

# VIC sheep and lamb summary

Produced by MLA's National Livestock Reporting Service

Week Ending 27 May, 2005

## Supply falls

Throughput at MLA's NLRS reported markets for both lambs and sheep fell in almost a complete reversal on last week. Lamb numbers declined by 14% while sheep fell rather substantially, being down by 35%.

Perhaps the rainfall received across a majority of the state, albeit only moderate (up to 16mm was recorded in the Western district) may have influenced some producers into a false sense that this was the start of a good break, and they held back numbers in good faith. The more probable reason could well be that numbers are declining which does seem the most logical because by this time of the year, large supplies are very unusual. Lamb numbers at both Ballarat and Bendigo remained fairly high compared to the

## Stock Movements

### Saleyard throughput

Sheep	Lambs
21,585	36,311

### Slaughter statistics

Sheep	Lambs
59,531	134,168

### ESTLI

351 ¢/kg cwt

same period last year while Hamilton's penning was also slightly higher than last week's too is up compared to previous years.

In considering this there are still supplies available either being supplementary fed or contracted into registered feedlots. One feedlot operator this week had to turn away some 6,000 lambs, even though they have a capacity of being able to accommodate 15,000 head. Heavy lambs were in larger supply at Ballarat and Hamilton but those drafts weighing over 24kg declined at Bendigo.

Both trade and light lambs were in fair supply, with the bulk being heavier trades (20 to 22kg), whilst there was quite a varied selection of light lambs offered. The large decline in sheep was caused at Hamilton where numbers came close to being cut in half.

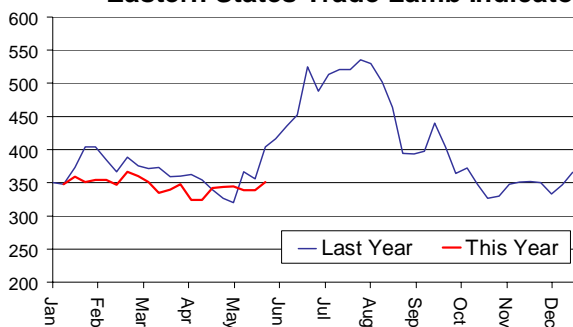
## Trade Lambs

Grade	3 Score			4 Score		
	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin
18 to 20kg	75	362	5	79	361	7
18 to 20kg 1X	74	346	6	-	-	-
20 to 22kg	79	347	5	80	335	8

## Export Lambs

Grade	3 Score			4 Score		
	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin
22-24kg	82	310	8	81	311	9
24-26kg	86	302	11	86	299	10
26kg +	-	-	-	96	302	11

## Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator



## Lambs dearer, sheep firm

Prices for most categories of lambs were dearer by between \$4 and \$8/head throughout the week. Most 4 and 5 scores rose from 20¢ to 35¢/kg to average at rates around 290¢ to 310¢/kg for those between 22 to 26kg, while the extra heavy 5 scores came close to 280¢/kg, with a few sales breaking through the \$100/head, the first time for several weeks.

The best trade weights averaged 350¢ to 360¢/kg to show rises of 20¢ to 30¢/kg with the very choice light trade lambs returning rates of better than 380¢/kg on a number of occasions. One major supermarket is still buying light lambs to feed on, and there was perhaps a little more restocker demand at some centres.

Sheep values were mainly firm to \$4/head dearer but there were some inconsistencies at individual markets in both the light and heavy mutton classes. Mutton rates varied but the majority ranged between 150¢ and 180¢/kg as only some sales of very light 1 score and heavy over-fat 5 scores fell below 120¢/kg.

## Mutton - Ewes

Grade	2 Score			3 Score		
	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin	\$/head	¢/kg cwt	\$/Skin
0-18kg	32	152	6	-	-	-
18-24kg	36	156	5	42	157	7

## Over the Hooks

Grade	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Trade	335	334	348
Export	291	296	314
Mutton	151	149	177

**Key to Abbreviations** 1X: First cross RS: Restocker cwt: Carcase Weight lwt: Liveweight

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