock size for 2024: 10,795,102

Total forecast flock size for 2025: 14,247,003

Difference of: + 3,451,901



Factors influencing the expected increase in lambs in 2025

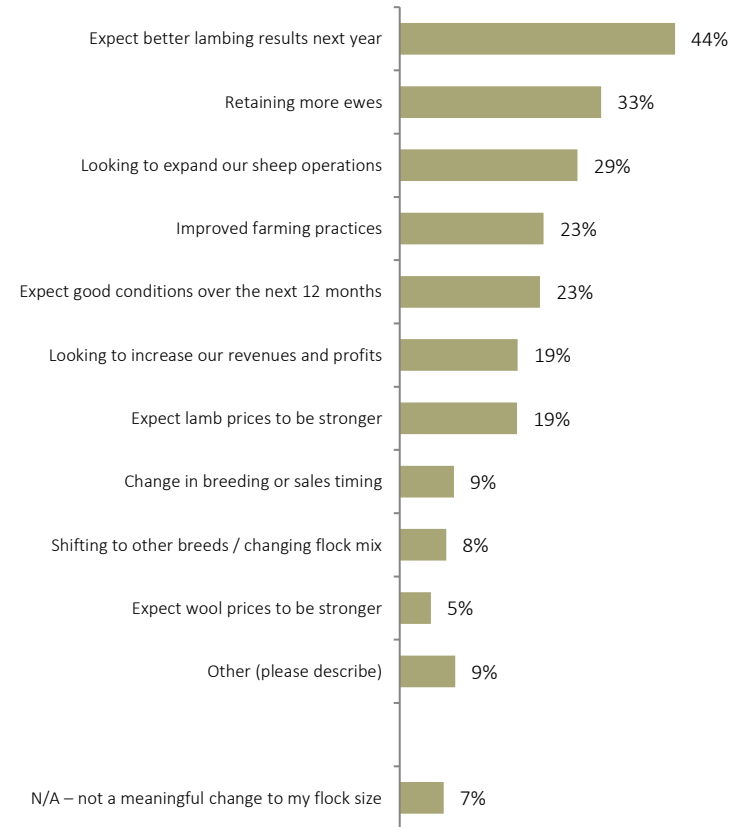
40% of producers reported they are likely to have MORE lambs next year

We asked these producers what factors were influencing their plans to increase the number of lambs...



Q20. You've indicated that you are likely to have more lambs next year compared to this year. What factors are influencing your plans for the next 12 months? Please select all the factors that are influencing your plans.

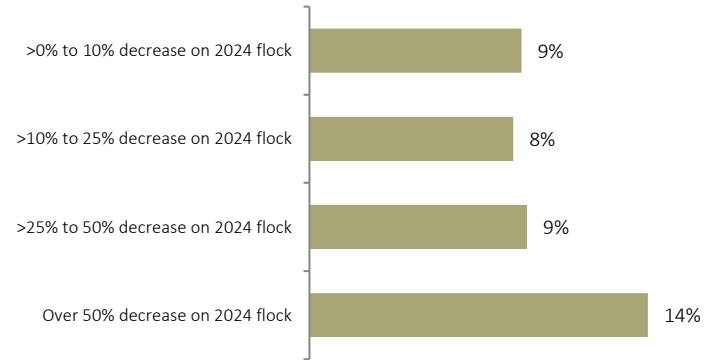
Base: All respondents who expect an increase in lamb flock size in 2025, n = 1,004



How the forecast decrease translates to lamb flock numbers

39% of producers reported they are likely to have FEWER lambs next year

We asked these producers what they forecast the decrease in lamb flock numbers would be...



Of those who forecast a **decrease** in lambs...

