

A close-up photograph of a horse's muzzle, focusing on the nostrils and the bridge of the nose. A bright, circular spotlight illuminates the center of the muzzle, creating a strong contrast with the dark, shadowed areas on either side. The texture of the horse's skin and the fine hairs around the nostrils are clearly visible.

2024

ALFA

AUSTRALIAN LOT FEEDERS' ASSOCIATION

Year in Review

2023-2024 Highlights

Online Training

2,099 users and 200 feedlots using FeedlotTECH to upskill.

Attracting Labour

Attended 9 Career Fairs with 52 students seeking further information about careers in the feedlot industry.

Professional Development

Doubled ALFA's Margin & People Management program and launched ALFA's Emerging Leaders program.

Policy and Advocacy

21 ALFA submissions and contributed to 19 RMAC submissions to government reviews.

In-person Training

1,141 people participated in ALFA training courses, sessions, and professional development programs.

Research and Development

Partnered with MLA to deliver feedlot R&D for the betterment of grain fed levy payers.

Animal Welfare

Delivered our first online ALFA Animal Welfare Officer Training, providing greater access to certified training for lot feeders.

Industry support for ALFA's Shade Initiative reached 70% of Australia's feedlot cattle now with access to shade.

Water Security

Successfully advocated for Queensland Government to ban Carbon Capture and Storage in the Queensland Great Artesian Basin, protecting this resource from CO2 waste for 58% of Australian feedlots.

Governance

Member endorsement of ALFA's new Constitution, modernising our governance for the future.

Biosecurity

ALFA partnered with Biosecurity Queensland to deliver 'Exercise High Steaks' to 30 people - an EAD workshop on best practice response to a potential foot-and-mouth disease outbreak.

President's Message



It's been a remarkable year, and one well captured by this year's ALFA Year in Review document. I am sure you will join me in awe of all the activities undertaken by ALFA staff, led by our formidable voluntary Board, to drive a profitable and sustainable feedlot industry on our collective behalf. Within these pages captures the multitude of various programs, events, policies, resources and value that ALFA has delivered to its members and stakeholders this financial year.

It demonstrates that we are an industry that promotes transparency and continual improvement and that we strive to nurture cattle, land and community in what we do every single day. The industry's commitment to embracing change and investing in the training of their teams speaks volumes about its resilience and potential for long-term success.

I am proud to be a part of this dedicated and vital industry, and I thank each and every person who plays their part in delivering nutritious, high-quality protein to Australia and the world. It makes all the work undertaken by ALFA this year, feel all that extra bit worthwhile.

B Madden

Barbara Madden

CEO's Message



ALFA works towards fostering a profitable and sustainable feedlot industry through advocacy, the delivery of essential services, and strategic collaboration with our members and stakeholders.

Our Year in Review 2024 demonstrates our commitment to advancing our industry and representing our members, who collectively account for close to 90% of Australia's cattle feedlot capacity.

The achievements of the past year would not have been possible without the support and active participation of the ALFA Board, our committee members, members, industry partners, and sponsors.

ALFA's team has been instrumental in executing the Board's direction, and I thank them for their commitment, dedication, and support. If you would like any further information on the Year in Review activities, please contact the ALFA Office.

Christian Mulders

Christian Mulders

The Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) is the peak national body representing the Australian cattle feedlot industry.

Our Vision

ALFA works towards delivering a profitable and sustainable feedlot industry recognised and valued by the community for producing quality grain fed beef to the highest ethical, environmental, humane, and animal welfare standards.

Our Mission

ALFA strives to improve the profitability, professionalism and community standing of the feedlot industry and does this by working on behalf of our members to deliver:

- Industry Representation
- Strategic Levy Investment
- Industry Development and Extension

Our Goals

- Be the recognised voice of the Australian Cattle Feedlot Industry
- 100% representation of all Australian Cattle Feedlots
- Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses
- Influence the operating environment to enable feedlots to continually improve, adapt, and innovate
- Be a leader in animal welfare, environmental and production standard
- Attract, retain and grow a professional and skilled feedlot industry workforce



Our Values



COMMUNITY

Members are our top priority



INFLUENCE

We are effective in our advocacy efforts



EXCELLENCE

We strive for quality and continuous improvement



INTEGRITY

We adhere to the highest standards and act with composure, respect and fairness



PROFESSIONALISM

We adhere to best practice governance



COLLABORATION

We work with others to achieve our goals



CARE

We care about our cattle, our people, our community, the environment, and our markets

Fast Facts

Economic Industry

VALUE: Turnover equated to \$8.07 billion and contributed \$920 million to Australia's GDP in 2021-2022.

Source: State of the Industry Report 2023, MLA

ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY: The Australian economy would shrink by \$10.3 billion and shed 49,000 full-time employees if feedlots ceased to exist.

Source: 'Regional feedlot investment study' Deloitte Australia (2015)

Quality Assurance Credentials

ACCREDITED: Operates under Australia's oldest agriculturally based quality assurance program, National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS).

CERTIFIED: Certified 'Grain Fed' beef must come from an NFAS accredited feedlot.

ANIMAL WELFARE: 83.29% compliance with NFAS Animal Welfare requirements in 2023.

Source: Independently verified via 2023 NFAS audits, AUS-MEAT

ENVIRONMENT: 94.9% compliance with NFAS Environmental requirements in 2023.

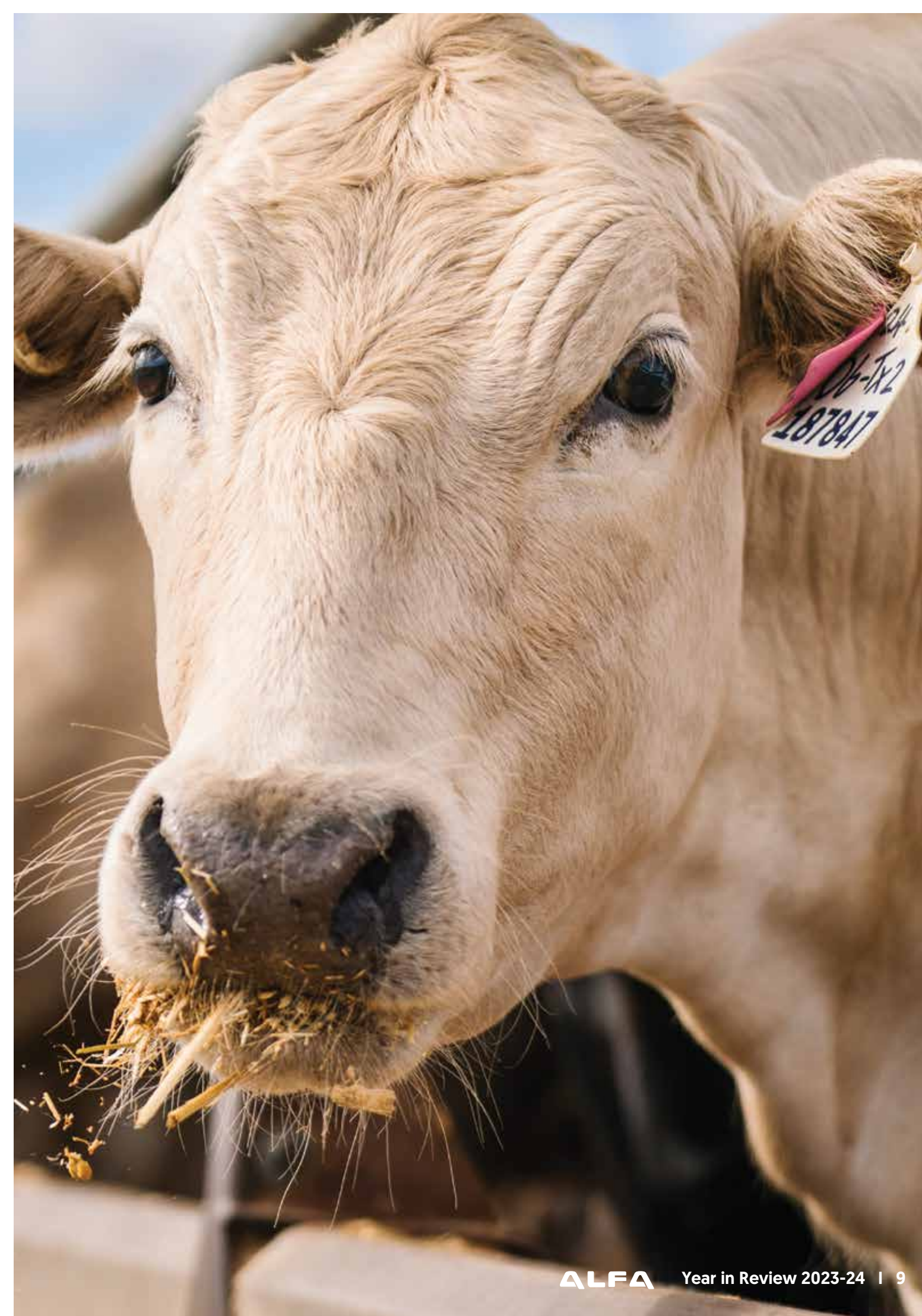
Source: Independently verified via 2023 NFAS audits, AUS-MEAT

AMS: 84.35% compliance with the requirement for NFAS accredited feedlots to have an Antimicrobial Stewardship Plan in place since January 2022 (an increase of 22.35% year-on-year).

Source: Independently verified via 2023 NFAS audits, AUS-MEAT

SHADE: The feedlot industry has voluntarily increased cattle under shade from 810,376 head in June 2020, representing 56% of capacity, to 1,129,437 head in June 2024, representing 70% of Australia's feedlot capacity.

Source: ALFA/MLA Technical Services Officer survey, 2024



Fast Facts

Size of Industry

FACILITIES: 356 NFAS accredited feedlots

Source: NFAS Annual Report 2023, AUS-MEAT

CAPACITY: 1.6 million head.

