



MEDIA RELEASE

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February 2024

Feedlot sector reaches record numbers on feed

- Australia's latest feedlot survey results reveal an increase in cattle on feed to 1,294,531 head in the December quarter, marking a record high.
- While numbers in NSW, SA, and WA surged, Queensland and Victorian figures declined over the quarter.
- National capacity rose by 1.1% to 1.59 million head, with utilisation rates increasing to 81.2% in Q4 2023, driven by a fifth consecutive lift in feedlot capacity.

Australia's latest feedlot survey results, published by the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), show numbers of cattle on feed increasing moderately to 1,294,531 head in the December quarter, the largest quarterly number on record.

Numbers on feed in NSW, SA and WA rose by 7.3%, 14.7% and 92.6% respectively, while Queensland and Victorian numbers dropped 3.1%, and 2.2% across the quarter.

ALFA President, Barb Madden, said lifts to numbers on feed are reflective of the availability of feeder cattle during late spring and early summer 2023.

"Adjustments seen in WA reflect the seasonal nature of the western lot feeding system, which traditionally peak in the first and last quarter of the year," Mrs Madden said.

National capacity increased by 1.1% to 1.59 million head. Utilisation rates rose by 1%, to 81.2% in the December quarter. This is the fifth consecutive lift to feedlot capacity, leading to record capacity for the sector.

Source: Feedlot Capacity figures are provided by AUS-MEAT Limited (AUS-MEAT). AUS-MEAT owns and administers the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) on behalf of ALFA and the feedlot sector. Actual Feedlot Capacity figures are reported under the NFAS.

Erin Lukey, MLA's Senior Market Information Analyst, said grain fed export figures finished positively to close out the year.

"We've seen quarter-on-quarter exports up 18% year-on-year, helping to achieve an 8% lift in 2023 calendar year grain fed meat export volume," Ms Lukey said.

"It is encouraging to see grain fed exports grow over the year with exports relatively stable in the first half of the year then lifting in in the latter part of the year Q3 and Q4."

Looking to supply, feedlot cattle buyers were met with a sustained supply of feeder cattle into the last quarter of 2023.

"Despite supply of feeder cattle through saleyards dipping by 0.9% in Q4, annual throughput was up 9% in 2023," Ms Lukey said.

"The largest lift in supply was seen through NSW and WA where annual feeder throughput lifted 32% and 21% respectively, which reflects the increased numbers on feed in these states."

ENDS.

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NUMBERS ON FEED

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-23	372,708	54,513	750,246	58,502	58,562	1,294,531
Sep-23	347,199	55,737	774,052	50,984	30,405	1,258,377
Dec-22	318,905	49,404	675,872	41,812	59,235	1,145,228

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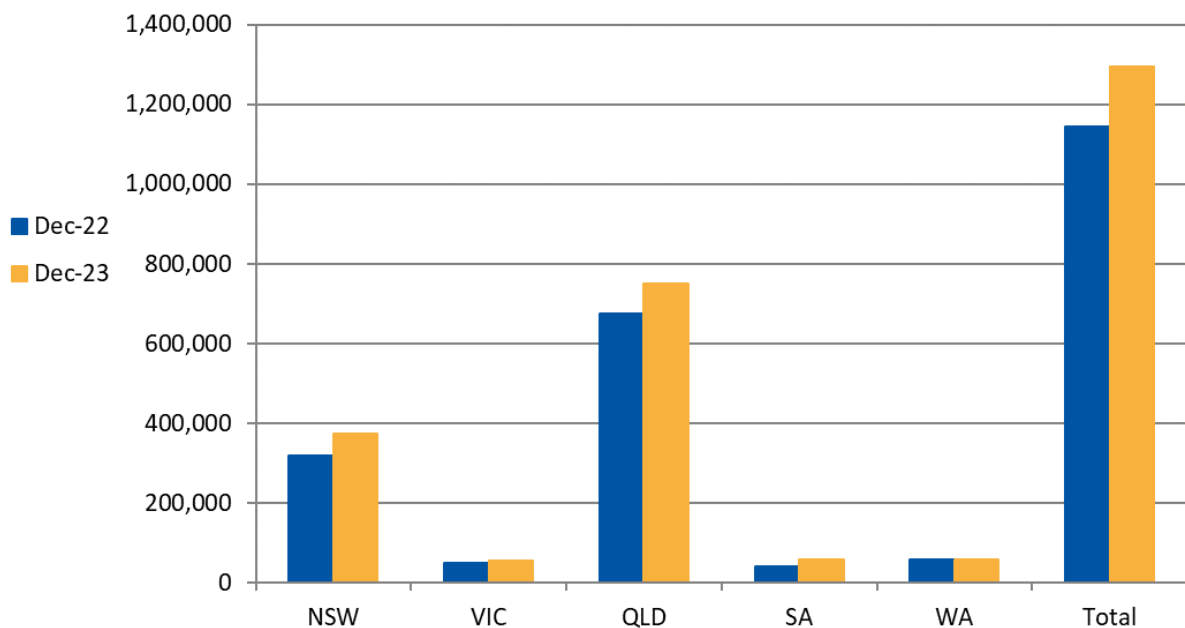
Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-23	166,821	32,068	426,857	25,397	17,470	668,613
Sep-23	163,580	28,390	358,827	28,044	39,176	618,017
Dec-22	166,093	32,797	374,708	24,896	20,017	618,511