Total reported flock size for 2024: 11,469,702

Total forecast flock size for 2025: 7,766,125

Difference of: - 3,703,577

Factors influencing the expected decrease in lambs in 2025

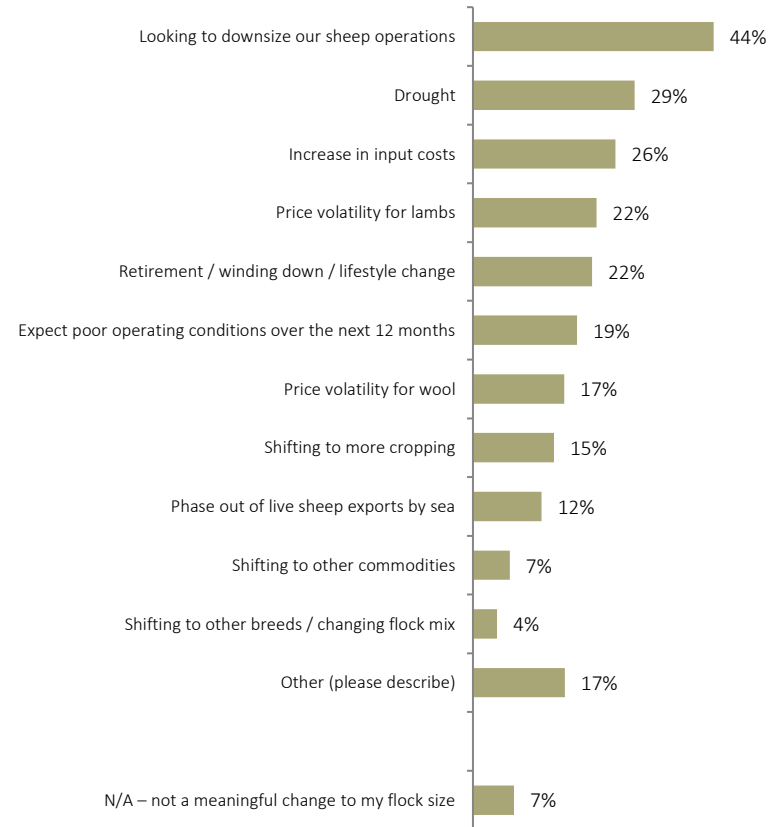
39% of producers reported they are likely to have FEWER lambs next year

We asked these producers what factors were influencing their plans to decrease the number of lambs...



Q21. You've indicated that you are likely to have fewer lambs next year compared to this year. What factors are influencing your plans for the next 12 months? Please select all the factors that are influencing your plans.

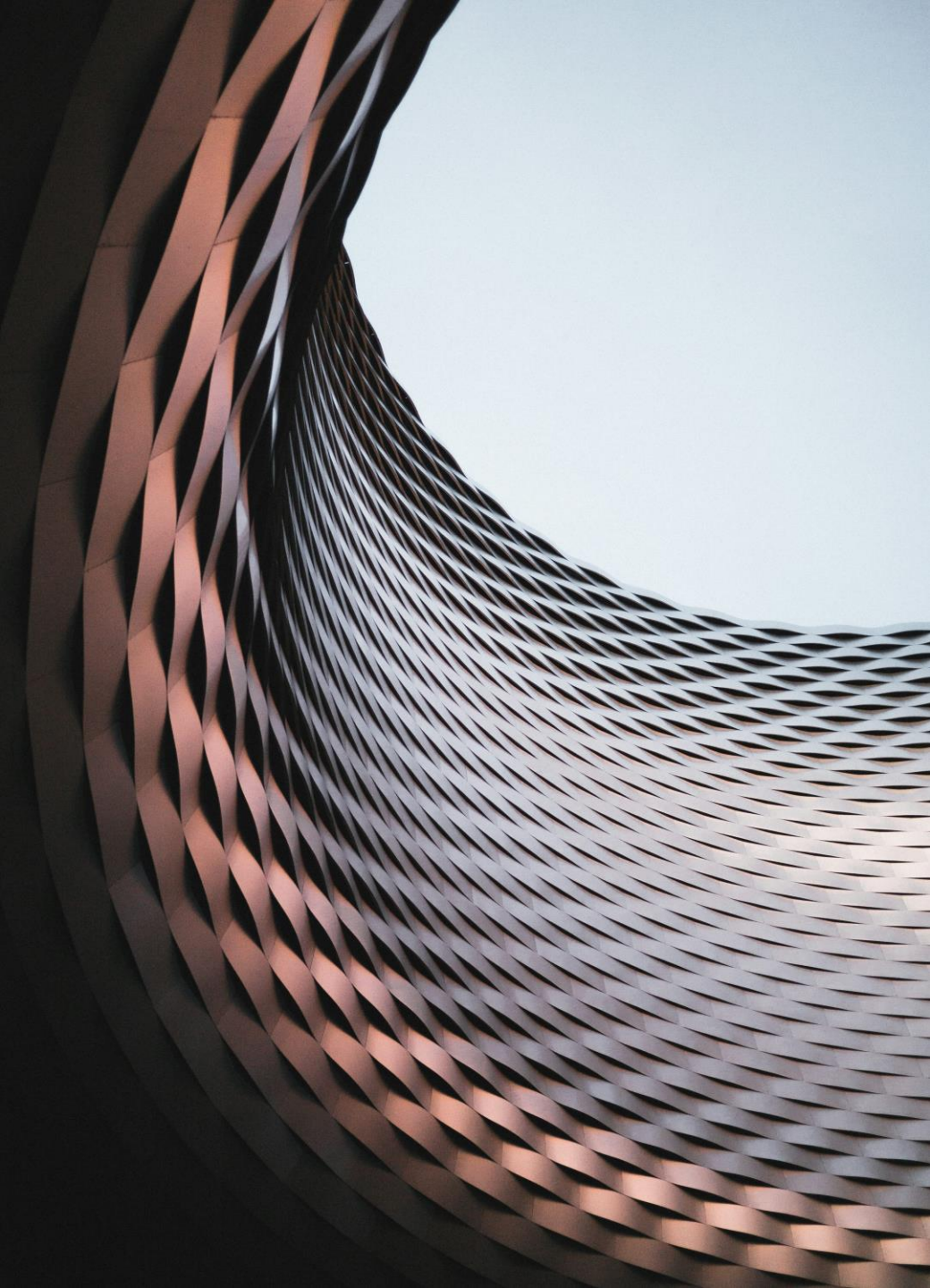
Base: All respondents who expect a decrease in lamb flock size in 2025, n = 1,025