Source: MLA/ALFA Quarterly Feedlot Survey, June 2024

EMPLOYMENT: Employs 2,000 people directly and 30,000 indirectly.

Source: 'Regional feedlot investment study' Deloitte Australia (2015)

OWNERSHIP: Australian Feedlots are owned and operated by families, businesses and corporate entities.

EQUALITY: Over 1/3 of employees are female.

Production

ON FEED: Cattle on feed averaged 1.4 million head per quarter in the year to June 2024.

Source: MLA/ALFA Quarterly Feedlot Survey, June 2024

RECORD NUMBERS: After seven consecutive lifts to cattle on feed numbers, the latest record of 1.4 million head was reached in June 2024.

Source: MLA/ALFA Quarterly Feedlot Survey, June 2024

GRAIN FED BEEF: In 2023, grain fed beef accounted for 42% of total beef production and 47% of the cattle slaughtered in Australia.

Source: State of the Industry Report 2023, MLA

Delivered on behalf of lot feeders

2023-2024



A refined strategy forward

The ALFA Strategic Operating Plan (SOP) '**ALFA Initiatives 2020-2023**' continued to guide our goals and activities under seven priority focus areas:

1. Our People
2. Our Customers, Consumers and Communities
3. Our Livestock
4. Our Environment
5. Our Markets
6. Our Systems
7. Our Association

The SOP is closely aligned with the key objectives outlined in **Red Meat 2030**.

This comprehensive industry strategy was collaboratively developed by the red meat and livestock sector under the Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC).

Throughout 2023-2024, ALFA remained actively engaged with RMAC in a comprehensive review of Red Meat 2030. As a result of this review, a revitalised strategy was unveiled in June 2023.

ALFA's SOP has demonstrated enduring effectiveness, owing to the initial insights contributed by members, ALFA Committees, and the ALFA Board.



Our People

ALFA Industry Capacity Program

Our Goals:

Attract, retain and grow a professional and skilled feedlot industry workforce

Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses

Initiatives:

ALFA Industry Capacity Program

ALFA Recognition of Excellence Program

Technical support and extending research

A key priority of ALFA is to provide the Australian cattle feedlot sector, its businesses and current and prospective employees with a clear career development pathway and to provide the associated training, professional development and support networks to attract, retain and grow the capacity of the feedlot workforce.

We know building capable, high-performing teams is key for operational excellence and attracting future talent.

We achieve this through our training programs, online courses via Feedlot TECH, workshops, webinars, tours, events, professional development courses, scholarships, and our conference.

We've upskilled over 2,000 industry participants again this year. With 2,000 employees in the Australian feedlot industry, this engagement demonstrates our commitment to members and the broader feedlot industry.

Capacity Building Activity Snapshot [2023-2024]

2,099
users
upskilling on
Feedlot TECH

200
feedlots using
Feedlot TECH as
part of their onsite
training program

1,141
enrolments into ALFA
training courses,
sessions, and professional
development programs

2023-2024 Industry Capacity Highlights

Developed two new **online training courses** in the fundamentals of Pen Riding and NFAS that are accessible via Feedlot TECH.

Delivered monthly **group online training** sessions on Feedlot Fundamentals, with over 107 feedlots participating online to take advantage of this easy staff training opportunity.

Delivered the staple ALFA workshop series; **Animal Health and Nutrition & Milling**, providing valuable in-person training offering to those new to roles or those needing a topic refresher.

Hosted a **summer heat webinar** that has provided a great foundation for a summer preparedness webinar as a future offering.

Developed a new **Professional Development Program** for delivery in the coming 12 months, designed for emerging talent.

Delivered the first fully online delivery of the **ALFA Animal Welfare Officer Training** successfully, providing greater access to all lot feeders to this critical certification.

Delivered a **webinar on Partial Covered Housing Systems**, with the recording now accessible as a resource on Feedlot TECH.

Hosted our **SmartBeef Conference** held onsite at Elders Killara Feedlot, complete with a campcraft competition.

Doubled the number of **Margin & People Management Programs** from one to two, annually.

Training

Feedlot TECH

Now in its third year, ALFA's online training, education and careers platform, Feedlot TECH, continues to showcase career, employment, and professional development opportunities available within the feedlot sector, across all career stages.

The tool provides the Australian feedlot sector, its businesses, and current and prospective employees with a clear career pathway and associated training, professional development and support networks.

A joint project between ALFA and MLA, continued industry investment relies on continual feedlot adoption.

We encourage you to take advantage of the resources and training available on feedlottech.com.au.

Career Pathways

Feedlot TECH promotes the vast feedlot career opportunities and pathways available to individuals coming into the sector, along with the associated training required to progress through the industry.

Training

Feedlot TECH provides links to training and professional development opportunities through a 'directory' that relates training courses to feedlot teams and stages along the career pathways.

The online Training Hub provides training courses that are practical, cover core feedlot skills and can be easily integrated into daily operations and training of staff. A range of online training courses and resources are available, including training on Feed Shed Loader Operations, Feed Truck Operations, Cattle Backgrounding and Induction, Antimicrobial Stewardship, Pen Cleaning, Manure and Environmental Management, Caring for Cattle, Practical Bovine Post-mortem Techniques, and more.

What's New?



During 2023-2024, the ALFA team were busy designing and building two new online courses for feedlot businesses to unlock for their staff:

Pen Riding Fundamentals Course

In September 2023, ALFA and MLA provided access to the "Fundamentals of Pen Riding" course on Feedlot TECH. This course is part of the wider Feedlot Fundamentals online training series.

This comprehensive online course encompasses crucial elements of pen riding including foundational skills, best practice riding, identifying and understanding animal health issues, how to remove an animal from the pen, and horse husbandry.



Feedlot Accreditation Fundamentals Course

Next to launch, in April 2024, was the "Fundamentals of Feedlot Accreditation" course. This concise course is divided into three modules, and educates users on the foundations of NFAS, your responsibilities under NFAS, and how to ensure you maintain NFAS accreditation.

The next courses in the Feedlot Fundamentals series are focusing on the "Fundamentals of feed allocation and bunk management" and "Fundamentals of feedlot administration"; they are scheduled for release in late 2024.

Resources

Feedlot TECH brings together feedlot-specific resources in one easily accessible location, including up-to-date information on new technologies, best practices, 'how to' guides and links to standards and guidelines, to assist lot feeders with daily feedlot operations. Central to the initiative is the provision of training, learning and educational resources housed in a learning management hub which provides feedlot operators and individuals better access to training, professional development and career path opportunities.



A New Learning Experience

ALFA launched monthly online group training sessions, led by a facilitator, designed to support feedlot staff in completing training in the fundamentals of lot feeding, one course at a time.

The 60-minute interactive session sees participants successfully completing a course in a friendly group environment by the end of the session. Feedlots have found it an efficient way to introduce online learning to staff, and provide fundamental training to all staff in an engaging way.



Shedding light on partial covered housing systems

ALFA, in collaboration with MLA, hosted a webinar focused on the benefits of partial covered housing systems in Australian feedlots. The June 2024 webinar provided valuable insights into the decisions surrounding the implementation or upgrading of shade and shelter infrastructure within feedlots.

119 participants gained valuable insights from industry experts and practitioners on the ground, learnt about cutting-edge research and development findings, particularly focusing on partial shelter solutions, and gained a deeper understanding of how investing in shade and shelter infrastructure can positively impact both animal well-being and productivity. A recording is available on Feedlot TECH as a resource.



Rookie of the month draw

ALFA introduced a new way for those invested in upskilling themselves via Feedlot TECH to be recognised and rewarded.

With the new **Rookie of the Month Draw**, proudly sponsored by Zoetis, we are recognising the most active users on the Feedlot TECH training platform. Each time you log in, enrol in, and complete courses, users earn points and climb the Leaderboard.

The top 5 point scoring users each month automatically go in the draw to win a limited-edition vest worth \$150, with the winner chosen at random from this group. The more active on the platform, the more chances there are to win.

Check your score on the Feedlot TECH Leaderboard anytime by signing in. For more information on the Rookie of the Month Draw, head to the **Training page** on the ALFA website.

AWO Training

Ensuring excellent animal health and welfare outcomes is pivotal for Australia's cattle feedlot industry. ALFA conducts the Animal Welfare Officer (AWO) Certified Training annually, alternating between in person and online delivery.

Launched in July, the online course trained 78 individuals and provided a flexible option for lot feeders and stakeholders. ALFA thanks to MLA who continues to support the delivery of this critical training for lot feeders.

Animal Health

In September 2023, ALFA ran a series of workshops across Australia focused on Animal Health aimed at instilling and improving animal husbandry practices directly related to animal health and welfare in Australian feedlots.

The workshops saw the team of Jeff House, ALFA's Technical Services Officer, David Frith from Apiam Animal Health Limited and Lachlan Strohfelt from

Protein Production Vets deliver the training across multiple locations across Australia, on our behalf.

The workshops, proudly sponsored by Zoetis, trained 154 feedlot professionals in a wide range of essential topics including fit to load, heat load management, antimicrobial stewardship, receival management and more.

Nutrition and Milling

In March 2024, ALFA successfully conducted its face-to-face Nutrition & Milling workshop series. This workshop featured industry experts who provided valuable training on key subjects including Antimicrobial Stewardship, loading mixing & delivery, bunk management, and feed mill maintenance.

The groups were able to chat directly to the presenters and ask their burning questions, all the while making meaningful connections with the other participants. Held across different locations in Australia, a total of 145 individuals benefited from upskilling during this workshop, and we extend our gratitude to our sponsors Elanco and MLA.



Professional Development

ALFA Margin & People Management



The MPM Program, now in its 14th year, continues to offer valuable insights.

This program is tailored for a yearly cohort of up to 12 lot feeders and industry professionals. Its purpose is to provide participants with an in-depth comprehension of modern feedlot business management.

The group convenes three times in Sydney and Brisbane for interactive sessions led by various facilitators. The concluding fourth session involves a feedlot tour, where participants gain firsthand perspectives from Feedlot Managers who have completed the Program.

