



Media Release

20th May, 2014

Grain fed cattle numbers rise again

The March ALFA/ MLA quarterly feedlot survey has indicated an 8% increase in cattle numbers on feed since the previous quarter.

The result represented the highest quarter result in terms of cattle numbers on feed since December 2006.

Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) President Don Mackay commented that the survey result was driven by both an influx of cheaper drought affected cattle entering the feedlot sector at the end of that period as well as heightened demand for Australian beef overseas.

"Feeder steer and heifer prices were down 2% and 4% from the December average or 4% and 9% year-on-year."

"The increases in cattle numbers on feed were mainly felt in Queensland, NSW and WA, results considered hardly surprising given ongoing drought conditions and the increased demand for grain fed cattle – a normal season occurrence this time of year in the west."

"Capacity utilisation, at 79%, was the highest experienced since December 2006."

"However, the dry conditions also led to grain and fodder price increases which largely offset lot feeder margins."

"Darling Downs wheat and barley averaged \$346/tonne and \$334/ tonne for the March quarter, up 23% and 17% year-on-year respectively."

"Darling Downs cereal fodder prices also rose to \$425/tonne, a 55% increase."

Meat & Livestock Australia's Manager for Market Information and Analysis, Tim McRae stated that grain fed beef exports for the March quarter were up 12% year-on-year to 52,515 tonnes swt, with declines to Japan offset by increases to China, the Middle East the EU and the USA.

Quarterly grain fed beef exports to Japan declined 4% year-on-year while they increased 19% in South Korea, 47% in China, 77% in the EU, 38% in the Middle East and over 200% into the US."

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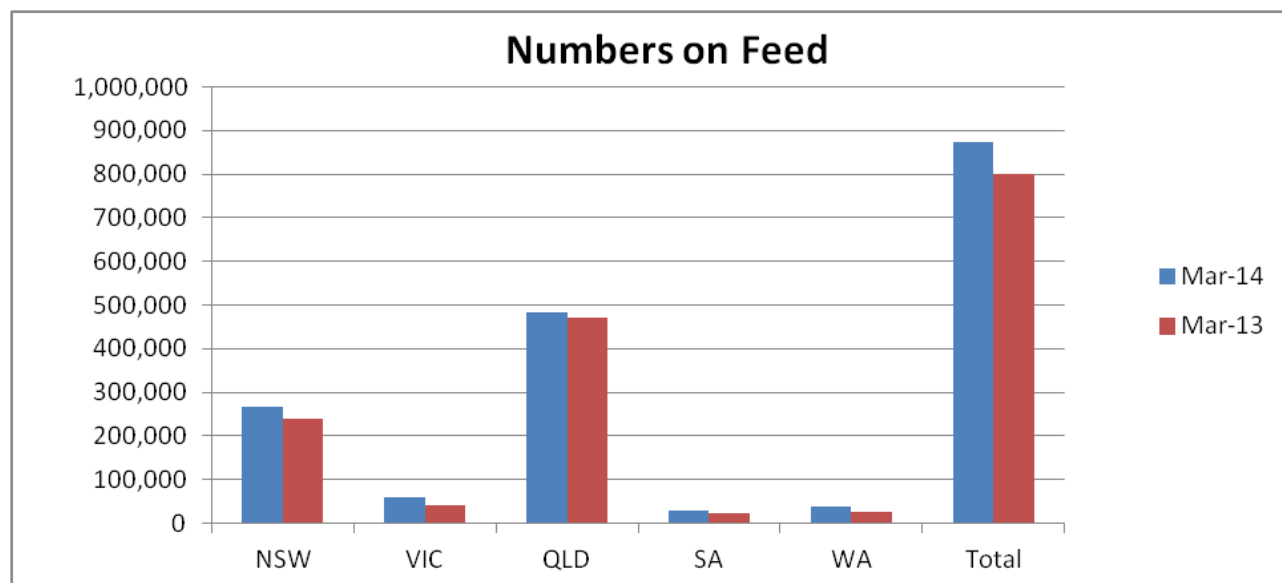
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Cattle numbers on feed, capacity and capacity utilisation

Numbers on Feed	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Mar-14	265,227	57,804	484,534	27,398	38,821	873,783
Dec-13	245,229	49,050	476,033	21,726	18,367	810,405
Mar-13	239,846	40,373	470,212	22,360	26,243	799,034

Capacity	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Mar-14	358,242	76,325	597,880	26,499	48,728	1,107,674
Dec-13	368,104	74,547	589,005	28,231	76,955	1,136,842
Mar-13	331,182	75,356	662,856	30,195	89,226	1,188,815

Utilisation	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Mar-14	74%	76%	81%	103%	80%	79%
Dec-13	67%	66%	81%	77%	24%	71%
Mar-13	72%	54%	71%	74%	29%	67%



