

Goat Data Collation and Tracking *data guide*



Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Slaughter Levy Data

The number of goats processed in each state is determined using Livestock Slaughter Levy data (referred to as Levy data). Goats that are slaughtered at an abattoir for human consumption are subject to this Levy. The Forecasting Committee considers the Levy data as the most reliable source of processing data because the processors pay a levy based on the data they report, which is also subject to auditing.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) provides aggregated monthly totals for each state, which are supplied 1.5 months after the end of each quarter. The lag time is necessary to allow processors 28 days to lodge their returns. It is important to note that the recently reported quarterly total may increase when the next quarter's data is provided due to processors adding or adjusting reports. The project reports the most up-to-date data available, so changes in the totals may be observed between reports. It is also important to emphasise that the Levy data only reports where goats are processed, not where they were sourced.

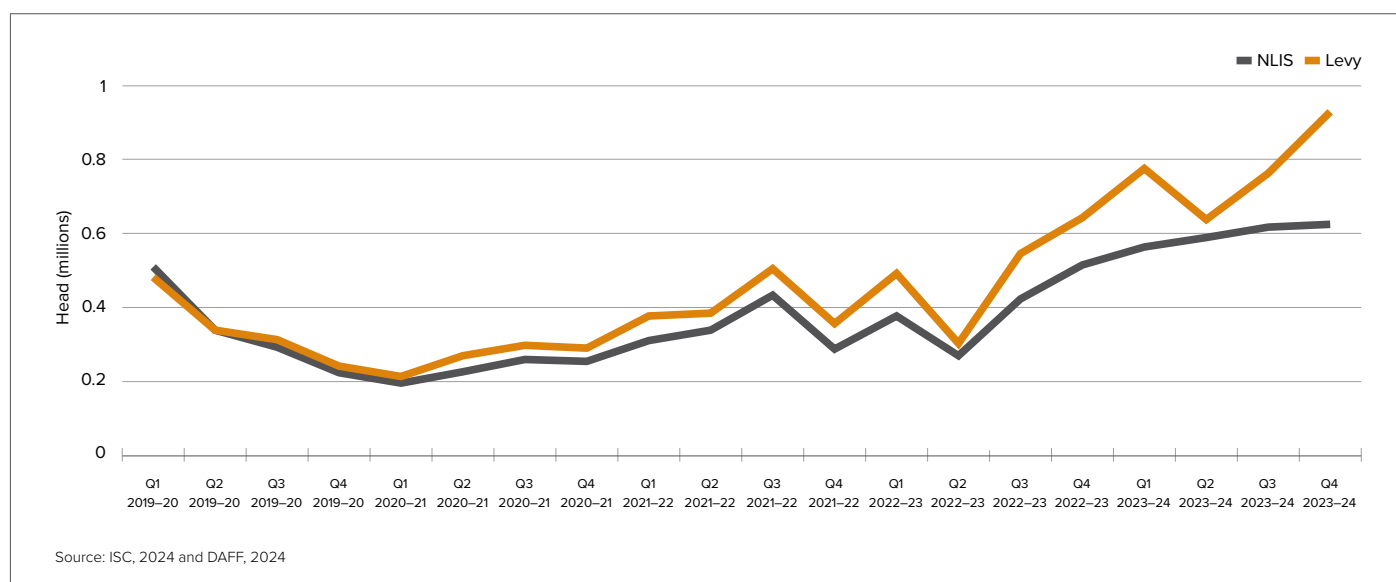
Integrity Systems Company – NLIS data

Supply information (i.e. the number of goats supplied to processing from each state or region) is collated using movement data from the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS). The Integrity Systems Company (ISC) provides updated downloads of the NLIS data 15 days after the end of each quarter.

This data enables the industry to understand the sources of goat supply for processing. The region that goats are supplied from is determined by the mob's location before being consigned to processing. Supply via depots may alter the actual turn-off from a region. For example, goats supplied from a depot in the Cobar region could have been sourced from a property in the Bourke region. However, most movements to depots occur locally, so this is unlikely to influence significantly the regional supply totals.

The total number of goats supplied to processing, as indicated by the NLIS data should theoretically equal the number of goats processed according to the Levy data. While trends in the Levy data are consistently reflected in the NLIS data, the NLIS total has consistently been lower than the Levy total since 2019–20 (**Figure 1**). Although potential causes of this discrepancy have been reviewed, it remains unclear why the totals differ. The difference between the two totals should be taken into account when interpreting the supply information in the reports. Despite this, the NLIS data is critical for understanding supply dynamics and supply chain flows within the industry.

Figure 1: Goats processed by FY quarter according to NLIS and Levy data (2019–20 to 2023–24)



Annual Land and Stock Returns

Local Land Services provides deidentified Land and Stock Return data, which enables reporting on the number of managed goats and holding that have managed goats in various New South Wales (NSW) regions. In NSW, producers complete Annual Land and Stock Returns, which are essentially a 'farm census' that provides information about livestock numbers across the state. Every year, producers report all livestock over six months of age held on their property on 30 June, including pets, regardless of whether owned or agisted. Although submitting annual returns is a statutory requirement, some landholders do not submit them. Additionally, some producers may also be reluctant to declare they are managing goats. As a result, the data likely underreports the total number of managed goats and holdings with goats. Nevertheless, this information is valuable for examining and understanding industry trends related to goat management and regional changes.

Aerial survey data

Goat population estimates are calculated using aerial survey data sourced from government agencies. Although the aerial surveys are designed and conducted to estimate kangaroo abundance, the goat abundance estimates provide a useful indicator of how goat populations change over time in the surveyed areas. The goat abundance estimates calculated in the Goat Data Collation and Tracking project generally align with the Forecasting Committee's perceptions of goat abundance. Aerial surveys do not distinguish between managed and unmanaged goats.

Price data

The over-the-hooks prices are obtained from Meat & Livestock Australia's (MLA) statistical database. MLA provides reports based on publicly available price grids. Once MLA obtains a certain number of public grids, an aggregate is calculated. This aggregate can cause monthly price swings. However, the long-term averages typically reflect changes in goat prices over time.

Other publicly available data

The project also utilises a range of publicly available data, which are used to report information on price, exports and production.

Data sources

DAFF (Department of Agricultural, Fisheries and Forestry (2024). *Australian Red Meat Export Statistics*. <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/export/controlled-goods/meat/statistics>

ISC (Integrity Systems Company) (2024). *Unpublished data 2024*. Collated by the MLA and NSW DPIRD project - Goat Data Collection and Tracking project (B.GOA.0133).

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mla.com.au/gdct

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