CAPACITY

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-23	467,574	83,250	887,763	65,215	90,763	1,594,565
Sep-23	460,633	82,392	878,705	64,940	90,188	1,576,858
Dec-22	452,117	82,892	849,462	63,594	84,751	1,532,816

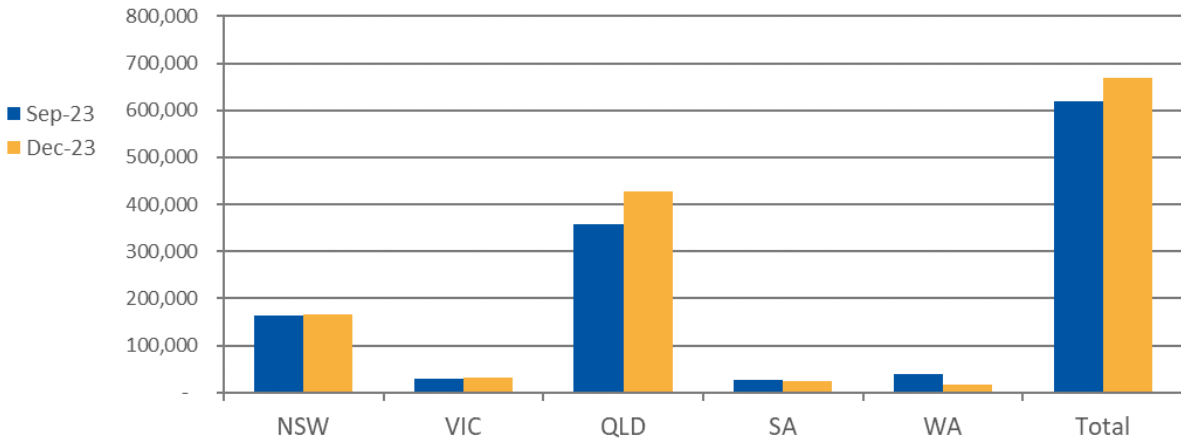
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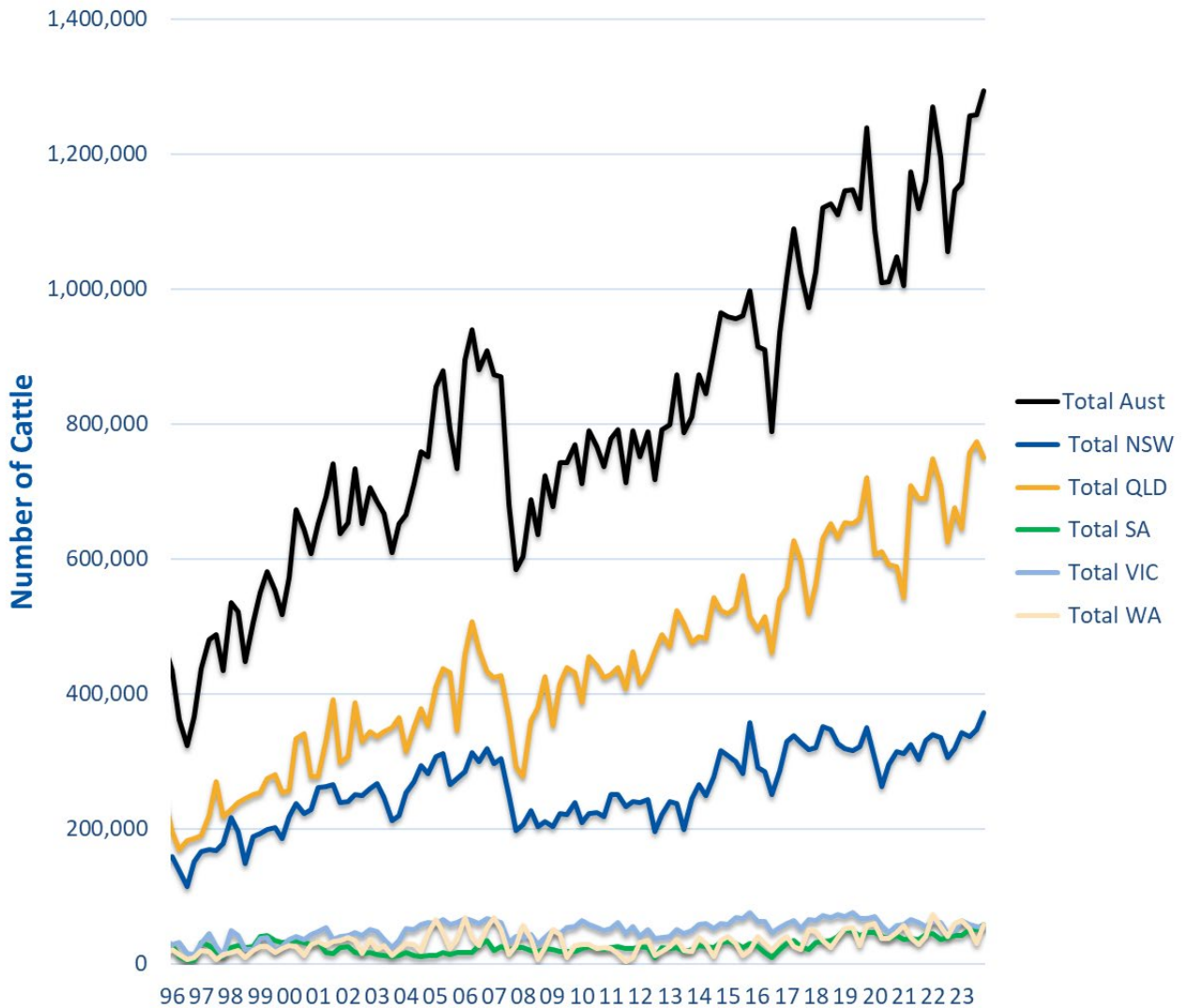


