

17 February 2021

Cattle remain above 1 million head three years in a row

Cattle on feed for the October to December 2020 quarter increased to 1,048,306 head, a 37,985 head increase from the September 2020 period, according to the latest results of the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) survey.

Queensland recorded a decrease in cattle numbers on feed, however only fell by 2,972 head, or 0.5% to 588,692 head.

All other states experienced increases with New South Wales increasing by 18,529 or 6.3%, to 314,281 head on feed, Victoria increased by 9,853, or 21.0%, to 56,816 head, South Australia increased by 4,213, or 11.1%, to 42,216 head and Western Australia increased by 8,364, or 22.0%, to 46,302 head.

ALFA President, Bryce Camm, said the Australian feedlot industry ended 2020 with cattle numbers on feed remaining above 1 million head, a result which has been achieved continuously each quarter for three consecutive years.

"2020 saw industry face unprecedented challenges ranging from COVID, the global recession, bushfires, floods, tightening cattle supply and a turnaround in seasonal conditions across Australia," Mr Camm said.

"Yet despite these challenges Lot Feeders have kept the supply chain moving with our industry partners by continuing to focus on producing high quality grain fed beef," Mr Camm said.

"Cattle on feed above 1 million head for three consecutive years demonstrates the significance feedlots play in the Australian beef supply chain," Mr Camm said.

Steve Bignell, MLA's Manager - Market Information, said that key feedlot indicators for the December quarter reached all-time records reflecting the market dynamics experienced last year.

"Strong signals for finished cattle saw the Queensland 100 day grainfed steer over-the-hook (OTH) indicator post a record December quarterly average of 669c/kg carcass weight (cwt), assisting Lot Feeders on the sell side."

"Also boosting Lot Feeder's confidence was a falling grain market off the back of an outstanding winter crop. Both wheat and barley prices fell to levels not experienced since 2017; hitting averages of \$301 and 262 / tonne ex-Darling Downs respectively," Mr Bignell said.

"On the feedlot entry side reduced cattle availability converging with heavy restocker and feedlot competition drove the national feeder steer indicator average to a record 420¢/kg live weight (lwt) for the quarter."

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NUMBERS ON FEED

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-20	314,281	56,816	588,692	42,216	46,302	1,048,306
Sep-20	295,752	46,963	591,664	38,003	37,938	1,010,320
Dec-19	349,694	67,255	720,055	46,367	56,193	1,239,563

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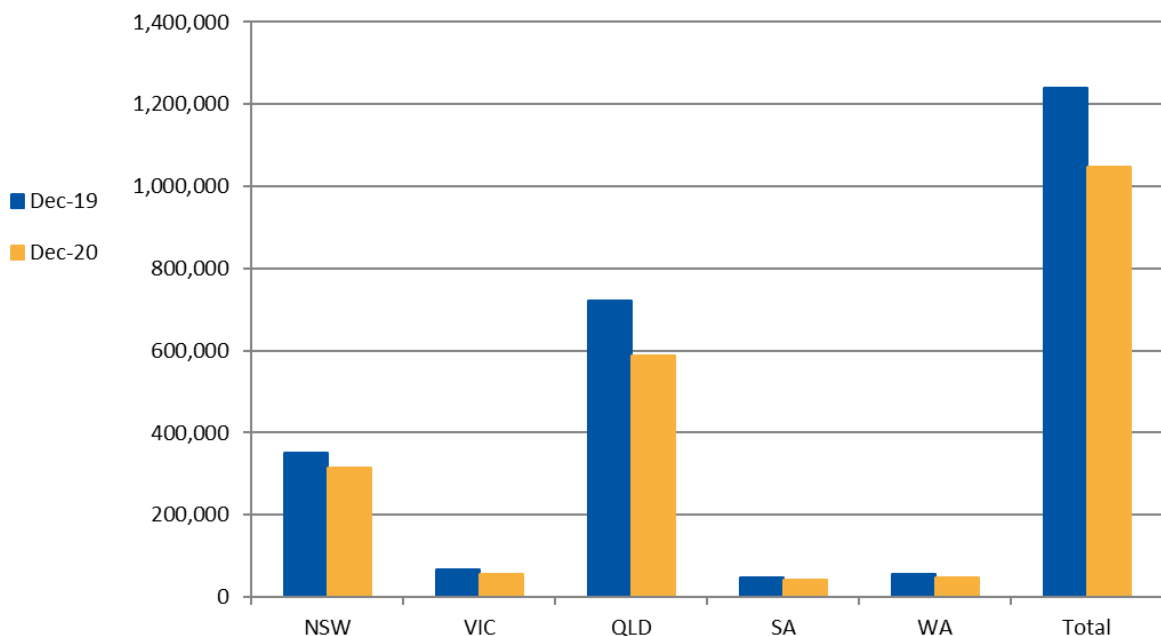
Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-20	175,172	33,084	409,843	22,588	8,554	649,240
Sep-20	152,377	41,066	413,908	27,901	31,570	666,821
Dec-19	186,757	49,989	431,375	28,783	16,601	713,505

