








# Quarterly production and slaughter volumes

## December Quarter 2023 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**
	Figure	<b>1,848,000</b>	<b>578,888</b>	<b>313.25</b>	<b>199,692</b>	<b>2,047,692</b>	<b>7,705,492</b>	<b>2,921,194,064</b>	<b>1,427</b>	The fourth quarter saw a reduction in cattle supply returning after the top numbers seen through Q3. Despite higher retention this quarter, supply and production figures are still well above year ago levels.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-3%	-2%	2%	7%	-2%	3%	-9%	-7%	
	Year on year change	26%	24%	-2%	9%	24%	19%	-19%	-35%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	6%	10%	3%	-12%	4%	-2%	-12%	-11%	
	Figure	<b>981,800</b>	<b>336,549</b>	<b>342.79</b>	—	—	—	—	—	Bull, bullock and steer slaughter, production, and carcase weights stayed relatively flat into the fourth quarter. Supply of processor ready cattle remain stable despite shifts in weather events.
	Quarter on Quarter change	1%	0%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	16%	14%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	12%	14%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	<b>866,200</b>	<b>242,339</b>	<b>279.77</b>	—	—	—	—	—	A reduction in female slaughter driven by rainfall encouraged female retention. Female carcase weights lifted quarter on quarter after high female turnoff in Q3 dropped carcase weights.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-7%	-4%	4%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	41%	40%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	2%	6%	3%	—	—	—	—	—	
<b>Female slaughter rate (FSR)</b>	<b>FSR</b>	<b>46.9%</b>	<b>Rebuild Status</b>							
	Quarter on Quarter change	-2%	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 tends to use this as a reference point for gauging whether the national cattle herd is undergoing a liquidation or rebuild phase, though it is not a scientific tipping-point. The herd has entered a liquidation phase now the FSR has been above 47% for two quarters.							
	Year on year change	5%								
	Comparison to 5 year average	-2%								
	Figure	<b>9,321,300</b>	<b>222,651</b>	<b>23.89</b>	<b>170,682</b>	<b>9,491,982</b>	<b>35,288,517</b>	<b>883,459,478</b>	<b>93.07</b>	Record quarterly sheepmeat production was sustained into the last quarter of 2023. Inflated supply led to prices easing further during the fourth quarter, having a tangible impact on the sectors production value.
	Quarter on Quarter change	7%	3%	-4%	177%	9%	3%	-8%	-15%	
	Year on year change	21%	18%	-3%	-21%	19%	23%	-28%	-40%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	26%	23%	-3%	-9%	25%	16%	-25%	-36%	
	Figure	<b>6,674,500</b>	<b>153,452</b>	<b>22.99</b>	—	—	—	—	—	Lamb carcase weights were impacted by high supply of lamb through to processors. This resulted in a quarter on quarter dip in production in lamb production, despite the record slaughter figures.
	Quarter on Quarter change	1%	-5%	-6%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	19%	15%	-3%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	22%	16%	-5%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	<b>2,646,800</b>	<b>69,199</b>	<b>26.14</b>	—	—	—	—	—	Price disparities between sheep and lamb led to processor focus on mutton production. Sustained turnoff and discounted prices resulted in significant lifts to production and slaughter on short- and long-term averages.
	Quarter on Quarter change	27%	28%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	25%	22%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	37%	41%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	<b>606,949</b>	<b>9,314</b>	<b>15.35</b>	<b>3,652</b>	<b>610,601</b>	<b>2,376,786</b>	—	—	Goat slaughter and production eased slightly after record levels of slaughter and production in the third quarter of 2023. There is maintained global demand for goatmeat.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-12%	-13%	-1%	-19%	-12%	-2%	—	—	
	Year on year change	38%	11%	-20%	8%	38%	42%	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	61%	55%	-4%	15%	60%	56%	—	—	

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

Source: MLA/ABS

\*NB: Based on historical seasonality (2000–2022)

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