



National Livestock Reporting Service

Western Young Cattle Indicator

The Western Young Cattle Indicator, or WYCI, is a seven-day rolling average of young cattle from two saleyards across WA. It is expressed in cents per kilogram carcass (or dressed) weight (¢/kg cwt) and is rounded to two decimal points.

What is a seven-day rolling average?

At any point in time, a seven-day rolling average includes data from the past seven calendar days. In the case of the WYCI, the dataset takes the average ¢/kg cwt of an animal matching the specifications of the indicator per day for the past week, adds them up and divides the figure by seven. This figure is updated daily to create a rolling average value for this specification of animal.

WYCI composition

The WYCI includes vealer and yearling heifers and steers with muscle score C, fat score 2 and 3, and live weight from 200kg (Table 1). The sales included in the WYCI are outlined in Table 2.


Table 1: Cattle categories in the WYCI

Classification	Muscle and fat score	Live weight (kg)	Sales prefix*
Vealer steers	C	200.1-280	PR
	2,3	280.1-330	RS
		330.1+	FD
Vealer heifers	C	200.1-280	PR
	2,3	280.1-330	RS
		330.1+	FD
Yearling steers	C	200.1-330	PR
	2,3	330.1-400	RS
		400.1+	FD
Yearling heifers	C	200.1-330	PR
	2,3	330.1-400	RS
		400.1+	FD



Table 2: Prime sales in the WYCI⁺

Monday		Thursday	
Muchea	WA	Mount Barker	WA




* PR - Processor purchased, RS - Restocker purchased, FD - Feeder purchased.
 + Subject to revision. Note – Closed: Boyanup physical (Oct 2019).

How is the WYCI calculated?

The WYCI is the average price of cattle meeting the Indicator specifications for the past seven calendar days. It is calculated as follows, using the average live weight price, dressing percentage and number of head for individual pens:

- 1 The carcase weight (cwt) price for each pen is calculated.

$$\text{CWT} = \text{lwt price} \div \text{dressing percentage}$$

(expressed as a fraction e.g. 55% = 0.55)

- 2 The average price for each pen is weighted by the number of head in the pen. This is done by calculating the pen value.

$$\text{Pen value} = \text{cwt price} \times \text{head in pen}$$

- 3 The WYCI value (¢/kg cwt) is obtained by dividing the sum of all pen values by the total number of cattle meeting the WYCI specifications and rounding to two decimal points.

$$\text{WYCI} = \frac{\text{Sum of all pen values}}{\text{Total head in WYCI}}$$



The purpose of the WYCI

The WYCI is designed to be applicable to beef industry participants based in WA. Much like its eastern equivalent, the Eastern Young Cattle Indicator (EYCI), the WYCI describes general movements in market prices, drawing on data from the two key physical cattle sales in WA - Muchea and Mt Barker.

Price movements in the WYCI follow the general trends of the EYCI and other MLA cattle indicators. This is expected, as many major Australian and global factors that influence beef demand and supply have an impact across all states. However, there are several factors, largely related to regional weather influences and distance from major markets, that distinctively reflect trends in the WA cattle market.

Performance

Since 2017, the average weight of WYCI eligible cattle has typically ranged from 320-360kg, made up predominately of vealer steers and heifers (65%), with the remainder yearlings. Feedlotter and restockers purchase the majority, with processors acquiring a smaller share. Over this period, the average buyer breakdown for the total share of eligible cattle has consisted of 67% feedlotter, 25% restockers and 8% processors. These dynamics will vary to a degree, largely dependent on seasonal factors. Typically, better seasonal conditions will cause the WYCI to rise and drier conditions to have the opposite effect.

Keep up to date on all WYCI price movements and key insights by subscribing at: mla.com.au/prices-markets/subscriptions

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Price movements

It is important to note that movements in prices in individual saleyards and livestock categories are likely to be much more volatile than the WYCI, while still subject to the same underlying price trends.

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