








Quarterly production and slaughter volumes

June Quarter 2024 data

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		Slaughter (head)	Production (tonne)	Carcass weight (kg)	Live export (head)	Total turnoff (head)	Seasonal estimate (Full Year Run Rate*)	Value of production (A\$)	Value per animal (A\$)	Why**
Beef 	Figure	2,127,200	648,763	304.98	211,244	2,338,444	8,664,756	3,646,288,378	1,714	Carcass weights have dropped back to 2020 levels. Increased slaughter is mainly from elevated grassfed turnoff. Grassfed cattle are lighter, so as they make up a higher proportion, national averages will ease.
	Quarter on Quarter change	17%	14%	-3%	42%	19%	5%	14%	-3%	
	Year on year change	23%	19%	-3%	24%	23%	21%	11%	-10%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	23%	23%	-1%	-1%	20%	12%	9%	-13%	
Male cattle 	Figure	998,226	339,909	340.51	—	—	—	—	—	Male slaughter lifted to numbers not seen since 2018. Genetic investment and growth in feedlots have allowed steers to reach processor-ready weights younger. The herd is operating at its maintenance peak.
	Quarter on Quarter change	6%	5%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	11%	9%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	13%	14%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
Female cattle 	Figure	1,128,946	308,855	273.58	—	—	—	—	—	Female slaughter lifted significantly over the second quarter. A portion of this slaughter is elevated cow turnoff. Breeding cows were retained over the rebuild, and now, with prices supported by US demand, producers are selling older stock.
	Quarter on Quarter change	29%	26%	-3%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	36%	33%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	35%	36%	0%	—	—	—	—	—	
Female slaughter rate (FSR)	FSR	53.1%	Rebuild Status							
	Quarter on Quarter change	5%	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 tipped 53%, resulting in a second-quarter above the benchmark. This indicates the herd is in a technical destock. However, this elevated female slaughter has been driven mainly by the turnoff of retained older breeding cows rather than drought-driven liquidation.							
	Year on year change	5%								
	Comparison to 5 year average	5%								
Sheepmeat 	Figure	9,949,600	243,902	24.51	61,247	10,010,847	40,107,440	1,412,184,727	141.93	Live exports are down due to two technical issues. Earlier in the year, shipments to Kuwait were halted due to unforeseen ship maintenance. Additionally, exports to Israel slowed due to issues related to the conflict and tension along the trade route.
	Quarter on Quarter change	2%	3%	1%	-73%	1%	-4%	12%	10%	
	Year on year change	16%	16%	0%	-73%	13%	17%	20%	4%	
	Comparison to 5 year average	32%	32%	-1%	-64%	30%	29%	18%	-12%	
Lamb 	Figure	7,224,800	177,147	24.52	—	—	—	—	—	Lamb slaughter across Australia lifted to a record 7.2 m head. Three years of consistent rebuilding has encouraged growth among producers. Positive conditions across NSW and QLD promoted an impressive lamb cohort, which is now being turned off.
	Quarter on Quarter change	4%	6%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	19%	19%	-1%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	29%	30%	1%	—	—	—	—	—	
Sheep 	Figure	2,724,800	66,755	24.50	—	—	—	—	—	Despite a reduction in sheep slaughter over the quarter, quarter two figures lifted financial year sheep slaughter to 10.2m, the highest since 2008. Dry conditions across southern Australia have caused the turnoff of retained ewes.
	Quarter on Quarter change	-2%	-4%	-2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Year on year change	7%	9%	2%	—	—	—	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	41%	35%	-4%	—	—	—	—	—	
Goat 	Figure	878,128	13,592	15.48	6,891	885,019	3,351,702	—	—	Goat slaughter and production have been steadily climbing since the end of the drought. Positive seasons, along with a supporting price, have encouraged further participation in goat production. Quarterly slaughter and production are the highest on record.
	Quarter on Quarter change	18%	17%	-1%	226%	19%	22%	—	—	
	Year on year change	60%	57%	-2%	-23%	58%	52%	—	—	
	Comparison to 5 year average	108%	101%	-4%	125%	109%	102%	—	—	

Source: MLA/ABS

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

** 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