MPM Program Course 14 Graduates:

- **Hamish Muntelwit**, Feedlot Manager at Paringa
- **Max Cochrane**, Trainee Manager at Smithfield Feedlot
- **Will Fagan**, Trainee Manager at Sapphire Feedlot
- **Alexa Hearn**, Feedlot Graduate at Thomas Foods International
- **Sam Haddow**, Livestock Manager + Staff Supervisor at Princess Royal
- **Maddison Fryer**, Feedlot Data + Operations at Rangers Valley Feedlot
- **Brendan Olm**, Mill Manager at Stanbroke
- **Bart Norris**, Feedlot Management Trainee at Stanbroke
- **Ryan Cooper**, Leading Hand at Maydan
- **Brenton Watterson**, Operations Manager at AACO - Aronui
- **Nathan McLennan**, Feedlot Manager at Macquarie Wagyu, Broad Water Downs
- **Natalie Eade**, Finance & Commercial Manager at Elders Killara

In 2024, ALFA decided to run a second intake to deliver more value for lot feeders eager to participate in the coveted Program. Course 15 of MPM commenced in March and the group due to graduate in September 2024.

For more information on MPM and to register your interest, visit feedlots.com.au/mpm

ALFA Emerging Leaders Program launched

In 2024, ALFA designed a new professional development program aimed at providing ground level staff with opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

The Emerging Leaders Program was borne out of an idea pitched by a previous ALFA Young Lot Feeder

of the Year Award winner, and is designed to fill the gap in training for entry to mid-level feedlot employees, providing soft skills in leadership to prime participants for the next stage of their career. The first program is set to begin in February 2025.



SmartBeef

Smarter. Richer Beef

Conference 2023

ALFA hosted the grain fed beef industry's premier technical event, SmartBeef23, in Tamworth in October 2023 with over 350 feedlot professionals and industry stakeholders attending. The event saw on-site demonstrations at Elders' Killara Feedlot showcasing the latest in research, development and technology, a well-heelled industry dinner, its own campdraft competition and an official "Roto-Mixer" after-party.

Delegates capitalised on the practical program of demonstrations that rotated between topics such as compost management & soil carbon, thoracic ultrasound & wearable technology, pen riding technique, autonomous bunk scanning technology, the latest in shade research and development and enjoyed networking with friends and colleagues.





ALFA Annual Recognition of Excellence Program

ALFA is dedicated to fostering excellence in the feedlot industry. Through the Recognition of Excellence Program, we strive to build a skilled, professional workforce by acknowledging and supporting outstanding businesses and individuals. The Program manages and promotes various industry awards and scholarships, celebrating achievements and inspiring ongoing growth and development within the feedlot industry.

While not all run annually, ALFA's Recognition of Excellence Program encompasses the following:

- Australian Feedlot of the Year Competition
- ALFA Young Lot Feeder of the Year Award
- ALFA Excellence in Feedlot Education Medal
- ALFA Community Heroes Award
- ALFA Outstanding Services to the Feedlot Industry Award
- ALFA Life Membership Award
- Grain Fed Beef Industry Scholarship to Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP)
- ALFA Innovation Competition
- ALFA Communicate your Research Competition
- ALFA Student Conference Scholarship
- Grain Fed Beef Industry Scholarship to Training Rural Australians in Leadership (TRAIL)



ALFA Young Lot Feeder of the Year Award

In its 30th year, this award nurtures qualities in emerging leaders, empowering them to think innovatively, envision boldly, and consistently expand their perspectives about the Australian lot feeding industry and its possibilities.

Proudly sponsored by Performance Feeds, this accolade celebrates and motivates the industry's invaluable asset: its people, who play a pivotal role in ensuring the industry's future success and sustainability.

Congratulations to the Grand Finalists listed below, and **Tim Brennan** who was named 2023's Young Lot Feeder of the Year.

- **Tim Brennan**, NH Foods – Whyalla Beef QLD
- **Maddison Fryer**, Rangers Valley – Rangers Valley Feedlot NSW
- **Jacob Leak**, Teys Australia - Jindalee Feedlot NSW



ALFA Community Heroes Award

Proudly sponsored by Lallemand Animal Nutrition, the Community Heroes Award showcases the variety of ways that feedlots go above and beyond in supporting and nurturing their local communities and environment.

These can include community initiatives, such as outreach and engagement with local schools or groups, and environmental initiatives, including conservation and protection of land and wildlife or regenerative practices such as planting trees.

In its third year, the ALFA Community Heroes Award was awarded to **Stockyard Beef's Kerwee Feedlot**, Queensland, for their Stockyard Beef Education Program that is enriching their community's educational landscape and works to secure a vibrant future for the feedlot industry.



ALFA Innovation Competition

The ALFA Innovation Competition, sponsored by Integrated Animal Production, showcases feedlots and their employees' clever ground-roots ideas that have been incorporated into day-to-day operations on site.

From the initial pool of entries hailing from across Australia and New Zealand, **Smithfield Cattle Company's MaxiMukMoover**, innovated onsite by **Sandy Hagan**, was voted as the 'niftiest' innovation in the 2023 Competition for its ability to aid in efficient pen cleaning.

The runner up was announced as **Matthew Penna of Connors Junction** for his T-Grab innovation, developed to help shift tyres to silage pits.



Grain Fed Beef Industry Scholarship to ARLP Course 30

The Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP) is based on the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation's (ARLF) 30 years of experience, with a leadership model that reflects current thinking and practice in the areas of adult education, leadership and capacity building.

ALFA, with the support of MLA and grain fed levies, supported **Simon Kensit** to participate in Course 30.



Grain Fed Beef Industry Scholarship to TRAIL Program

ALFA, with the support of MLA and grain fed levies, supported a position on the ARLF's TRAIL Program in 2024.

TRAIL is a cross-sector, challenge-based leadership program set in Canberra and a regional location, for Australia's future emerging rural leaders. **Sandalwood Feedlot's Megan Krause** was awarded the scholarship to attend the TRAIL Program held in March 2024.



ALFA Student Conference Scholarship

Thanks to the generous support of MLA, Feedworks and Jefe, ALFA was able to award 10 student scholarships to attend SmartBeef 2023.

Scholarships were awarded to **Abby Dwight-Nowland, Basil Kaniewski, Holly Newsome, Isabella Tatchell, Jasmine Beddows, Jasmine Wholton, Olivia Mullins, Shania Gough, Sophie Inder** and **William York**.

Technical Support & Extending Research



Jeff House

Continuing to provide one-on-one technical support for lot feeders.

As a complimentary service, ALFA, in partnership with MLA, offers a dedicated Technical Services Officer, Jeff House, to all lot feeders. Jeff delivers the latest technical information, education, training and on-site support to feedlot operators. Each visited feedlot receives a Research Extension Information Pack containing ALFA and MLA's latest research and development resources.

In 2023-2024, Jeff enjoyed getting out on the road and connecting with lot feeders, visiting over 90 feedlots.

To request the complimentary services of the ALFA/ MLA Feedlot Technical Services Officer, contact Jeff House on:

M. 0419 262 207
E. jeff.house@feedlots.com.au

Our Goals:

Influence the operating environment to enable feedlots to continually improve, adapt and innovate

To be the recognised voice of the Australian cattle feedlot industry

Initiatives:

Promote the feedlot industry's production, welfare and environmental credentials

Promote industry career opportunities

Community engagement

Our Customers, Consumers & Community



Promote the Feedlot Industry's Production, Welfare and Environmental Credentials

grainfedbeef.com.au

Launched at Beef Australia 2021, grainfedbeef.com.au showcases the strengths of grain-fed beef production and the dedicated professionals in this sector. The platform is aimed at empowering the feedlot industry to share its story of nurturing cattle, land, and communities.

Created to highlight our practices, educate consumers, and address questions about food origins, this resource provides a unified voice in response to misinformation, alternative protein competition, activism, and changing dietary trends. It emphasises our commitment to livestock care, environmental stewardship, and community support. The platform also aids brand owners, suppliers,

and foodservice providers in addressing queries about Australian grain-fed beef production.

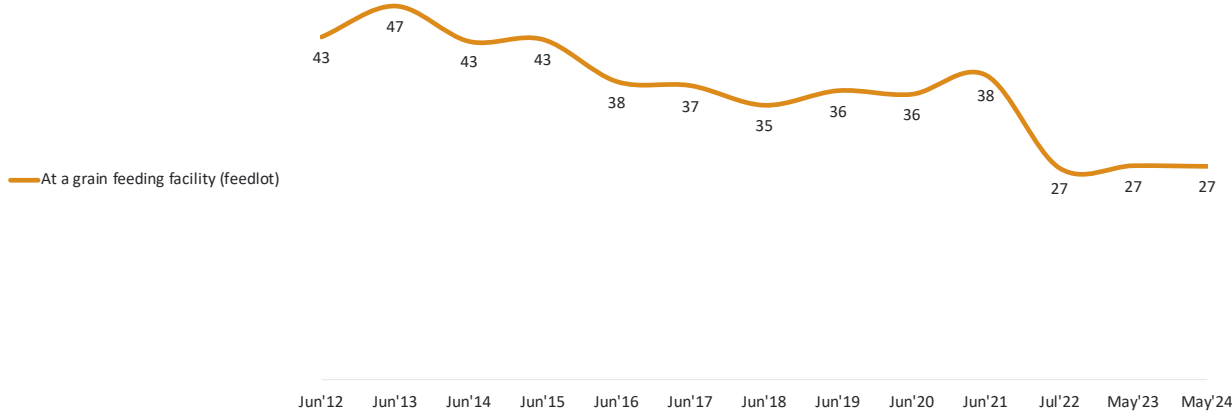
The website, @grainfedbeef Instagram account, and blog posts feature engaging stories about grain-fed beef production, dedicated lot feeding professionals, and the distinctive flavours of grain-fed beef. Educational videos covering topics such as the role of feedlots, animal welfare, community impact, NFAS standards and more are available on the website.