Taking into account the forecast size of the lamb flock for those producers who indicated they would be increasing their flock size as well as those producers who indicated they would decrease their flock size, an estimation of the forecast lamb flock for 2025 is shown below. . .

	2025 LAMB FLOCK FORECAST		Of those who expect an increase in lambs		Of those who expect no change in lambs		Of those who expect a decrease in lambs
Total reported flock size for 2024:	27,484,676	=	10,795,102	+	5,219,873	+	11,469,702
Total expected flock size for 2025:	27,233,001	=	14,247,003	+	5,219,873	+	7,766,125
Difference of:	- 251,675	=	+ 3,451,901	+	0	+	- 3,703,577
% forecast change on 2024:	-1%						

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
Base:	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Total reported flock size for 2024:	10,137,440	555,411	4,361,964	766,448	7,234,972	4,399,549	1,506,841	1,440,368	3,570,434	3,694,659	5,263,970	6,773,171	3,370,627	1,864,606
Total expected flock size for 2025:	10,316,815	724,845	4,230,495	738,046	7,110,046	4,084,027	1,510,132	1,369,839	3,323,585	3,533,443	5,341,006	6,647,276	3,586,488	1,921,232
Difference of:	+ 179,375	+ 169,433	- 131,469	- 28,402	- 124,927	- 315,522	+ 3,291	- 70,530	- 246,850	- 161,216	+ 77,037	- 125,895	+ 215,861	+ 56,626
% forecast change on 2024:	+ 2%	+ 31%	- 3%	- 4%	- 2%	- 7%	0%	- 5%	- 7%	- 4%	+ 1%	- 2%	+ 6%	+ 3%