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QUARTERLY TURNOFF



CATTLE NUMBERS ON FEED - HISTORIC



Source: Feedlot Capacity figures are provided by AUS-MEAT Limited (AUS-MEAT). AUS-MEAT owns and administers the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) on behalf of ALFA and the feedlot sector. Actual Feedlot Capacity figures are reported under the NFAS.

	Numbers on Feed Dec 23	Numbers on Feed Sep 23	Numbers on Feed Dec 22
New South Wales			
Less than 500 head	788	1,126	0
500 - 1000 head	11,912	8,893	2,967
1001 - 10,000 head	116,794	103,907	103,644
over 10,000 head	243,214	233,273	212,294
State Total	372,708	347,199	318,905
Queensland			
Less than 500 head	7,089	9,263	4,671
500 - 1000 head	13,727	18,850	13,849
1001 - 10,000 head	197,226	190,966	148,979
over 10,000 head	532,204	554,973	508,373
State Total	750,246	774,052	675,872
Victoria			
Less than 500 head	0	0	0
500 - 1000 head	2,487	3,224	6,388
1001 - 10,000 head	17,779	18,387	12,718
over 10,000 head	34,247	34,126	30,298
State Total	54,513	55,737	49,404
South Australia			
Less than 500 head	1,188	1,016	737
500 - 1000 head	850	1,218	3,102
1001 - 10,000 head	28,464	23,750	19,851
over 10,000 head	28,000	25,000	18,122
State Total	58,502	50,984	41,812
Western Australia			
Less than 500 head	1,820	0	1,339
500 - 1000 head	6,257	3,180	4,711
1001 - 10,000 head	32,991	12,701	39,115
over 10,000 head	17,494	14,524	14,070
State Total	58,562	30,405	59,235
Australia			
Less than 500 head	10,885	11,405	6,747
500 - 1000 head	35,233	35,365	31,017
1001 - 10,000 head	393,254	349,711	324,307
over 10,000 head	855,159	861,896	783,157
Total	1,294,531	1,258,377	1,145,228

Note: Due to rounding, numbers presented throughout this document may not add up to the totals.