Visit www.grainfedbeef.com.au to explore these informative resources.

Concerns about beef production at grain feeding facilities



Concern of beef production stages (extremely/very concerned %) – Among meat eaters



CS Please indicate how concerned you are about the following stages of beef production. Base: Meat eaters n=1288-1434.
NOTE: *Prior to Jul'22 this was asked as 'live transportation in ships'



Community Sentiment Research

Since 2010, MLA has partnered with Pollinate Market Research, providing invaluable data on consumer trust, attitudes, and red meat consumption in Australian metropolitan areas.

The below graph shows how concerns have decreased around beef production in grain feeding facilities over the past decade, of which ALFA & MLA community engagement activities have contributed to. Current trends indicate generally favourable consumer perceptions of all red meat production. Importantly, there is a strong link between consumer knowledge of our practices and their overall attitude toward red meat, so it is crucial that we continue to build on this progress.

Brand refinement

As ALFA entered its 53rd year, we recognised the need for a brand revamp to align with modern cattle feeding in Australia. In 2023-2024, we introduced a refined brand that honours our past while highlighting the sector's professionalism.

Our goals were to establish a strong visual identity reflecting ALFA's values, mission, and industry leadership, and to ensure brand consistency across all communications, enhancing brand recall with stakeholders.



Case Study: Thomas Foods International Opens its Gates to the Next Generation

In 2022, Thomas Foods International's (TFI) Southern Cross Feedlot took home ALFA's beloved Community Heroes Award for their highly successful Rural Pathways Program.

Aimed at attracting young, enthusiastic people looking for an entry level opportunity in the agricultural industry, the program was well deserving of the award and the \$5,000 prize money.

The team at the Tintinara based feedlot further demonstrated their commitment to nurturing the next generation of agricultural professionals by utilising the prize fund to provide secondary school students with an invaluable introduction to the grain-fed beef industry.

The TFI Community Heroes Feedlot Tour involved nearly 40 students and teachers hailing from five schools across regional South Australia who were enthusiastic about careers in agriculture.

The Feedlot Tour's aim, spearheaded by Southern Cross Feedlot's business administration manager,

Kelly Nankivell, was to shed light on the diverse career options available at the feedlot which has recently doubled its capacity to 30,000 head - making it the largest in south-eastern Australia.

"A lot of kids may have some idea of agriculture on farm but very few have a good understanding of the intricacies of the lot feeding industry or have even visited a feedlot" she said.

The interactive program included activities such as visiting the induction area to compare cattle fed for differing durations and participate in a 'guess the weight' competition on a mob of steers. Following the next stage of the tour at the feed mill, students were given the hands-on opportunity to mix their own rations, further enhancing their understanding of the process.

Read the full story or watch the video on the ALFA website - feedlots.com.au/post/thomas-foods-international-opens-its-gates-to-the-next-generation

Promote Industry Career Opportunities

On behalf of the feedlot industry, ALFA actively represents lot feeders at various career expos and events across the country. In 2023-2024, ALFA attended Approaching Ag Wagga, ICMJ Wagga, PIEFA Conference, UNE Armidale's Farming Futures, ICMJ Rockhampton, Tamworth Agricultural Careers Expo, and AgVision Sydney.

The goal of having presence at these events is to spotlight the career paths and prospects in lot feeding, focusing on our student memberships, scholarships, graduate programs, and traineeships. We also invite PhD candidates to join our Communicate Your Research Competition, offering a forum to present and gain insights on feedlot-related studies.

These events proved fruitful, with 52 students seeking further information and over 12 scholarship applications received for SmartBeef 2023.

Virtual Feedlot Tour

In 2023, ALFA created another educational resource, a virtual feedlot tour, which delivers an immersive 'on farm' experience of feedlot operations and its career opportunities.

The all-inclusive virtual experience provides an immersive 360-degree walkthrough of a feedlot, offering detailed insights into the operational areas and concise facts about the grain fed beef industry.

It gives users a detailed guide of feedlot operations, creating awareness about the industry's production system, and encouraging further engagement through the **ALFA website**, ALFA's consumer facing platform **grainfedbeef.com.au**, and its online careers and education hub, **Feedlot TECH**.

Available on the **ALFA website**, the user-friendly resource is accessible to all ALFA members & stakeholders to showcase the inner workings of a feedlot.

Community Engagement

Alumni Engagement

ALFA has been cultivating industry leaders for more than 30 years through leadership programs, awards, and scholarships. This effort has built a diverse network of respected leaders and alumni, sharing knowledge for industry advancement.

Following our inaugural networking event in Brisbane in 2022, the second Alumni Function was held ahead of SmartBeef 2023.

At this event, we heard from an inspiring panel of industry scholars, including Tim Brennan, Ryan Brown and Grant Melrose, about their unique experiences partaking in Australian Rural Leadership Foundation programs.

We look forward to our third alumni event in Brisbane this October, aligned with BeefEx 2024, continuing to nurture industry collaboration and growth.



Stakeholder Engagement

ALFA is committed to fostering meaningful stakeholder engagement, consistently working to advance the lot feeding industry.

By engaging and building strong relationships with industry stakeholders, we can make more impactful decisions and create better outcomes for our members.

In 2024, the ALFA team participated in Beef Australia, the largest beef exposition in the Southern Hemisphere. Throughout the week-long event, ALFA hosted daily member meetups and hosted various stakeholders and lot feeders at a variety of programmed events.

Our attendance at Beef Australia proved invaluable, allowing us to engage in face-to-face discussions with our members and stakeholders.

Our presence also enabled us to showcase the lot feeding industry's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and animal welfare, highlighting the vital role our sector plays in the broader red meat industry.



Our Livestock

Our Goals:

To lead in animal welfare, environmental and production standards.

Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses

Influence the operating environment to enable feedlots to continually improve, adapt and innovate

Initiatives:

Responding to Emergency Animal Disease risk

Continual improvement of feedlot animal welfare practices

Partnering with MLA on feedlot research and development for the betterment of grain fed levy payers

Responding to Emergency Animal Disease Risk

As a member of Animal Health Australia and a signatory of the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA), ALFA has been actively involved in evaluating Australia's response strategies for both LSD and FMD since their detection in Indonesia in 2022.

ALFA remains focused on building preparedness across the industry and in January 2024 appointed Rachael O'Brien as the Feedlot Industry Biosecurity Manager to deliver the ALFA EAD Biosecurity Project.

Rachael O'Brien is highly skilled in the field of Livestock Biosecurity encompassing animal welfare and the supply chain and has a vast amount of experience developing and delivering tools that enhance biosecurity preparedness.

The project, which included a national infield extension delivery component for 2025 is presently reviewing existing documents such as the enterprise manual for beef cattle feedlots, the national biosecurity manual for beef cattle feedlots and the AUSVETPLAN disposal manual whilst addressing any identified opportunities for information with new resources.

Resources created by the project will help lot feeders to implement strong biosecurity practices that assist them in preventing and responding to an EAD incursion in Australia.



Exercise High Steaks Workshop

In May 2024, ALFA and Biosecurity Queensland led an industry and government EAD exercise to address best practice action plans during a potential foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) outbreak.

Exercise High Steaks workshop had 30 participants, including feedlot managers, feedlot operators and government biosecurity specialists come together to learn about the roles of government and industry in a cost-shared emergency animal disease response. They applied their knowledge to work through various scenarios for three different sized feedlots to formulate a list of priorities

that collated the challenges feedlots may face during an EAD incursion. These priorities will now be addressed by the project to build preparedness across the feedlot industry.

The ALFA EAD Biosecurity Project under ALFA's strategic response to the threat of LSD/FMD also includes an infield delivery component scheduled for late 2025. Resources to aid lot feeders to prevent and response to an EAD incursion in Australia will be rolled out in due course as part of the project deliverables.

BE AWARE, BE PREPARED

Early detection and reporting is essential to containing the spread of an EAD. If you suspect an EAD is present, you must report it immediately by calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 or your feedlot vet.

Make sure you:

- Know the signs of animal diseases
- Inspect animals regularly
- Report unusual signs in animals to your vet or 1800 675 888
- Implement a Feedlot Biosecurity Management Plan on your feedlot
- Review your Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Action Plan

ALFA's Disease Preparedness Hub includes LSD and FMD fact sheets you can share amongst feedlot staff. Visit feedlots.com.au/disease-preparedness-hub for more information.



SNAPSHOT
Feedlot Industry uptake of ALFA's Shade Initiative

Since the unveiling of the ALFA Shade Initiative in late 2020, an impressive 32% of the industry's unshaded capacity has been transitioned to shaded conditions, compared to the 2019-2020 baseline. This voluntary effort has elevated the number of cattle under shade from 810,376 head (56% of capacity) in June 2020 to 1,129,437 head (70% of Australia's feedlot capacity) in June 2024.

Continual Improvement of Feedlot Animal Welfare Practices

Encourage adoption of shade in feedlots – ALFA's shade initiative

To maximise cattle wellbeing, meet welfare standards, increase productivity, and meet community expectations, ALFA is committed to seeing the adoption of shade in feedlots increase over time.

To support this, ALFA launched the ALFA Shade Initiative in November 2020, asking all Australian feedlots to make a pledge to provide cattle under their care with access to shade by 2026. To support lot feeders implementing shade, ALFA continued to promote shade adoption throughout 2023 and 2024.

- In conjunction with MLA, ALFA hosted a free 'Partial Covered Housing Systems' webinar aimed at providing valuable insights into the decisions surrounding the implementation or upgrading of shade and shelter infrastructure within feedlots.

- ALFA's dedicated Shade Hub houses a range of key resources including the 'Unlocking the benefits of Shade' Handbook, which contains information on the benefits of shade to animal welfare and feedlot productivity, the design and construction of shade and answers to frequently asked questions.
- In 2023, MLA published the 'Feedlot covered housing manual', a document built upon the best available knowledge from around the world for covered housing and shade systems, along with knowledge gained from visits to a variety of covered housing systems operational in Australia. The manual details design, construction, regulations, bedding, manure management, welfare standards, animal health considerations, and costs of these systems compared to best practice open feedlot pens.