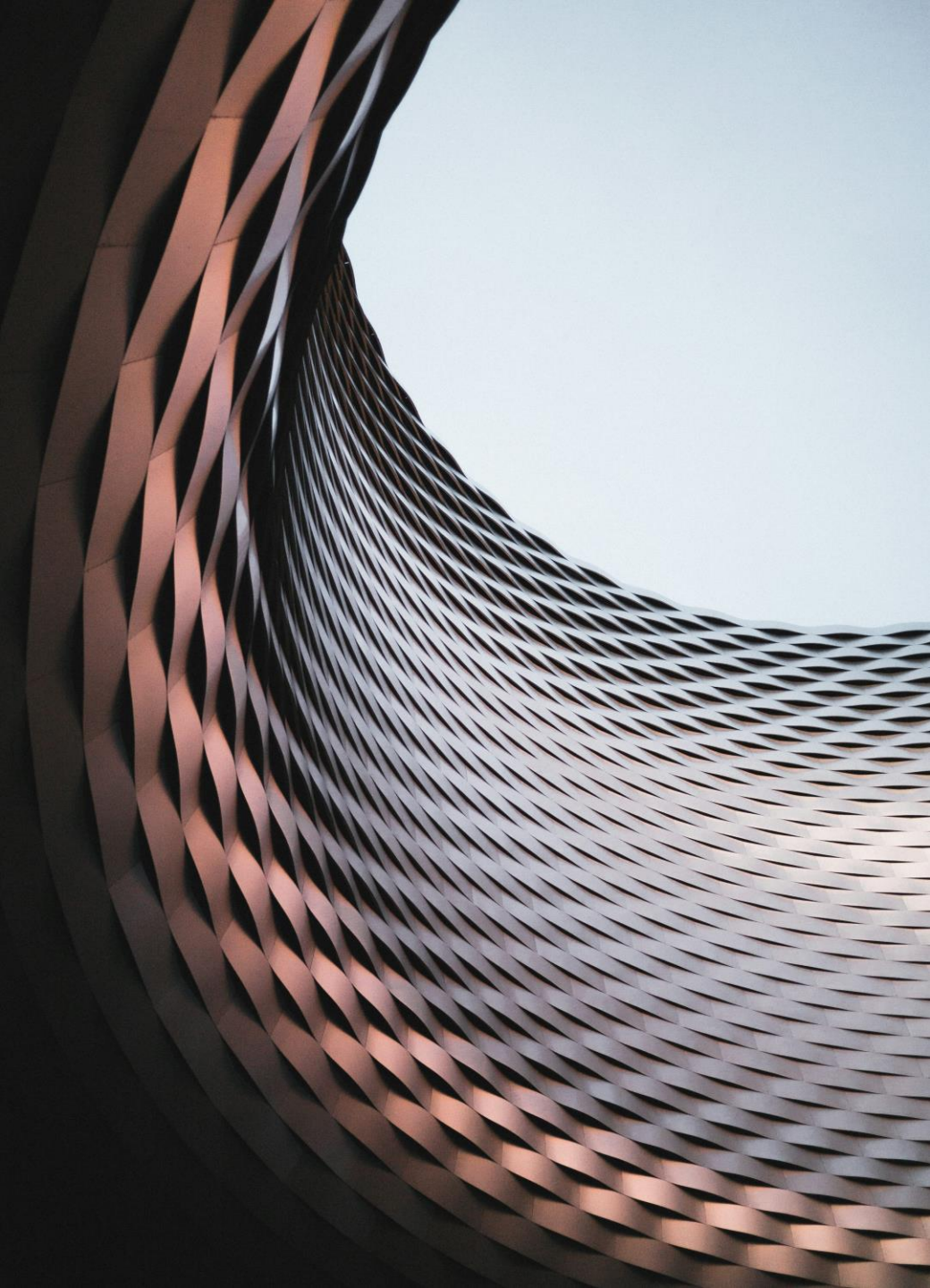
Summary of results: state & flock size

Summary of results by state

	OVERALL	State					
		NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
<i>Base:</i>	2,547	805	100	413	78	642	506
SENTIMENT							
Nett sentiment – wool industry	-19	-17	-12	-17	-21	-19	-30
Nett sentiment – sheepmeat industry	+42	+55	+41	+31	+27	+52	-2
Producers most likely to expect change:							
Input costs	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
Wool prices	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change
Lamb prices	Increase	Increase	No change	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
% more difficult to access skilled labour	52%	55%	60%	48%	48%	48%	55%
LAMB FLOCK PROFILE							
Estimate of total lamb flock	27.48M	10.14M	0.56M	4.36M	0.77M	7.23M	4.40M
Dominant breeds on hand:							
Prime lamb	38%	33%	8%	34%	61%	56%	27%
Merino	35%	37%	49%	41%	15%	21%	46%
First cross	14%	16%	3%	13%	16%	13%	13%
Proportion of lamb sales:							
Actual sales already made this spring	18%	26%	29%	18%	13%	8%	15%
Expected sales – spring flush to 31 Dec	36%	30%	23%	42%	21%	44%	36%
Expected sales – Jan-Jun 2025	46%	44%	48%	39%	66%	48%	49%
LAMB FLOCK INTENTIONS							
Reported lamb flock size for 2024	27.48M	10.14M	0.56M	4.36M	0.77M	7.23M	4.40M
Forecast lamb flock size for 2025	27.23M	10.32M	0.72M	4.23M	0.74M	7.11M	4.08M
Forecasted change in total lamb flock	- 1%	+ 2%	+ 31%	- 3%	- 4%	- 2%	- 7%
Producer-level intentions (ignoring size):							
Increase from 2024 to 2025	40%	47%	45%	37%	43%	36%	31%
No change	21%	22%	26%	15%	15%	23%	18%
Decrease from 2024 to 2025	39%	31%	29%	49%	42%	41%	51%
Major factors influencing increase in 2025:							
Expect better lambing results next year	44%	41%	56%	58%	31%	43%	46%
Retaining more ewes	33%	36%	40%	19%	26%	34%	30%
Looking to expand our sheep operations	29%	34%	26%	19%	32%	28%	18%

