

Cattle numbers remain strong despite challenging conditions

The latest national feedlot survey results, released today by the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), demonstrate continued performance within the sector with numbers on feed remaining above 1 million head in the September quarter.

A total of 1,056,056 cattle on feed in Australia was recorded for the September 2022 quarter, a decrease of 139,410 on the previous quarter.

Each state recorded reductions except for South Australia.

Queensland decreased by 11.6% to 626,125 head, New South Wales decreased by 8.8% to 305,554 head, Victoria decreased by 26.4% to 45,135 head and Western Australia also decreased by 26.4% to 40,406 head. South Australia increased by 7.6% to 38,836 head.

ALFA President Barb Madden said the feedlot industry is currently operating in challenging trading conditions which is reflected in the reduction of cattle on feed.

"Transport and logistics, high grain prices and cattle availability, coupled with persistent wet weather events hampering cattle performance, are all contributing to what is a challenging trading environment for the feedlot industry," Mrs Madden said.

While we have seen some relief in feeder cattle prices this quarter, with the indicator down 9% or 48¢/kg lwt, and wheat ex-Darling Downs softened 6% or \$23 to average \$389/tonne on the Ukraine war inflated highs of the June quarter, wheat prices remain 16% higher, or \$55/tonne, on year ago levels.

"Despite these challenges it is pleasing to see cattle on feed remain above 1 million head pointing to the resilience of lot feeders," Mrs Madden said.

"In a sign of longer-term confidence in the lot feeding sector, national capacity broke new ground to reach 1.51 million," Ripley Atkinson, MLA's Senior Market Information Analyst, said.

"This is despite significant headwinds in input cost challenges and extreme weather events like the recent floods, affecting cattle performance."

Turn-off saw a solid uptick, rising by 7% or 46,400 head at a national level to 714,000 head, demonstrating the significant contribution of the grain fed sector to total beef production.

This has translated to strong export demand, according to Mr Atkinson, with strong improvements in volumes to South Korea and China in particular.

"Export volumes mostly remained firm quarter-on-quarter, continuing the trend of strong export performance to a diverse range of markets reflecting solid demand for Australian grain fed beef," Mr Atkinson said.

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NUMBERS ON FEED

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Sep-22	305,554	45,135	626,125	38,836	40,406	1,056,056
Jun-22	335,064	61,362	708,052	36,098	54,890	1,195,466
Sep-21	302,369	61,334	690,229	36,327	28,834	1,119,093

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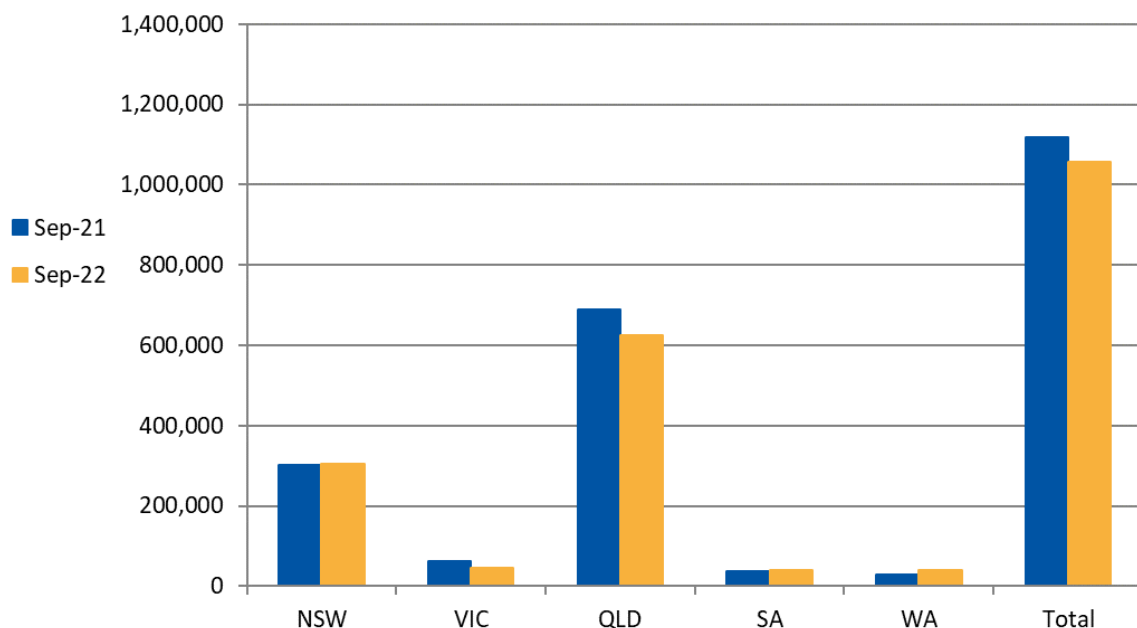
Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Sep-22	168,254	43,724	434,298	31,193	36,454	713,923
Jun-22	164,846	46,585	399,225	17,892	38,994	667,542
Sep-21	185,405	44,960	410,750	26,974	40,282	708,371

