

# Fast Facts

# 2023

## Australia's sheepmeat industry

**Sheep farming industry turnover in 2020–21 was \$6.4 billion, 19% below year-ago levels (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022).**

At the time of publication, figures included in this document were the most up to date available but may be subject to revision.

### Flock facts and figures:

- There are 19,692 agricultural businesses involved in the sheep and lamb industry (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022).
- There were 70 million head of sheep in Australia as of 30 June 2022 (ABS).
- 5% of the national flock were breeding ewes aged one-year and older as at 30 June 2021 (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022)
- The majority of Australia's sheep population were located in New South Wales (38%), Victoria (21%), Western Australia (18%) and South Australia (15%). Tasmania and Queensland each has 4% of the national flock (ABS).

### People in the industry:

- Around 191,000 people are directly employed in the red meat and livestock industry, including on-farm production, processing and retail (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022).

### How much is produced?

- In 2022, Australia produced 537,013 tonnes carcass weight (cwt) of lamb and 172,919 tonnes cwt of mutton (ABS).
- Total sheepmeat production (lamb and mutton) was 709,932 tonnes cwt in 2022, 7% above year-ago levels, (ABS).

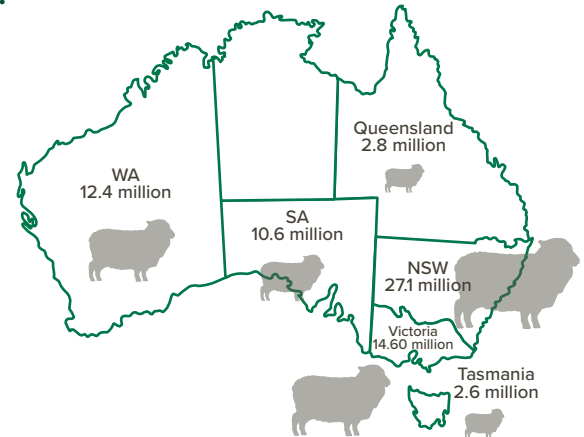
### What is the value of production

- The gross value of Australian lamb and mutton production is expected to fall to \$4.3 billion in 2023–24 due to lower prices offsetting increased turnoff (ABARES).
- The average farm cash income of Australian slaughter lamb producers was estimated at \$126,100 in 2022 a 6% decrease year-on-year (ABARES Australian Agricultural and Grazing Industries Survey).

### Domestic value and consumption:

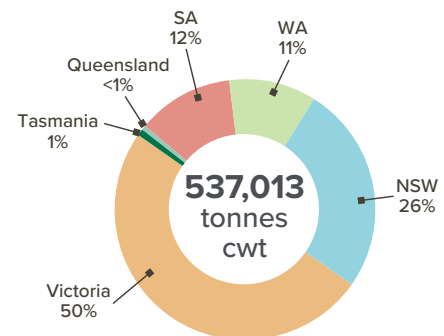
- Australia continues to be one of the largest per capita consumers of sheepmeat in the world. In 2022, Australians consumed approximately 6kg of sheepmeat per person (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022).
- Consumer preferences toward lamb combined with increased interest from export markets for quality sheepmeat has resulted in almost all of Australia's mutton being exported (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2022).
- Domestic expenditure was approximately \$3.4 billion on lamb and \$50 million on mutton in 2022 (MLA estimate).

National sheep numbers as at June 2022: 70.2 million head



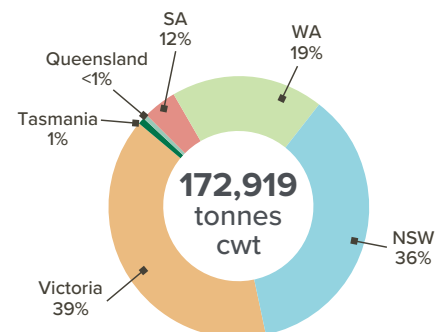
Source: ABS

### Australian lamb production



Source: ABS, 2022

### Australian mutton production



Source: ABS, 2022

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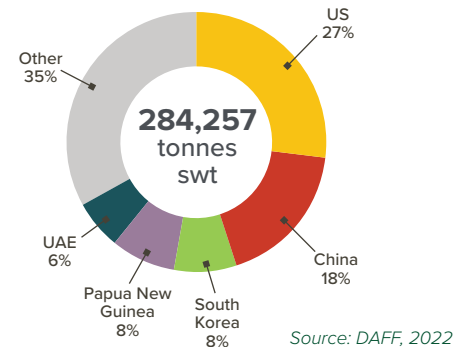
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## Australia's sheepmeat industry