Summary of results by total flock size

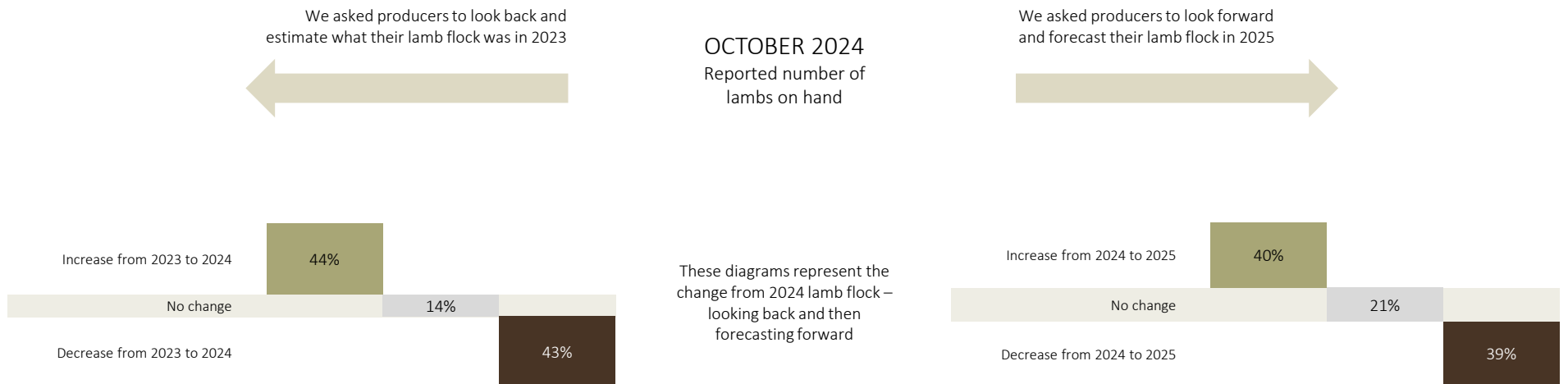
	OVERALL	Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
		Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	2,547	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
SENTIMENT									
Nett sentiment – wool industry	-19	-7	-23	-28	-30	-33	-41	-35	-25
Nett sentiment – sheepmeat industry	+42	+39	+46	+48	+42	+38	+49	+54	+76
Producers most likely to expect change:									
Input costs	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
Wool prices	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	No change	Increase
Lamb prices	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase	Increase
% more difficult to access skilled labour	52%	54%	49%	52%	50%	50%	49%	47%	30%
LAMB FLOCK PROFILE									
Estimate of total lamb flock	27.48M	1.51M	1.44M	3.57M	3.69M	5.26M	6.77M	3.37M	1.86M
Dominant breeds on hand:									
Prime lamb	38%	38%	50%	43%	38%	34%	36%	35%	46%
Merino	35%	11%	16%	27%	34%	39%	38%	49%	35%
First cross	14%	16%	11%	13%	14%	14%	16%	12%	11%
Proportion of lamb sales:									
Actual sales already made this spring	18%	19%	19%	21%	18%	19%	18%	15%	16%
Expected sales – spring flush to 31 Dec	36%	36%	36%	34%	36%	35%	35%	38%	44%
Expected sales – Jan-Jun 2025	46%	45%	45%	45%	46%	46%	47%	47%	40%
LAMB FLOCK INTENTIONS									
Reported lamb flock size for 2024	27.48M	1.51M	1.44M	3.57M	3.69M	5.26M	6.77M	3.37M	1.86M
Forecast lamb flock size for 2025	27.23M	1.51M	1.37M	3.32M	3.53M	5.34M	6.65M	3.59M	1.92M
Forecasted change in total lamb flock	- 1%	0%	- 5%	- 7%	- 4%	+ 1%	- 2%	+ 6%	+ 3%
Producer-level intentions (ignoring size):									
Increase from 2024 to 2025	40%	42%	39%	35%	37%	42%	42%	50%	46%
No change	21%	21%	20%	21%	24%	18%	20%	25%	22%
Decrease from 2024 to 2025	39%	38%	40%	44%	39%	40%	39%	25%	31%
Major factors influencing increase in 2025:									
Expect better lambing results next year	44%	40%	45%	44%	44%	54%	58%	60%	55%
Retaining more ewes	33%	30%	41%	32%	28%	38%	38%	33%	48%
Looking to expand our sheep operations	29%	28%	33%	30%	25%	29%	31%	33%	33%



Additional analysis

Lamb flock size: a 3-year perspective

As part of the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions Survey, producers were asked to look back and estimate what their lamb flock was in 2023 as well as to look forward and forecast their lamb flock size for 2025. This then provided 3 points in time – the 2023 flock size, the current 2024 flock size and the forecast flock size for 2025. An analysis of this data is shown below.



Lamb flock size: a 3-year perspective

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Increase from 2024 to 2025	47%	45%	37%	43%	36%	31%	42%	39%	35%	37%	42%	42%	50%	46%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Increase 2025	21%	21%	7%	17%	16%	7%	15%	17%	15%	14%	18%	17%	23%	27%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Increase 2025	5%	5%	2%	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	2%	3%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Increase 2025	21%	19%	29%	25%	17%	23%	23%	19%	17%	20%	21%	20%	25%	16%
No change	22%	26%	15%	15%	23%	18%	21%	20%	21%	24%	18%	20%	25%	22%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Same 2025	9%	5%	5%	6%	7%	3%	7%	7%	7%	9%	5%	8%	9%	7%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Same 2025	8%	12%	3%	8%	7%	6%	6%	7%	8%	9%	7%	7%	10%	14%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Same 2025	6%	9%	6%	<1%	9%	8%	8%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	6%	1%
Decrease from 2024 to 2025	31%	29%	49%	42%	41%	51%	38%	40%	44%	39%	40%	39%	25%	31%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Decrease 2025	21%	17%	23%	23%	22%	19%	21%	21%	22%	21%	20%	18%	14%	16%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Decrease 2025	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	5%	3%	2%	3%	2%	6%	5%	2%	9%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Decrease 2025	8%	10%	23%	18%	15%	27%	13%	17%	19%	16%	13%	15%	9%	7%