CAPACITY

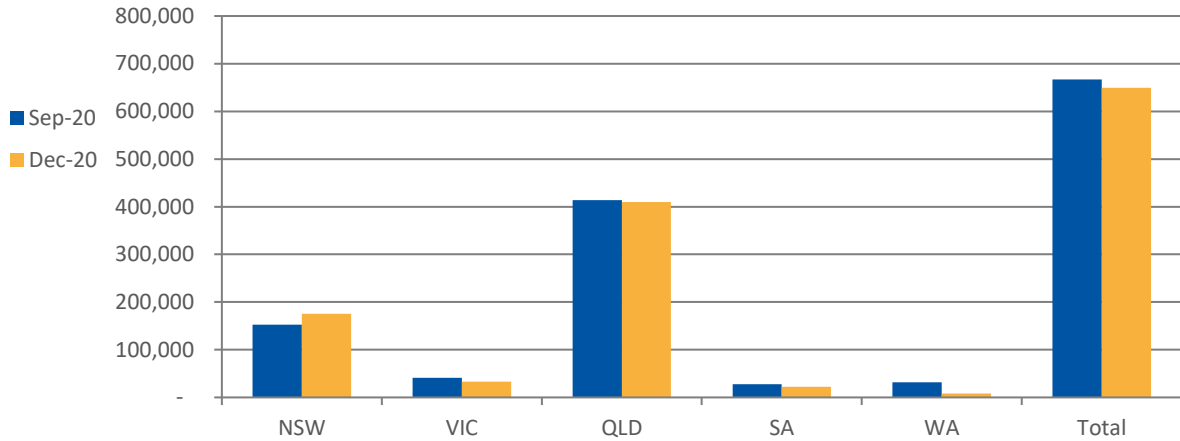
Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-20	408,277	79,392	830,376	53,614	73,477	1,445,136
Sep-20	411,538	79,392	831,179	53,614	73,477	1,449,200
Dec-19	395,038	76,692	780,839	53,614	73,477	1,379,660

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.