Case Study: Kylagh Feedlot, WA

Kylagh is a leading Western Australian feedlot and early adopter of practices to improve feedlot cattle wellbeing and performance.

Across 110-day programs in summer, Kylagh Feedlot's owner and general manager Ivan Rogers saw first-hand how shade benefited his cattle.

Kylagh Feedlot has three pillars of priority when it comes to running their business: environment, animal wellbeing and people. Of these, Ivan said they have identified animal wellbeing as the most important investment. "Shelter is a necessity for all walks of life. However, our lot holds predominantly black Angus and Waygu which are not very heat tolerant," Ivan said.

Since implementing the shade, Ivan has observed changes to physical displays of heat load, including less or no panting, shade seeking behaviour on warmer days, greater feed intake (increase of 0.13kg average daily gain) and calmer behaviour.

Kylagh developed their shade and shelter infrastructure plan to give their livestock choice.

"While we were sure our cattle would seek shade, especially during summer, we found it was better to allow them the choice if they wanted to use our shade infrastructure or not," Ivan said.

"It's a big investment but it's worth it. Our cattle are now reaching their target weights earlier, leading to reduced feeding costs and time – we're likely to experience payback within 2–10 years."

Ivan encouraged other producers and lot feeders to adapt their feedlots where needed, to match shade provision to their climatic requirements.

Read the full story on the **ALFA website**.



Adoption of antimicrobial stewardship in feedlots

Antimicrobial Stewardship is a key action industry is taking maintain the effectiveness of medicines, combat resistance development, and ensure continued access to vital tools for future livestock care.

As of January 1, 2022, Antimicrobial Stewardship became a required component of the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) for all feedlot operators.

ALFA is encouraging the implementation of the Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines for the Australian Cattle Feedlot Industry. First introduced in 2018, these world-leading guidelines provide feedlot managers with structured guidelines to minimise antimicrobial resistance risks and protect future antimicrobial use.

In addition to Antimicrobial Stewardship, ALFA endorses the establishment of national usage reporting systems as well as regular industry-level surveillance monitoring.

Managing summer heat in Australian feedlots

Throughout the year, and especially in the lead up to summer, it is important that feedlots remain vigilant and ensure their heat load management plans are fit for purpose.

With El Nino conditions prevailing through summer 2023-2024, the heatwave conditions proved to be a challenging environment for cattle management, and the increased risk of heat load was evident.

To assist members during this difficult time, ALFA hosted a Preparing for Heat Events Webinar for feedlots to hear from industry professionals and find out exactly what steps they needed to take. Featuring experienced industry professionals, from lot feeders themselves to vets and nutritionists, the panel discussed how to prepare and plan for heat events. The panel shared their experiences to help the feedlot community best equip themselves for heatwave conditions.

Alongside this, ALFA's **Guide on Managing Summer Heat in Australian Feedlots** supports feedlot operator's decision-making process leading up to a during the summer period and provides practical management tools that can reduce the risk of heat and help protect cattle welfare.

Continuing to be a valuable resource, the Guide assists lot feeders in preparing for and managing extreme heat events. Its promotion and dissemination remain a priority for ALFA to benefit the industry.

Handbook of best practice guidelines for the Australian feedlot industry

Continual improvement and adherence to best practice are of key focus to the feedlot industry. Developed by ALFA and MLA, the Handbook of best practice guidelines for the Australian feedlot industry provides a concise reference document for feedlot operators and staff to promote improved management practices in the Australian feedlot industry.

This handbook serves as a resource to help feedlot operators identify

optimal outcomes and key operational procedures that align with National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) standards.

The document is not a substitute for existing quality management systems in feedlots, but rather a practical guide for feedlot operators to consider in their operational and management programs and assist in the development of in-house procedures.

Handbook of best practice guidelines for the Australian feedlot industry





Partnering with MLA on feedlot research and development for the betterment of grain fed levy payers

MLA's Feedlot Program is funded from grain fed levies, with a matching contribution from the Australian Government. It addresses the specific research, development and adoption requirements of the cattle feedlot sector.

Guided by **Red Meat 2030's** 'Our Livestock' and 'Our Environment' priority areas, the Feedlot Program is also aligned with MLA's strategic initiatives to enable the Australian feedlot industry to be world leaders in animal health, welfare and production practices.

MLA continues to work to the joint MLA-ALFA 5-year Feedlot Program R&D strategy endorsed by the ALFA Board in 22-23, with focus on investment areas including labour, preventative health & welfare, environmental sustainability, productivity, and automation.

ALFA, through our Research & Development Committee, develops and approves research and development priorities aligned with the 5-year strategy. MLA takes these priorities and develops them into actionable research and development projects, which undergo approval by the committee before being tendered by MLA.

Through this process, priorities for feedlot industry research are identified, key projects are developed, and levy funds are allocated judiciously to ensure delivery and impact driven research for Australian lot feeders.

During 2023-2024, several key projects were delivered or commenced by MLA in partnership with the ALFA Research & Development Committee and grain fed levy payers.

Key highlights in these focus areas are included here:

Feedlot Labour

- ✓ Several training courses on Feedlot Tech were developed during the year. This included the launch of the Fundamentals of Pen Riding course, and development of the Fundamentals of Feed Allocation and Bunk Management and Fundamentals of Office and Administration courses, with launch anticipated early in FY25.
- ✓ Continued support of scholarships for emerging leaders in the industry. Course 29 ARLP scholars Tim Brennan and Ryan Brown have graduated from their programs. Megan Krause of Sandalwood feedlot graduated from the ARLF's TRAIL Program in March 2024.
- ✓ Sponsorship of 10 student scholars to attend **ALFA's BeefEx Conference** in October 2024 to network and engage with the feedlot industry.

Preventative Health & Welfare

- ✓ Launch of the Feedlot covered housing systems: Best practice design and management manual at **SmartBeef** in October 2023.
- ✓ Results from a project evaluating partial coverage of pens with shelter in a commercial feedlot launched at a webinar in June 2024. The webinar had 122 attendees, representing 80 feedlot organisations.
- ✓ Contracted a multi-year project to evaluate the management of cattle under covered housing and model odour of animals in covered facilities at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga.
- ✓ Continued evaluation of Autogenous vaccines for *Pasturella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, and ' *Mycoplasma bovis* in Australian feedlots under a funding partnership between MLA, Apiam Animal Health, and University of Adelaide.

Feedlot Automation

- ✓ Continued adoption of bunk management automation in the feedlot industry with ute-mounted scanners now determining feed remaining on 250,000 cattle on a daily basis.
- ✓ A project to develop customisable bunk management algorithms in a software packaged commenced.
- ✓ In FY24, MLA Donor Company commenced a project with a commercial lot feeder to evaluate automated disease and animal wellbeing detection systems.

Environmental Sustainability

- ✓ Completion of a project that has developed a new, more accurate method to account for enteric methane emissions from Australian grain fed cattle. This work is currently being reviewed for acceptance in a scientific journal, as well as being incorporated into the national inventory methods for calculations used to account for enteric methane of lot fed cattle.
- ✓ MLA Donor Company study completed a large 8,000 head randomised block design evaluation of 3-NOP at 100 mg/kg DM. The research highlighted no performance effect of 3-NOP in 50% of cattle during summer and loss of 4 kg HCW in 50% of cattle during wet spring conditions. Hydrogen accumulation suspected. Two further research initiatives endorsed by ALFA R&D Committee for low dose inhibitor and hydrogen utilisation research to address this issue.
- ✓ A levy funded trial evaluating Bovaer in animals grazing pasture supplemented with a small allocation of a grain-based pellet. In what was a world first result, ADG was 6.6% greater in cattle given Bovaer pellets, over conventional energy pellet, taking 28 days less to gain 200 kg BW.

Feedlot Productivity

- ✓ Continued research on short duration lairage, including the initiation of a project to evaluate short lairage over winter conditions. To date, it has been shown that limiting time in lairage to less than 4 hours can increase hot carcase weight of mid-fed export cattle by 6.2 to 7.4kg (advantage over 26.5 & 16.5 hours in lairage, respectively).
- ✓ Short duration lairage is now adopted by 596,178 (21.8%) head of the grain-fed supply chain.
- ✓ The first phase of the feedlot sorting and endpoint model concluded. In what was a world first, calibrations developed for determination of chemical fat from computed tomography (CT scan) were validated. In future this enables far less labour intense studies in the field of body composition and growth prediction research to occur. Validation of the sorting and endpoint model in a commercial feedlot is planned to start in FY25.
- ✓ One new probiotic based product from the USA identified and research on this product to improve feedlot cattle performance planned to start FY25.

Our Environment

Our Goals:

To lead in animal welfare, environmental and production standards

Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses

Influence the operating environment to enable feedlots to continually improve, adapt and innovate

Initiatives:

Advocacy for feedlot environmental concerns

Feedlot industry's contribution to the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework

Feedlot industry's contribution to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030

Advocacy for Feedlot Environmental Concerns

In 2023, the Carbon Transport and Storage Corporation (CTSCo), a subsidiary of Glencore, put a submission in front of the Queensland Government to trial injection of liquefied carbon dioxide waste from the Millmerran Power Station into the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) Precipice aquifer in the Western Downs region.

The GAB is a critically important water resource for agricultural and community use throughout eastern Australia, stretching across the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia. With 58% of Australian feedlots situated within the affected area, it was of paramount importance to ALFA that the proposal was rejected to protect water quality for agricultural enterprises and prioritise food production and security, ensuring Australian lot feeders can continue to produce safe high-quality grain fed beef to nourish families here and globally.

Alongside various farming bodies such as AgForce, Queensland Farmers' Federation and the National

Farmers' Federation, ALFA urged the Queensland Government to reject this proposed Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project in the GAB.

In May 2024, the Queensland Department of Environment, Science and Innovation confirmed ALFA's concerns that CTSC's proposal to inject liquid CO₂ waste into the GAB presented an unacceptable risk to the integrity, safety, and security of Australia's food production, rejecting CTSCo's proposal.

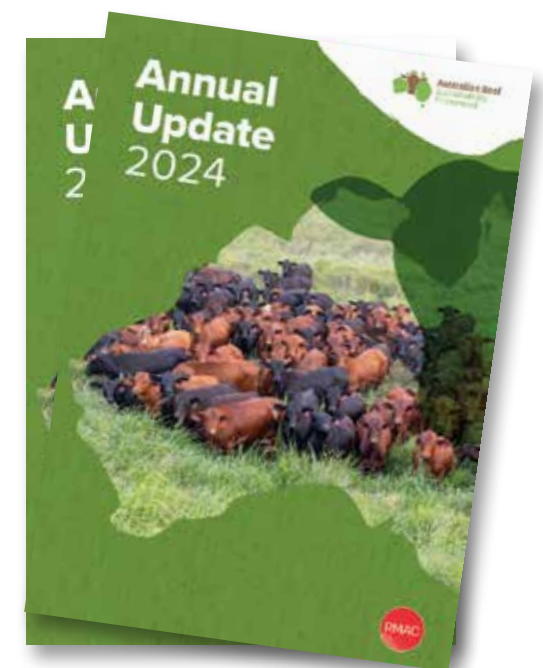
Furthering this, the Queensland Government announced a permanent ban on CCS activities in the Queensland component of the GAB. This was a positive outcome for industry and set an important precedent for other governments to put similar protections in place to protect GAB water under their jurisdiction and prioritise this resource for agricultural and community use.

Feedlot Industry's contribution to the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework

The Australian Beef Sustainability Framework (ABSF) promotes what sustainable beef production looks like in practice and conducts annual assessments of industry performance across a series of indicators.

The ABSF guides the Australian beef industry towards sustainable best practices, using independent evidence to evaluate performance. This evaluation covers critical indicators within four key themes: animal welfare, environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and people and community engagement.

Key feedlot industry indicators, including animal welfare compliance, Antimicrobial Stewardship Guidelines adoption, and shade implementation, remain integral to the framework. These indicators contribute significantly to the representation of the beef industry's sustainability efforts.



Feedlot Industry's contribution to achieving Carbon Neutrality by 2030

The Australian feedlot sector has an active commitment to environmental stewardship and supports the wider industry initiative of creating a carbon neutral industry by 2030. Through collaboration with MLA in the Research & Development Feedlot Program, ALFA has identified best practices to help feedlots measure and, where feasible, reduce their carbon footprint.

Carbon Neutrality Hub

ALFA maintains its support for feedlot operators in understanding and acting on the carbon neutrality commitment through our dedicated **Carbon Neutrality Hub** on the ALFA website.

The hub provides comprehensive tools for feedlots to understand what it means to be carbon neutral, learn emission reduction strategies and navigate the process of registering a business as carbon neutral.

Redefining how methane emissions are predicted

One of the four key work areas identified by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) in relation to the Carbon Neutral 2030 Roadmap refers to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from livestock.

It has been discovered by researchers that the current equation used to determine the levels of enteric methane emissions from Australian feedlot cattle may overestimate emissions.

Currently, the Moe and Tyrell (1979) equation is used to calculate enteric methane emissions from the feedlot industry as part of the National Greenhouse Inventory.

These calculations are then reported as part of Australia's obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Paris Agreement. The Moe and Tyrell equation was developed using North American Dairy cattle in the late 1970s.

Originally it was chosen due to its reliance on the carbohydrate composition of each diet, offering the potential for customised estimates for different feedlots.

Meat & Livestock Australia has now completed several projects where actual collected data from Australian feedlot cattle does not accurately reflect predicted methane emissions calculated using the Moe and Tyrell (1979) equation.

In 2016, a project led by researchers at the University of Melbourne, funded by MLA, investigated the **long-term total greenhouse gas emissions from beef feedlots**. This project involved collection of emissions data at two Australian feedlots, one based in southern Australia and the other in northern Australia.

The emissions data collected was compared to the national inventory quantification methods.

Significantly, it was shown that equations used to predict methane and nitrous oxide resulted in an overestimation of up to 30% and 80%, respectively, depending on the site.

MLA is currently working on a new equation to accurately predict enteric methane emissions and is in the process of presenting it to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Our Markets

Our Goals:

Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses

Influence the operating environment to enable feedlots to continually improve, adapt and innovate

Initiatives:

Active engagement in Australia's FTA process to ensure we maximise our market access opportunities

Continued provision of Quarterly Feedlot Statistics

Active Engagement in Australia's FTA Process to Ensure we Maximise our Market Access Opportunities

A-EU Free Trade Agreement

ALFA maintains an active role as part of the Australia-EU Red Meat Market Access Taskforce, engaging with both industry and government in the ongoing Australia-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations.

In the lead up to the final negotiation stages in October 2023, ALFA, as a member of the Taskforce, advocated strongly to secure better access for Australian beef. With the EU holding firm on its restrictive quota position, industry collectively reaffirmed its position that Australian officials must be resolute that there should be no deal for the sake of a deal – and importantly, no deal without addressing the red meat sector's disproportionately low volume access.

To the government's credit, negotiators did hold firm, and with it being clear that not enough compromise had been made a deal was not reached. While not ideal to reach an outcome, this FTA is seen as a once in a generation opportunity for our industry, and too important not to improve market access for red meat into Europe.

While there is backing from both the Australian and EU perspectives to reach an agreement, there remains a need for further efforts to finalise a comprehensive deal that aligns favourably with the interests of both parties, and for our industry, a better deal for Australian beef into Europe.

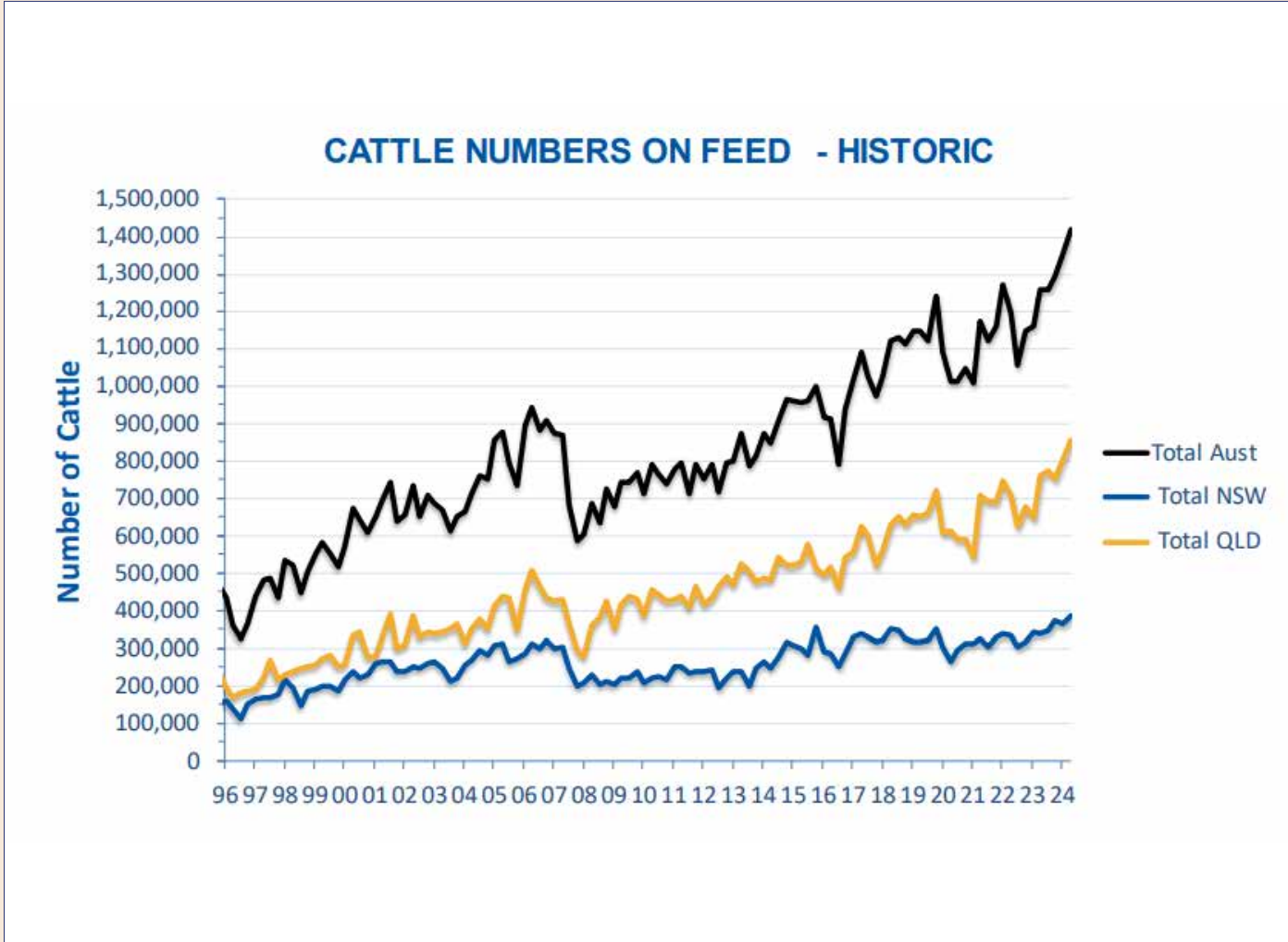
Continued provision of Quarterly Feedlot Statistics

ALFA, with the support of MLA, continued to release the Quarterly Feedlot Survey results, offering significant data on cattle on feed and other key market indicators. The 2023-2024 period was marked by several milestones, including the longest stretch of quarters with over 1 million head on feed and a new peak in national capacity.