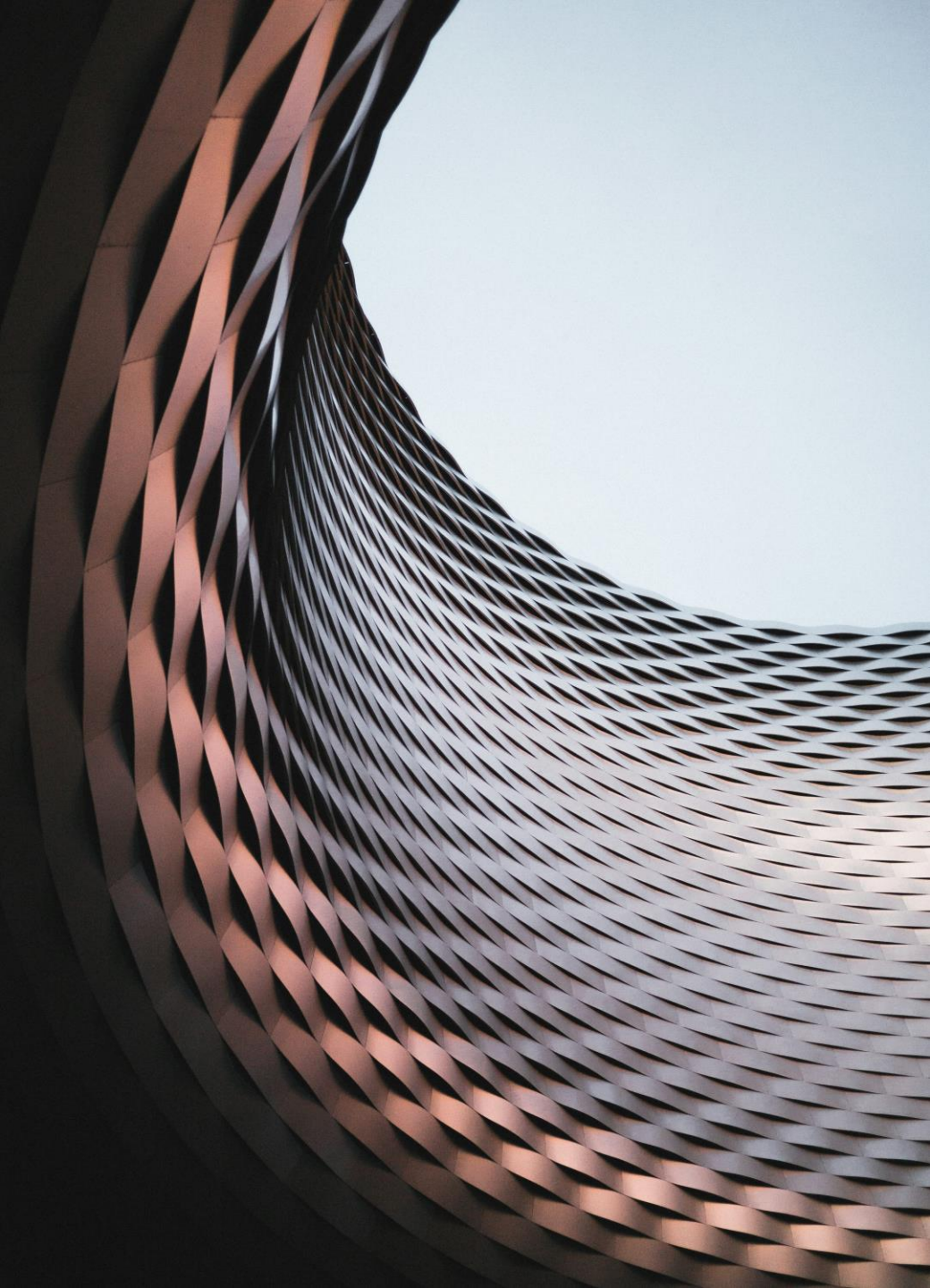
Breeding ewe flock size: a 3-year perspective

As part of the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions Survey, producers were asked to look back and estimate what their breeding ewe flock was in 2023 as well as to look forward and forecast their breeding ewe flock size for 2025. This then provided 3 points in time – the 2023 flock size, the current 2024 flock size and the forecast flock size for 2025. An analysis of this data is shown below.