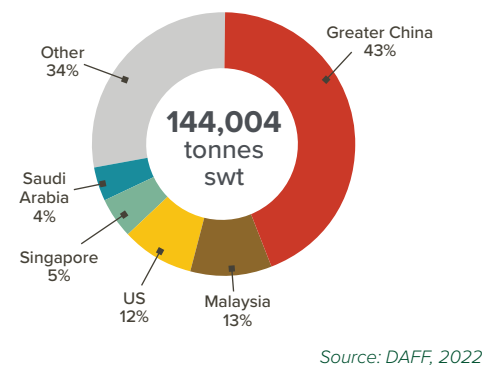
### Export value and volume:

- In 2022, Australian lamb exports totalled 284,192 tonnes shipped weight (swt), up 7% year-on-year and 4% above the five-year average (DAFF).
- Australian mutton exports were 144,005 tonnes swt in 2022, increasing 2% year-on-year but down 9% on the five-year average (DAFF).
- The value of Australian sheepmeat (lamb and mutton) exports in 2022 was \$4.6 billion, up 14% from the previous year (IHS Markit).
- In 2022, Australian live sheep exports totalled 502,758 head, down 13% on the previous year (DAFF).

### Australian lamb exports



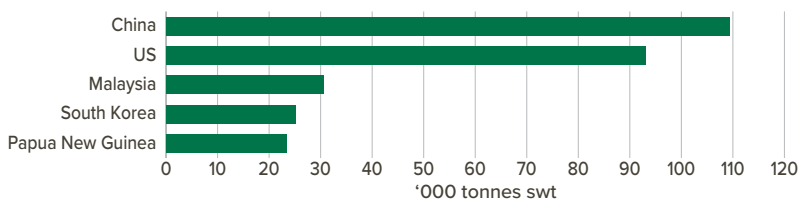
### Australian mutton exports



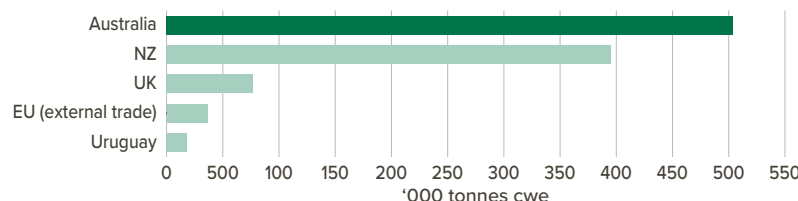
### Australia's place in the world:

- In 2022, Australia's top three sheepmeat (lamb and mutton) export destinations (in volume terms) were China (109,397 tonnes swt, or 26% of total exports), the US (92,566 tonnes swt, or 22% of total exports) and Malaysia (30,546 tonnes swt, or 7% of total exports) (DAFF).
- Australia is the largest exporter of sheepmeat in the world (IHS Markit, UN Comtrade).
- Australia accounted for around 6.7% of global sheepmeat production in 2021 (ABS, FAO).

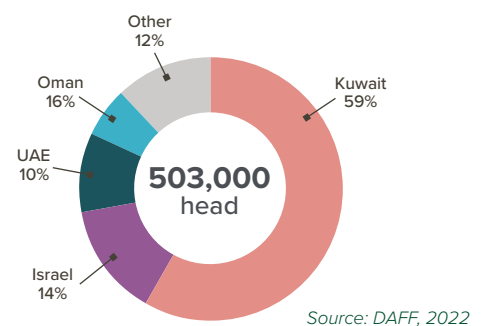
### Australia's top five mutton export markets in 2022



### Top five sheepmeat exporting countries in 2022



### Australian live sheep exports



For further information read MLA's *State of the Industry Report – 2022* [Click here to read the report](#)

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