By the end of 2023, cattle on feed exceeded 1.2 million head, marking the fifth consecutive increase. This solidifies

the new standard level for cattle on feed in the Australian feedlot industry.

In 2024, the numbers on feed continued to rise, with the June 2024 quarter seeing a new peak of 1.4 million head. This increase underscores the ongoing investment and confidence in feedlots as a critical component of Australia's beef supply chain.



Our Systems

Our Goals:

Increase the profitability and sustainability of our members' businesses

Be a leader in animal welfare, environment and production standards

Initiatives:

Continual improvement of the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme

Continual Improvement of the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme

The **National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS)** is the feedlot industry's quality management system, which underpins the integrity of grain fed beef in Australia.

Managed independently by AUS-MEAT and overseen by the Feedlot Industry Accreditation Committee (FLIAC), NFAS has enhanced the Australian feedlot sector's reputation by maintaining high standards in food safety, animal welfare, and environmental practices.

Following a 2020 review, FLIAC revised the NFAS Rules and Standards, implementing changes in 2021 that became auditable in January 2022. To support these updates, ALFA, AUS-MEAT, and Integrity Systems Company formed a strategic partnership, launching initiatives such as regular Open Zoom Forums.

These forums address areas of lower compliance and misunderstandings, continuing through 2023-2024 with steady or increasing participation.

The simplicity of this approach has proven effective in driving change and promoting QA system adoption. Feedback indicates that participants find these forums valuable; in 2023-2024, 107 feedlots participated in at least one Open Forum, with small to medium-sized operations finding the content and format particularly beneficial.

Each forum informs the development of additional resources, including user-friendly templates for capturing audit information, often co-developed with presenting feedlots. The new NFAS website, launched in late 2023, hosts these resources and fact sheets for easy access.

To further support feedlots in understanding NFAS and its requirements, ALFA and MLA introduced the "Fundamentals of feedlot accreditation" course as part of the Feedlot Fundamentals training on Feedlot TECH in April 2024. This concise course, divided into three modules, educates users on the foundations of NFAS, feedlot responsibilities under NFAS, and maintaining NFAS accreditation.



Our Goals:

Be the recognised voice
of the Australian cattle
feedlot industry

100% representation
of all Australian
cattle feedlots

Initiatives:

ALFA Constitution

ALFA enhanced operating model

ALFA policy and advocacy and
strengthening government relations

Continued best practice
governance management

Member
communications

Our Association



Constitution

ALFA Council undertook a comprehensive review of the Articles of Association, which govern our governance structure. To guide this effort, a specialist was enlisted with experience in refining Constitutions for member-based organizations like ALFA.

This review aimed to craft a contemporary Constitution fitting for a public company limited by guarantee and align with best practices in governance and law while addressing any ambiguities in the existing framework. The overarching goal was to create a document that will serve ALFA effectively well into the future.

Member consultation was conducted through a series of webinars where we elaborated on the proposed changes, fostering discussion, questions, and feedback. This process enabled further refinement of the Constitution to ensure it was fit for purpose.

The review culminated with Council recommending adoption of the new Constitution to Members by way of a special resolution at our Annual General Meeting held in November 2023. Members voted in unanimous support for the Constitution.

The newly endorsed Constitution introduces several operational changes for ALFA. It includes an updated definition for Feedlot and Lot Feeding aligned with the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS).

The Council is now referred to as the Board of Directors, and the Board structure allows for up to 11 Directors, including up to two Appointed Directors, facilitating external perspectives to complement the existing collective skills.

Through early 2024 ALFA developed a series of By-Laws to support the governance operations of ALFA and the Constitution.

ALFA's Enhanced Operating Model

From its modest origins, ALFA has grown into a highly respected Peak Industry Body focused on delivering value to its membership and seeking outcomes in the best interest of the feedlot industry.

In parallel with the review of ALFA's Articles of Association and adoption of the new Constitution, throughout the year ALFA continued to implement an enhanced operating model which was endorsed by the Board in May 2023.

This included restructuring ALFA's operations into three Operating Pillars:

PILLAR 1: Policy & Advocacy

PILLAR 2: Member Services & Community Engagement

PILLAR 3: Governance & Finance

The pillars are supported by:

- a. ALFA Policy
- b. ALFA R&D
- c. ALFA Marketing, Trade & Market Access
- d. ALFA Industry Capacity
- e. ALFA Community Engagement
- f. Audit, Risk & Remuneration

To support the three Operating Pillars and refocused Committee structure, the ALFA Secretariat now operates under three Business Units. ALFA's Policy and Advocacy efforts have been further invested in through the appointment of additional policy expertise designed to continue to effectively represent the interests of our members and be the recognised voice of the feedlot industry.

The result is that ALFA now has successfully implemented modernised governance arrangements supported by an operating structure and dedicated team of professionals to continue to propel the Association into the future.

ALFA's Policy & Advocacy and Strengthening Government Regulations

With a revitalised policy and advocacy team in place, ALFA has made significant progress in further advocating for policies that support the lot feeding industry and operating environment our members. From regulatory reforms to sustainability initiatives, our efforts have been guided by the needs and interests of our members, the revitalised ALFA Policy Committee and the ALFA Board.

ALFA holds official recognition from the government as the Peak Industry Body representing grain fed cattle producers.

Throughout 2023-2024, ALFA engaged with both State and Federal Governments but also diligently cultivated crucial relationships with other Peak Industry Bodies and industry stakeholders to advance the operating environment for our members. ALFA, being a member of the Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC), continued to advise and support them on a range of issues impacting ALFA members.

This year ALFA has actively lodged 21 submissions and contributed to 19 RMAC submissions addressing diverse challenges and opportunities, channelled through platforms like government reviews, consultative processes, and senate inquiries.

ALFA stands as a steadfast advocate for its members and the feedlot industry, actively involved in submissions, meetings and stakeholder engagements activities that impact the policy and operational landscape of feedlot operators.

Examples include:

1.

ALFA is a stakeholder and member of the Federal Governments push to renew the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy. The Federal Government has provided \$5 million over four years to renew the animal welfare strategy in Australia.
2.

Submission to the NSW EPA Guidelines for Large Emitters. ALFA met and provided a submission to NSW EPA on their greenhouse gas assessment and migration plan..
3.

South Australian Government proposed changes to animal welfare legislation and provide a draft bill for comment. ALFA provided comment on the bill to reflect a national approach to animal welfare enforcement.
4.

ALFA was successful in getting 'Feedlot Manager' and 'Feedlot Worker' as recognised occupations with the ANZSCO framework within the Beef Cattle framework.
5.

ALFA has meet with the Climate Change Authority on a number of occasions to discuss the role and impact feedlots have to manage climate change. The Climate Change Authority is responsible for providing advice to the Federal Government on climate change.
6.

ALFA made a submission to the Victorian Government of changes to the animal welfare legislation. ALFA provided comments on aspects like to role of NFAS and industry quality assurance programs provide concerning animal welfare and licencing arrangements.
7.

ALFA worked with supply chain members concerning the aspect of European Union Deforestation Regulation. Grain fed product is the largest share of the EU market and as such it is important ALFA members understand the obligations the EU will place on them going into 2025. ALFA is looking to provide updates on the requirements going into 2025.
8.

ALFA is active within the biosecurity area working with Animal Health Australia (AHA) on emergency animal disease preparedness. ALFA has led a number of working groups an example being the rework and updating of the Enterprise Manual for beef cattle feedlots. This manual is used by government and industry in the event of an emergency disease to gain an understanding of feedlot operations.
9.

ALFA is an active industry contributor to the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework (ABSF). ALFA is a member of the ABSF steering committee and provide regular feedback and input into the framework to ensure ALFA members interest are considered and included.
10.

ALFA continues to work with the Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC) concerning industry matters and submission RMAC provides to Government and Stakeholders. ALFA provided input and feedback to a number of RMAC submission throughout the year.

In addition, ALFA was actively engaged on the following matters during 2023-2024:

- ALFA assisted a number of feedlots that experienced a heat load event in February 2024. ALFA provided assistance and dealt with regulator and stakeholder engagement concerning the event.
- ALFA opposed a proposal from Carbon Transport and Storage Corporation (CTSCo) to inject Carbon Dioxide (CO2) liquid waste into the Great Artesian Basin (GAB), specifically the Precipice Sandstone aquifer. ALFA is in favour of further exploration of an alternate injection site, one not directly servicing the production of food, fibre, and regional communities. ALFA made this known to the Queensland Department of Environment and Science through submissions and meetings and worked with our stakeholders to make sure our collective voice was heard. The Government did not support the application and as such the GAB is free from any actions concerning liquid carbon capture.

In addition to these submissions, ALFA continued to ensure effective engagement with key stakeholder groups through the period, including:

- Industry – RMAC, Peak Bodies and Service providers
- Regulatory – State Agricultural Departments, Planning Departments, Environmental Departments
- Regulatory – Commonwealth Agricultural Department, Export Department
- Political – State Agricultural Departments and Environmental Agencies
- Political – Federal Agriculture and Trade
- Feedlot Veterinarians and Nutritionists
- Environmental service providers
- RSPCA at the State and Federal level
- Industry – Other intensive industries, including the Pork, Chicken, Eggs and Dairy research and advocacy industries



Continued Best Practice Governance Management

ALFA places a strong emphasis on effective governance and robust financial standing, ensuring the provision of quality service to its members. Over the year, the ALFA Board and the Secretariat continues to follow and refine ALFA's governance protocols. These encompass the execution of the Strategic Operating Plan, following ALFA's Corporate Governance Schedule, evaluating the Risk Framework, and sustaining the capacity to execute ALFA's Crisis Response Plan.

