








# Quarterly production and slaughter volumes

## December Quarter 2024 data

Published: March 2025

Emily Tan – Market Information Analyst – insights@mla.com.au

Published: March 2025		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	2,132,700	662,827	310.79	201,267	2,333,967	9,078,545	\$4,195,383,074	\$1,967	Over the fourth quarter, cattle supply reduced after witnessing the highest quarterly cattle slaughter since 2019. Annual cattle slaughter in 2024 hit 8.3 million, marking it the largest slaughter since 2019.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-5%	-4%	1%	-2%	-5%	1%	-2%	3%	
	Year on year change	15%	14%	-1%	1%	14%	18%	44%	24%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	24%	25%	0%	4%	22%	20%	22%	-4%	
	Figure	1,028,379	355,890	346.07	—	—	—	—	—	Bull, bullock and steer slaughter, production eased by 4% while carcase weights remained stable. However over the last 5 years male cattle slaughter remains elevated.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-4%	-4%	0%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	5%	7%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	15%	17%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	1,104,368	306,938	277.93	—	—	—	—	—	Cow and heifer slaughter eased by 6% since the last quarter, a slowing of cow slaughter after consecutive quarters of high throughput.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-6%	-4%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	27%	26%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	33%	35%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
Female slaughter rate (FSR)	FSR	51.8%	Rebuild Status  The Female Slaughter Rate (FSR) measures the percentage of female cattle slaughtered relative to the total. Industry uses a 47% FSR as a technical lead indicator for gauging whether the national cattle herd is undergoing liquidation or a rebuild phase. This quarter, the FSR is just below 52%, indicating the industry is in a technical destock since the beginning of the year. Despite entering a technical destock, the herd has not shown any signs of a liquidation instead producers looking at maintaining stocking rates if weather conditions allow.							
	Quarter on Quarter change	0%								
	Year on year change	3%								
	Comparison to 5 year average	4%								
	Figure	9,602,500	231,666	24.13	113,482	9,715,982	38,593,478	\$1,297,057,682	\$135.07	Sheep slaughter and production lifted by 6% high for the last quarter of 2024. For CY24, it marks the largest combined lamb and sheep slaughter and production on record.
	Quarter on Quarter change	6%	6%	0%	251%	7%	1%	-3%	-9%	
	Year on year change	3%	4%	1%	-34%	2%	9%	45%	41%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	25%	22%	-3%	-24%	24%	22%	8%	-16%	
	Figure	6,103,800	140,819	23.07	—	—	—	—	—	Strong saleyard prices for heavy and trade lamb resulted in processors switching to sheep leading to a slight reduction in lamb slaughter in Q4. Overall lamb slaughter remains above historical levels.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-4%	-6%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	-8%	-8%	0%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	7%	1%	-6%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	3,498,700	90,847	25.97	—	—	—	—	—	Favourable market conditions pushed mutton slaughter to record levels. A large cohort of older breeding ewes meant heavier sheep were favoured by processors, leading to a 31% increase in production.
	Quarter on Quarter change	29%	31%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	31%	30%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	71%	73%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Figure	874,126	14,276	16.33	0	0	3,404,139	—	—	Goat slaughter has remained consistently high lifting by 2% in Q4. Growing cost of production and a large population of goats has driven this record goat slaughter and production.
	Quarter on Quarter change	2%	3%	1%	-100%	-100%	-2%	—	—	
	Year on year change	40%	50%	7%	-100%	-100%	42%	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	82%	84%	0%	-100%	-100%	83%	—	—	

Source: MLA/ABS

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

© Meat & Livestock Australia, 2025. ABN 39 081 678 364. Care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication. However, MLA, MDC and ISC ("MLA Group") do not accept responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of the information or opinions contained in this publication. This publication is intended to provide general information only. It has been prepared without taking into account your specific circumstances, objectives, or needs. Any forward-looking statements made within this publication are not guarantees of future performance or results, and performance or results may vary from those expressed in, or implied by, any forward-looking statements. No representation, warranty or other assurance is given as to the fairness, accuracy, completeness, likelihood of achievement or reasonableness of forward-looking statements or related assumptions contained in the publication. You should make your own enquiries before making decisions concerning your interests. Your use of, or reliance on, any content is entirely at your own risk and the MLA Group accepts no liability for any losses or damages incurred by you as a result of that use or reliance.

\*\* 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