Breeding ewe flock size: a 3-year perspective

	State						Total Flock Size (sheep and lambs)							
	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
<i>Base:</i>	805	100	413	78	642	506	674	334	428	280	336	310	140	45
Increase from 2024 to 2025	27%	16%	17%	26%	23%	11%	24%	19%	20%	18%	23%	23%	18%	29%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Increase 2025	12%	9%	5%	4%	10%	4%	10%	8%	8%	9%	10%	13%	10%	14%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Increase 2025	3%	3%	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	2%	6%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Increase 2025	12%	3%	11%	17%	11%	5%	12%	9%	10%	8%	9%	7%	5%	9%
No change	35%	44%	32%	33%	32%	27%	36%	32%	30%	30%	27%	28%	38%	32%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Same 2025	13%	20%	6%	7%	7%	7%	9%	12%	11%	8%	9%	11%	20%	12%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Same 2025	13%	15%	10%	10%	12%	9%	13%	10%	9%	15%	11%	12%	12%	14%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Same 2025	9%	10%	16%	16%	12%	12%	15%	10%	10%	7%	6%	5%	6%	6%
Decrease from 2024 to 2025	38%	40%	52%	42%	45%	62%	39%	49%	50%	51%	51%	50%	44%	39%
2023 -> Increase 2024 -> Decrease 2025	17%	18%	16%	16%	16%	19%	13%	18%	15%	24%	23%	24%	23%	18%
2023 -> Same 2024 -> Decrease 2025	5%	4%	6%	4%	8%	11%	6%	7%	9%	6%	8%	6%	5%	11%
2023 -> Decrease 2024 -> Decrease 2025	16%	18%	30%	22%	20%	33%	20%	24%	26%	21%	19%	20%	16%	10%



Attachments

There were several definitions and specifications provided to producers in the survey. An outline of the key definitions used in the October survey are provided below.

Flock Categories

Breeding ewes	Breeding ewes (including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding).
Lambs	Lambs producers had after lambing but before sales (not including ewe lambs and hoggets intended for breeding).

Sheep Breeds

Merino	Main breed of sheep for wool production.
First cross	Merino crossed with a long-haired sheep of a different breed.
Shedding	Breeds of sheep that shed their wool without shearing e.g. Australian White or Dorper. Could also be referred to as hair sheep.
Prime lamb	Animal entirely focused on meat (lamb) production e.g. Composite, Terminal, Suffolk or Dorset.
Dual purpose	Animal with no more than 50% Merino content geared towards both meat and wool production equally.
Other	Any breeds that do not fit into the definitions above.

Lamb Sales Periods

Sales completed	Actual sales made by producers this spring up to the point of interview (from 1 July 2024 to now).
EOY Sales	Expected sales to be made in the remaining spring flush and the period up to 31 December 2024.
Sales next year	Expected sales of lambs in the first half of 2025 (January to June).

Sales Channels

Saleyard auction
Paddock sales
Over the hooks
Forward price contracts
Online (e.g. AuctionsPlus, Farmgate Auctions)
Some other way

Survey Program The Sheep Producers Intentions Survey, undertaken by MLA and AWI, is used to help industry determine wool and lamb production forecasts, and to understand the breed composition of the Australian flock on a national, state and regional basis. The results are used by processors for budgeting purposes and allows import markets to ascertain short-term supply estimates.

Methodology The October 2024 survey used a mixed-method approach. Producers with email contact details were provided with the opportunity to respond to an online survey invitation. Up to four invitations (one initial and three reminders) were sent to producers.

Sample lists Approval was sought and received to use the MLA Levy Payer Register as the sample. This data was cleaned for any duplicates by email and phone number before use in the research.

Questionnaire A 15-minute questionnaire was used to collect the required information. The survey questionnaire covered the following topic areas:

- Producer sentiment and outlook – on the wool sector, on the sheepmeat sector, on input prices, wool prices, lamb prices and access to skilled labour;
- Flock size estimates (flock estimates included breeding ewes and lambs)
- Lamb flock profiles
- Producer intentions (for their lamb flock and breeding ewe flock)

Sample size A total of n = 2,547 responses were provided by producers as follows:

	Overall	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
# of surveys	n = 2,547	n = 3	n = 805	n = 0	n = 100	n = 413	n = 78	n = 642	n = 506

Timing The interviewing was undertaken between the 1st October – 30th October 2024.

Weighting The survey results were weighted. A description of the weighting process used for the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions Survey follows next.

Survey data is often weighted to ensure estimates provide a representative match of the population being estimated and the estimates deliver statistical reliable measures.

For the Sheep Producers Intentions Survey, data has been weighted to ensure the sample provides a strong representation of the population of producers as possible. For this survey, it was considered important to weight the survey data to ensure we have:

- Coverage across the various regions as producers will have different operating conditions. For our purposes, a region is a state – so we need to weight so that our final sample is representative of the distribution of producers across states.
- Coverage across farm businesses of different sizes – obviously, the larger businesses have larger flocks so ensuring we have an appropriate mix of small, medium, large and very large producers is vital for the estimation process.

There may be other variables that help describe the possible differences across producers, but these two variables (state and flock size) will more than likely account for the likely differences that exist in the population of all producers.

For this survey, an updated weighting approach was utilised using the most recent available information. The weighting approach involved two factors:

- **State:** the estimate of the total number of agricultural businesses with sheep and lambs in each state from the Levy Payer Register for the most recent financial year (2023-24), totalling just under 42k producers (up from the ABS Ag Census 2020-21 estimate adjusted upwards to account for EVAO under \$40k of just under 41k, a 2.5% increase).
- **Total Flock Size:** With no recent data available to adjust or inform this factor, the proportional breakdown of the total flock size categories across each state from the previous weighting matrix was used (based on the most recent ABS Ag Census data available, 2020-21).

This final weighting matrix was then used to weight the October 2024 Sheep Producers Intentions survey data.

Estimated total number of agricultural businesses with sheep and lambs

	ALL FLOCK SIZES	Less than 500	500 – < 1,000	1,000 – < 2,000	2,000 – < 3,000	3,000 – < 5,000	5,000 – < 10,000	10,000 – < 20,000	20,000 or more
AUSTRALIA	41,994	19,653	4,983	6,394	3,891	3,651	2,547	716	159
NSW	15,978	7,218	2,001	2,574	1,526	1,430	908	255	65
VIC	12,043	6,384	1,463	1,643	1,014	807	567	134	32
SA	6,185	2,384	857	1,233	648	575	358	105	25
WA	4,770	1,622	442	719	571	687	551	160	19
QLD	1,600	1,148	79	105	72	82	82	25	6
TAS	1,299	811	126	115	60	65	77	34	12
ACT	115	82	15	4	0	5	5	4	0
NT	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reliability of the estimates

The estimates in this report are based on information obtained from a sample survey. Any data collection may encounter factors, known as non-sampling error, which can impact on the reliability of the resulting statistics. In addition, the reliability of estimates based on sample surveys are also subject to sampling variability. That is, the estimates may differ from those that would have been produced had all persons in the population been included in the survey.

Non-sampling error

Non-sampling error may occur in any collection, whether it is based on a sample or a full count such as a census. Sources of non-sampling error include non-response, errors in reporting by respondents or recording of answers by interviewers and errors in coding and processing data. Every effort is made to reduce non-sampling error by careful design of survey questionnaires and quality control procedures at all stages of data processing.

Sampling error

One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of persons was included. There are about two chances in three (67%) that a sample estimate will differ by less than one SE from the number that would have been obtained if all persons had been surveyed, and about 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the difference will be less than two SEs.

Calculation of confidence interval

If 50% of all the people in a population of 20,000 people drink coffee in the morning, and if you were repeat the survey of 377 people ("Did you drink coffee this morning?") many times, then 95% of the time, your survey would find that between 45% and 55% of the people in your sample answered "Yes".

The remaining 5% of the time, or for 1 in 20 survey questions, you would expect the survey response to more than the margin of error away from the true answer.

When you survey a sample of the population, you don't know that you've found the correct answer, but you do know that there's a 95% chance that you're within the margin of error of the correct answer.

In terms of the numbers selected above, the margin of error *MoE* is given by:

$$MoE = z * \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p})}{n}}$$

where *n* is the sample size, \hat{p} is the fraction of responses that you are interested in, and *z* is the [critical value](#) for the 95% confidence level (in this case, 1.96).

This calculation is based on the [Normal distribution](#) and assumes you have more than about 30 samples.

Margin of Error for a given sample size and survey estimate	Sample Size
	2,547 (total surveys completed)
10%	± 1.13%
20%	± 1.51%
30%	± 1.72%
40%	± 1.84%
50%	± 1.88%
60%	± 1.84%
70%	± 1.72%
80%	± 1.51%
90%	± 1.13%

	Estimated Population	Sample Size	Margin of Error (assuming max survey estimate of 50%)
Australia	2,547	41,994	± 1.88%
NSW	805	15,978	± 3.37%
VIC	642	12,043	± 3.76%
WA	506	4,770	± 4.12%
SA	413	6,185	± 4.66%
QLD	100	1,600	± 9.49%
TAS	78	1,299	± 10.76%
ACT	3	115	n/a
NT	0	4	n/a

Note. Margin of Errors are provided at the 95% confidence level on the assumption of a large population size (non-finite) and normally distributed. Results labelled "n/a" are due to the assumption of the normal distribution not being upheld ($n\hat{p} < 10$ or $n(1-\hat{p}) < 10$).



Sheep Producers Intentions Survey OCTOBER 2024

Sheep Producers Intentions Survey October 2024

This research was conducted by Intuitive Solutions on behalf of MLA and AWI. For more information, please contact:



Michael Sparks
Intuitive Solutions
Phone: 0412 868 918
Email: mspark@intuitivesolutions.com.au



Erin Lukey
Meat and Livestock Australia
Phone: (02) 9463 9210
Email: elukey@mla.com.au

Intuitive Solutions is an independent market research supplier and member of The Research Society (formerly the Australian Market & Social Research Society or AMSRS). This research was conducted under The Research Society Code of Conduct.

www.intuitivesolutions.com.au