CAPACITY

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Sep-22	442,617	78,892	829,167	69,094	91,526	1,511,296
Jun-22	423,043	78,892	820,571	58,514	91,026	1,472,046
Sep-21	414,263	78,892	827,270	53,814	73,477	1,447,716

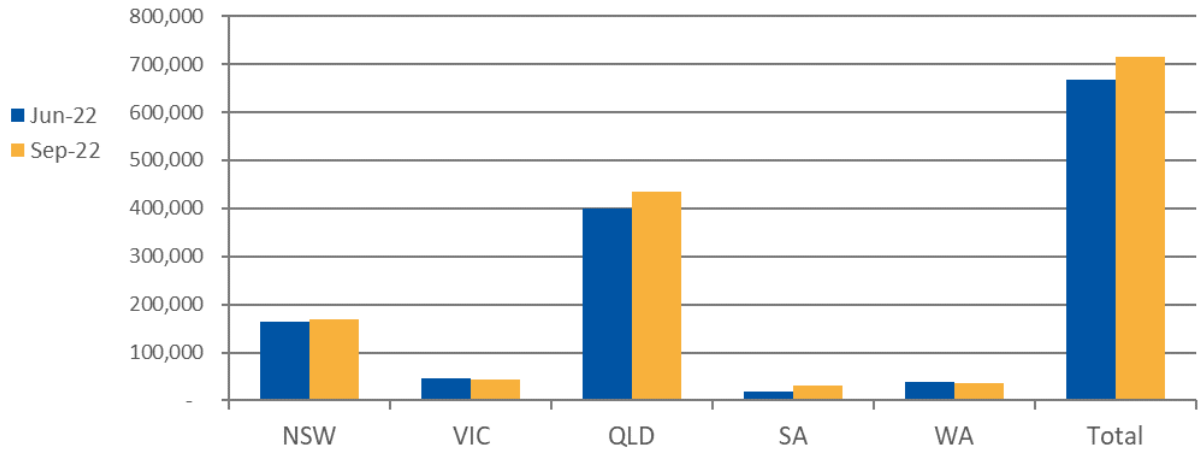
Source: Feedlot Capacity figures are provided by AUS-MEAT Limited (AUS-MEAT). AUS-MEAT owns and administers the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme (NFAS) on behalf of ALFA and the feedlot sector. Actual Feedlot Capacity figures are reported under the NFAS.

