

final report

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Feedlot sustainability benchmarking

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Executive summary

The Australian feedlot industry has established criteria to assess the ongoing sustainability performance of the feedlot sector in the areas of animal welfare, environment and people as part of a wider Red Meat Advisory Council initiative known as the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework. The Framework is built on four themes, animal welfare, environmental stewardship, economic resilience and people and the community.

A pilot project within the feedlot industry to establish mechanisms to collect information for the framework was conducted.

It was concluded that:

- Sustainability indicators where possible, should be easily collected from feedlots
- Mechanisms to collect data from NFAS accredited feedlots should be by face-to-face contact utilising the ALFA-MLA Technical Services Officer or Aus-Meat NFAS auditor.
- Online surveys are not the preferred medium to collect data from medium to large feedlots in the industry due to survey fatigue
- Water, Energy and Greenhouse gas emissions life-cycle analysis is a highly technical field that requires a suitably qualified consultant to integrate on-feedlot data analysis, feedlot closeout performance, emission and life cycle analysis models.
- Future exercises in life-cycle analysis should be conducted at a single feedlot level successfully, prior to expanding the modelling across the feedlot industry.

The learnings from this project will improve future collection of indicators for the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework.