

National Livestock Reporting Service (NLRS)

National Cattle Indicators



MLA Cattle indicators are seven-day rolling averages covering transactions across all NLRS reported saleyards and external online sales platforms. Prices are expressed in cents per kilogram liveweight (¢/kg lwt) or cents per kilogram carcase weight terms (¢/kg cwt) and are rounded to two decimal points.

What is a seven-day rolling average?

At any point in time, a seven-day rolling average includes data from the past seven calendar days. The dataset takes the average ¢/kg lwt or cwt of an animal matching the specifications of the indicator per day for the past week, adds them up and divides the figure by seven. This figure is updated daily to create a rolling average value for this specification of animal.

Table 1: National Cattle Indicators

| Indicator | Category | Liveweight (kg) | Prefix | Muscle/fat | Unit |
|---|---|-----------------|------------|------------|----------|
| Heavy Steer | Grown steers | 400-750 | PR | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Feeder Steer | Yearling steers | 200+ | FD | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| | Grown steers | 0-600 | FD | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Restocker Yearling Steer | Yearling steers | 200-400 | RS | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Restocker Yearling Heifer | Yearling heifers | 200-400 | RS | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Young Cattle | Vealer steers/heifers Weaner steers/heifers/mixed sex Yearling steers/heifers/mixed sex | 200+ | NSM, RS | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Online Young Cattle | | 200-400 | NSM | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Processor Cow | Cow | 400+ | PR | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Dairy Cow | Cow | All weights | DA | All | ¢/kg lwt |
| Eastern Young Cattle and Western Young Cattle | Vealer steers/heifers | 200+ | PR, RS, FD | C2, C3 | ¢/kg lwt |
| | Yearling steers/heifers | 200+ | PR, RS, FD | C2, C3 | ¢/kg lwt |



National Cattle Indicators



- **The National Young Cattle Indicator** represents what producers are paying for young restocker animals returning to the paddock. It is the only indicator that uses more than one sales channel (saleyard and online) to provide broader price coverage. Restocker prices provide a good benchmark for livestock prices, making this indicator a useful tool as a forward-looking confidence measure for industry.
- **The National Heavy Steer Indicator** represents cattle typically destined for domestic processing. Cattle bought as grown steers will typically be purchased directly by processors.
- **The National Feeder Steer Indicator** represents what feedlots are paying for cattle out of the saleyard. These cattle may be backgrounded in preparation for lot feeding or consigned straight to a feedlot to be finished on grain, depending on the condition of the animal.
- **The National Processor Cow Indicator** represents what processors are paying for cows to be processed typically for lean meat products, often destined for export markets.
- **The National Dairy Cow Indicator** represents what dairy producers are selling after productive milking years and are usually purchased by processors at the end of the supply chain.
- **The National Restocker Yearling Steer Indicator** represents what restockers are paying for young cattle out of the saleyard. These yearling steers purchased by restockers typically return to the farm for further finishing.
- **The National Restocker Yearling Heifer Indicator** represents what restockers are paying for future breeders out of the saleyard. Yearling heifers purchased by restockers typically return to the farm to be grown out to enter the breeding herd and produce calves on a yearly basis.
- **The Eastern Young Cattle Indicator** was designed to be the benchmark indicator for general cattle markets covering young cattle sales to processors, restockers and feeders across major eastern saleyards. The EYCI is reported in a carcass weight form to represent the carcass price. The EYCI is now made up of predominantly restocker buyers.
- **The Western Young Cattle Indicator** was designed to be the benchmark indicator for general cattle markets covering young cattle sales to processors, restockers and feeders across WA saleyards. The WYCI is reported in a carcass weight form to represent the carcass price. The WYCI is now made up of predominantly restocker buyers.
- **The Online Young Cattle Indicator** represents what cattle producers are selling to beef industry participants as an online marketplace. These cattle are typically restockers, purchased by producers who breed, trade or grow cattle.

Table 2: Sales prefix, muscle score and fat score used on the indicators

| Sales prefix | Description | Muscle score | Description | Fat score | Tissue depth (mm)* |
|--------------|---|--------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|
| PR | Processor purchased | | | | |
| RS | Restocker purchased (back to farm) | A | Very heavy | 1 | 0–2 |
| | | B | Heavy | 2 | 2–6 |
| FD | Feedlot purchased (direct to feedlots or background with the intention to be lot fed) | C | Medium | 3 | 6–12 |
| | | D | Moderate | 4 | 12–22 |
| | | E | Light | 5 | 22–32 |
| DA | Dairy breed | | | | |
| NSM | Not station mated (online) | | | | *P8 site, |

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT US ONLINE AT:
mla.com.au or email us at: insights@mla.com.au

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