Best practice policy development framework

ALFA Council remained committed to implementing its best practice Policy Framework. This framework delineates procedures and tools that expedite streamlined and efficient policy development for ALFA and the feedlot sector. ALFA Committees are tasked with the annual review of existing and the creation of new ALFA policies pertinent to their respective areas of expertise. The Policy Register of ALFA remains dynamic, subject to regular review and updates to ensure the ongoing relevance, current status, and appropriateness of ALFA's policies.

ALFA Annual General Meeting 2023

ALFA held its 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 22 November in Brisbane.

Highlights reported to members from ALFA's 2023 Year in Review included:

- The continued promotion of **ALFA's Shade Initiative** that encourages all Australian feedlots to make a pledge to provide cattle under their care with access to shade by 2026 and stepping up our commitment to **Antimicrobial Stewardship**.
- ALFA, in collaboration with MLA, continued work on **grainfedbeef.com.au** to showcase the attributes of the grain fed beef production system and enable the feedlot industry to better tell its story about how we nourish cattle, land and communities.
- A two new online training courses were developed by industry for ALFA's online training platform **Feedlot TECH** – Fundamentals of Pen Riding, and Fundamentals of NFAS.
- Launching a dedicated **Disease Preparedness Hub** designed to house resources to assist lot feeders in remaining alert and be prepared for an animal disease outbreak.
- Delivered workshops on Animal Health and Welfare, Nutrition and Milling, Summer Heat Preparedness, Covered Housing, and Animal Welfare Officer Training with over 532 feedlot staff attending.
- More than 350 feedlot professionals and industry stakeholders attended the industry event SmartBeef23, comprised of an on-site demonstration day at Elders' Killara Feedlot showcasing the latest in research, development and technology, and a full calendar of social events.

- Successful delivery of ALFA's Recognition of Excellence Awards Program which encourages and celebrates excellence via scholarships and awards such as the Young Lot Feeder of the Year, the Award for Innovation, and Community Heroes Award.
- Continued partnership with Meat & Livestock Australia to undertake effective Research & Development on behalf of lot feeders, with progress made in the areas of feedlot automation, dark cutting research, and methane emission suppression.


During the AGM 2023 proceedings, ALFA farewelled and thanked retiring Board members, Stephen Martin, Bryce Camm and Daryle Belford for their contribution through their terms.


ALFA Board members elect for 2023-2024 were:


- Barbara Madden (President)
- Thomas Green (Vice President)
- Amanda Moohen (Director)
- Grant Garey (Director)
- Paul Vogt (Director)
- Scott Braund (Director)
- David Bailey (Director)
- Lauren McNally (Director)
- Grant Melrose (Director)
- Lucy Morris (Director)
- Andrew Rushford (Director)
- Andrew Talbot (Director)
- Marcus Doumany (Director)
- Jeff Dight (Director)


Member Communications


ALFA remains dedicated to keeping its members well-informed about the latest industry news, research and development, policy changes, and government updates through various communication channels, including:


- 


'Around the Pens' newsletter: This fortnightly update features latest industry matters, events and training, recognition of excellence, and tools and resources.
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General messages: Used to keep members up to date as matters arise, prime examples of this includes major weather event updates; available industry and government support; biosecurity advice and fact sheets.
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Media releases: Distributed to members and media, releases facilitate the distribution of key information and talking points from ALFA, including quarterly survey data, awards announcements, and event promotion.
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Lotfeeding Journal: Printed every two months by Australian Community Media, this publication is an in-depth roundup of all things lot feeding.
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Fact sheets: ALFA develops and distributes fact sheets addressing a range of issues, to keep lot feeders informed as matters like Lumpy Skin Disease and Foot and Mouth Disease arise.
- 

Awards, Scholarships and Professional Development opportunities: ALFA regularly distributes information on upcoming Awards, Scholarships and Professional Development Programs directly to our members inboxes, helping industry to be aware of the opportunities available to them.
- 

Training and events communications: ALFA keeps members abreast of new training programs and events targeted towards the lot feeding sector. This includes ALFA run training and events, such as workshops, webinars and conferences, as well as broader industry upskilling opportunities.

If you would like any further information on the Year in Review activities, please contact the ALFA Office on (02) 9290 3700.





Board of Directors

ALFA's Board is comprised of directly elected feedlot representatives; a model that has stood the test of time in delivering passionate industry talent who strive to deliver on ALFA's value proposition to feedlot businesses.

The ALFA Board is steely focused on representing the interests of lot feeders and delivering on our mission to improve the profitability, professionalism and community standing of the cattle feedlot industry via industry representation, strategic levy investment, industry development activities and membership assistance.



Barbara Madden
President
Smithfield Cattle Company, QLD



Thomas Green
Vice President
Camm Agricultural Group, QLD



Amanda Moohen
Condabri Beef, QLD



Grant Garey
Tey's Australia, QLD



Paul Vogt
Associated Feedlots, NSW



Scott Braund
Mort & Co, QLD



David Bailey
ACC Beef, QLD



Lauren McNally
Paringa Feedlot, QLD



Grant Melrose
Pakaderinga Feedlot, QLD



Lucy Morris
TW Pearson and Son, WA



Andrew Talbot
Elders Killara Feedlot, NSW



Marcus Doumany
Stockyard Beef, QLD



Jeff Dight
Bindaree Food Group, NSW

ALFA Staff

ALFA staff collaborate closely with the ALFA Board to execute the Strategic Operating Plan and are readily available to provide assistance on member-related issues. You're encouraged to reach out to the ALFA office anytime to connect with one of our dedicated team members.



Christian Mulders
Chief Executive Officer



Madie Hamilton
Chief Operating Officer



Michael (Bomber) Lancaster
General Manager – Policy



Jeff House
Feedlot Technical Services
Officer (ALFA/MLA)



Meg Rice
Manager – Policy



Rachael O'Brien
Manager – Feedlot Industry
Biosecurity



Emily Litzow
Manager – Training & Education



Lexa Blandis
Professional Development
Coordinator



Annabelle Madden
Marketing & Communications
Coordinator



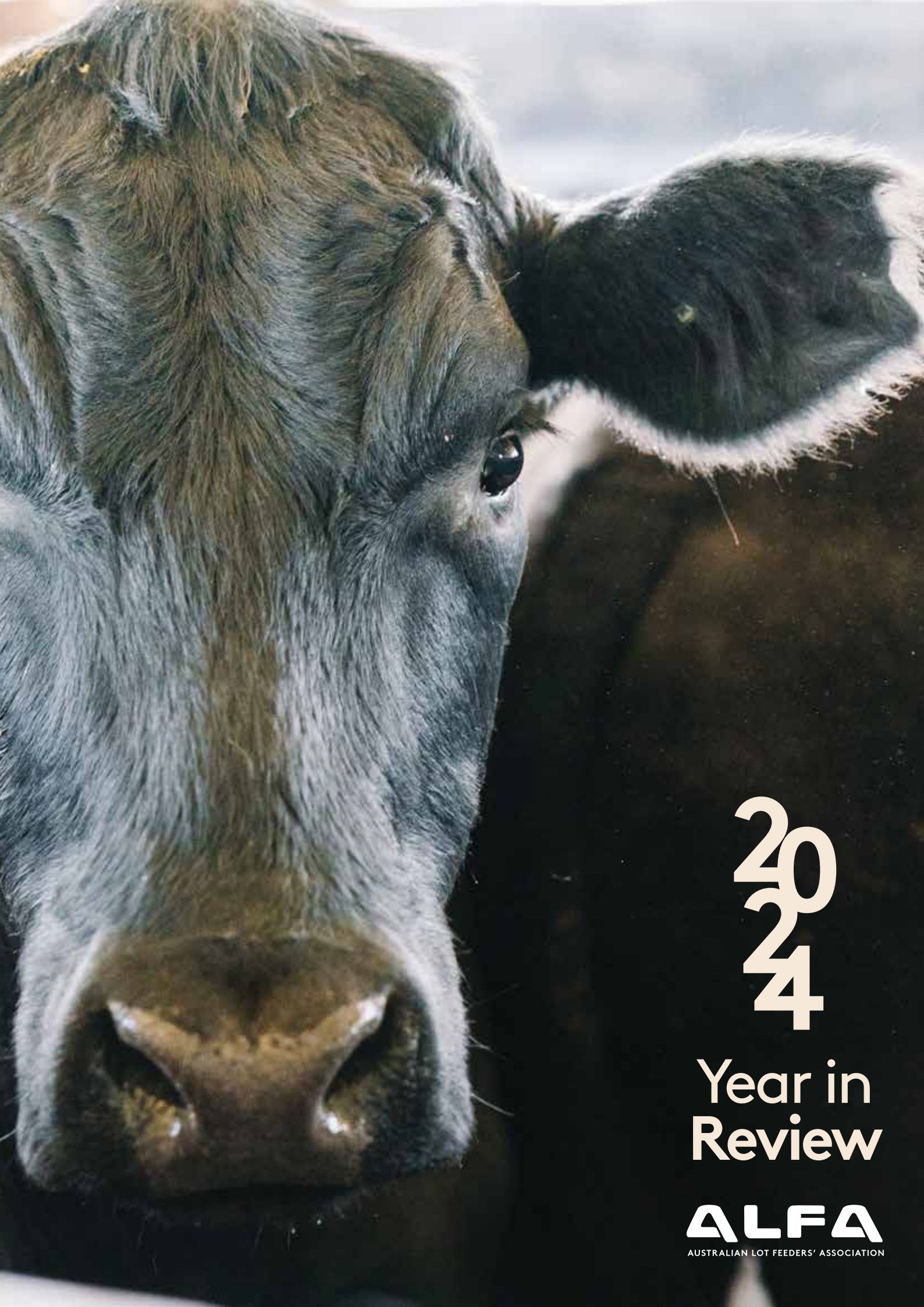
Lorraine Mills
Administration Coordinator



With thanks to our Platinum Members



Contact details: (02) 9290 3700 | info@feedlots.com.au | www.feedlots.com.au



2024

Year in
Review

ALFA
AUSTRALIAN LOT FEEDERS' ASSOCIATION