

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
Feeder Heifer	Yearling heifer	200+	FD	All	¢/kg lwt
	Grown heifer	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	200+	NSM, RS	All	¢/kg lwt
	Weaner steers/heifers/mixed sex				
	Yearling steers/heifers/mixed sex				
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 cwt
	Yearling steers/heifers	200+	PR, RS, FD	C2, C3	¢/kg cwt



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- **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 Feeder Heifer 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. Heifers traditionally go into the short fed domestic program.
- **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 carcase weight form to represent the carcase 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 carcase weight form to represent the carcase 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	A	Very heavy	1	0–2
RS	Restocker purchased (back to farm)	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
DA	Dairy breed	E	Light	5	22–32
NSM	Not station mated (online)				

*P8 site,

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