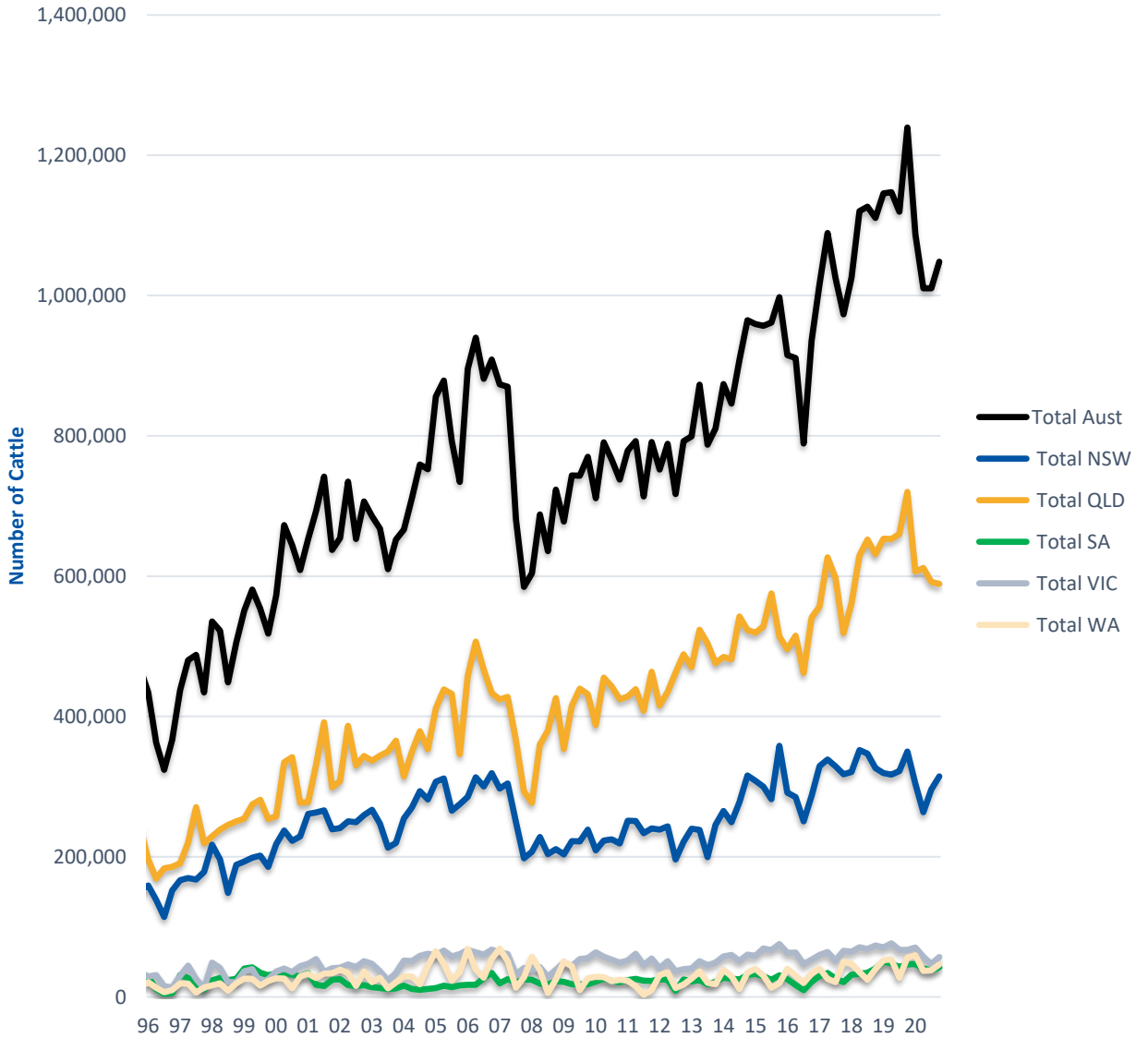
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CATTLE NUMBERS ON FEED - HISTORIC



	Numbers on Feed Dec 20	Numbers on Feed Sep 20	Numbers on Feed Dec 19
New South Wales			
Less than 500 head	520	743	1,356
500 -1000 head	4,421	6,828	20,178
1001 - 10,000 head	108,561	105,016	118,720
over 10,000 head	200,778	183,165	209,440
State Total	314,281	295,752	349,694
Queensland			
Less than 500 head	4,136	8,191	9,043
500 -1000 head	16,497	16,194	24,749
1001 - 10,000 head	141,254	158,686	209,615
over 10,000 head	426,804	408,593	476,648
State Total	588,692	591,664	720,055
Victoria			
Less than 500 head	0	0	0
500 -1000 head	3,271	3,266	3,712
1001 - 10,000 head	21,178	19,191	22,368
over 10,000 head	32,368	24,506	41,175
State Total	56,816	46,963	67,255
South Australia			
Less than 500 head	960	969	0
500 -1000 head	3,161	1,828	1,992
1001 - 10,000 head	20,595	18,306	26,875
over 10,000 head	17,500	16,900	17,500
State Total	42,216	38,003	46,367
Western Australia			
Less than 500 head	2,380	0	2,333
500 -1000 head	4,040	3,803	5,436
1001 - 10,000 head	39,882	34,135	48,423
over 10,000 head	0	0	0
State Total	46,302	37,938	56,193
Australia			
Less than 500 head	7,995	9,903	12,733
500 -1000 head	31,390	31,918	56,067
1001 - 10,000 head	331,470	335,335	426,001
over 10,000 head	677,450	633,164	744,763
Total	1,048,306	1,010,320	1,239,563