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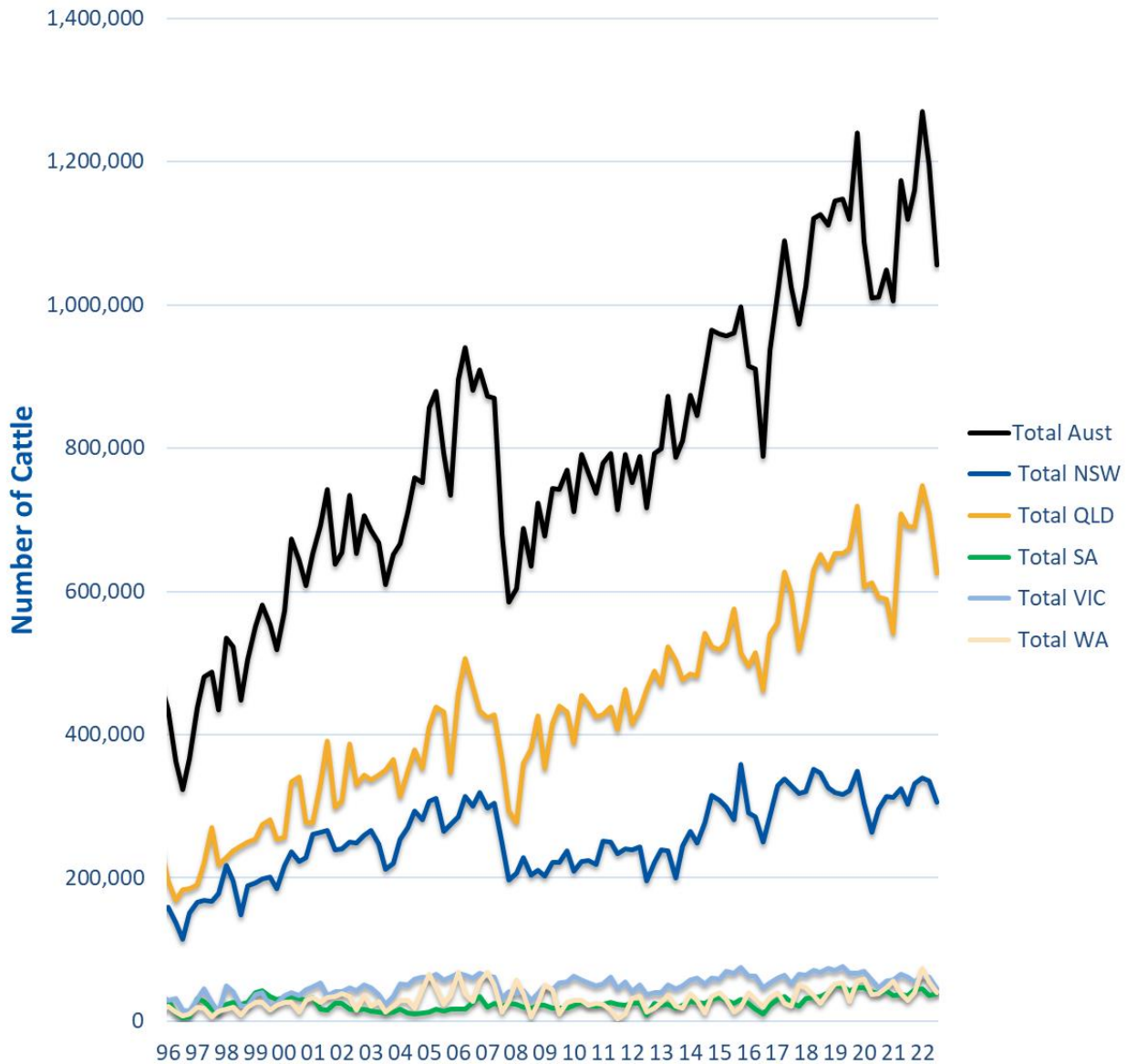


Source: ALFA / MLA, September 2022, National Accredited Feedlot Survey

QUARTERLY TURNOFF



CATTLE NUMBERS ON FEED - HISTORIC



	Numbers on Feed Sep 22	Numbers on Feed Jun 22	Numbers on Feed Sep 21
New South Wales			
Less than 500 head	791	396	520
500 - 1000 head	9,865	9,401	4,688
1001 - 10,000 head	100,659	105,465	101,972
over 10,000 head	194,239	219,802	195,189
State Total	305,554	335,064	302,369
Queensland			
Less than 500 head	6,768	6,352	4,197
500 - 1000 head	14,396	14,385	20,615
1001 - 10,000 head	143,291	142,632	160,532
over 10,000 head	461,670	544,683	504,885
State Total	626,125	708,052	690,229
Victoria			
Less than 500 head	0	0	0
500 - 1000 head	5,225	5,880	4,139
1001 - 10,000 head	11,942	16,085	19,687
over 10,000 head	27,968	39,397	37,508
State Total	45,135	61,362	61,334
South Australia			
Less than 500 head	1,016	978	789
500 - 1000 head	1,697	4,876	3,936
1001 - 10,000 head	19,141	10,444	16,602
over 10,000 head	16,982	19,800	15,000
State Total	38,836	36,098	36,327
Western Australia			
Less than 500 head	0	1,877	0
500 - 1000 head	2,438	2,629	2,103
1001 - 10,000 head	25,468	40,890	26,731
over 10,000 head	12,500	9,494	0
State Total	40,406	54,890	28,834
Australia			
Less than 500 head	8,575	9,603	5,506
500 - 1000 head	33,621	37,171	35,481
1001 - 10,000 head	300,501	315,516	325,524
over 10,000 head	713,359	833,176	752,582
Total	1,056,056	1,195,466	1,119,093

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