Total Cattle Turnoff

Total Turnoff (year ending)	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-13	675,353	161,378	1,581,591	87,291	117,377	2,622,990
Dec-12	610,687	156,573	1,566,232	104,681	67,077	2,505,250
Dec-11	665,278	220,082	1,402,924	101,822	55,026	2,445,132
Dec-10	634,526	207,305	1,468,631	110,831	112,318	2,533,611
Dec-09	587,444	161,614	1,374,959	77,281	130,601	2,331,899
Dec-08	570,099	150,271	1,212,738	76,910	124,485	2,134,503

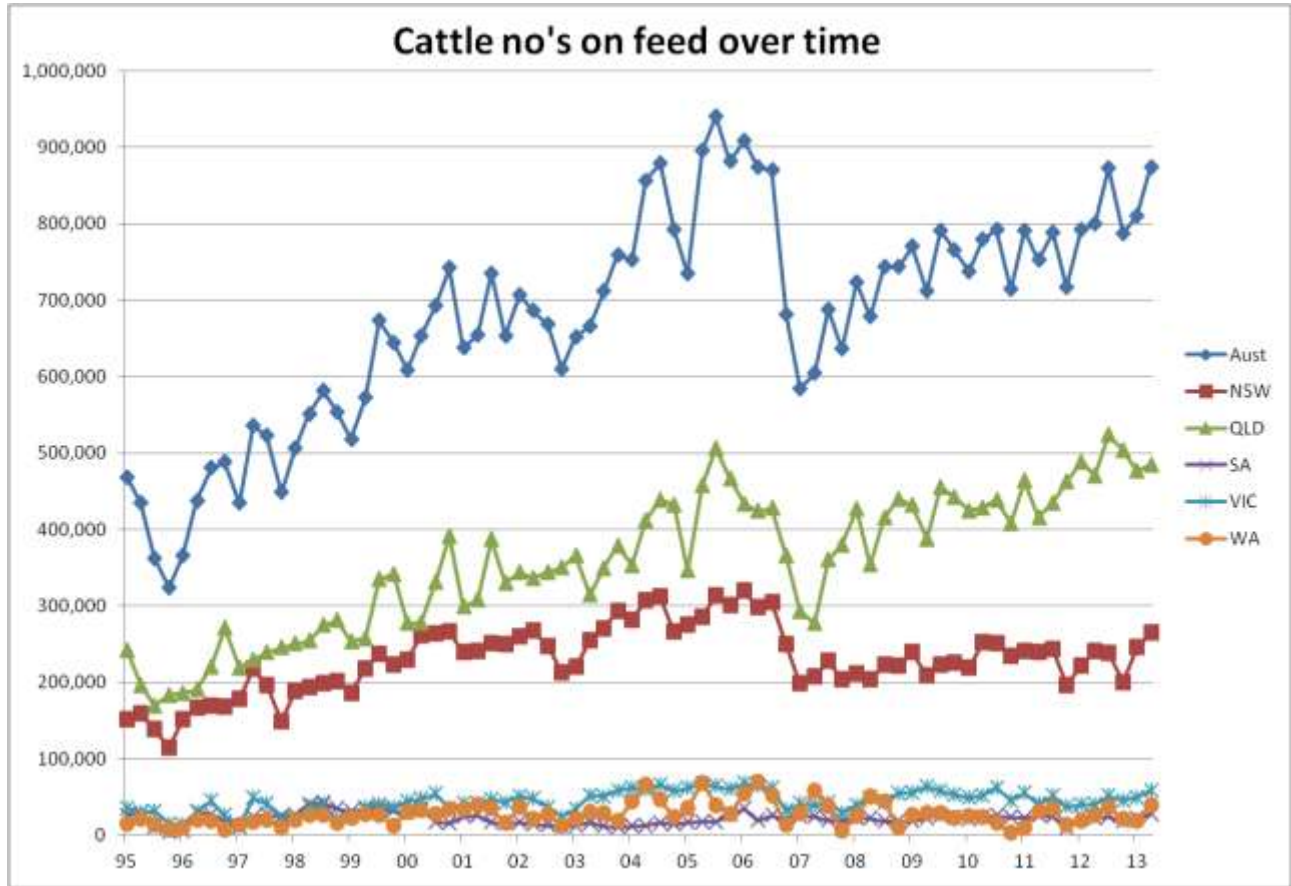
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Total Turnoff (quarterly)	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Mar-14	192,761	36,941	377,690	18,081	16,432	641,905
Dec-13	146,528	34,090	411,703	18,269	5,883	616,473
Mar-13	173,756	31,016	365,008	18,885	26,697	615,362

State Breakdown by Feedlot Size

	Capacity Mar 14	Capacity Dec 13	Capacity Mar 13	Numbers on Feed Mar 14	Numbers on Feed Dec 13	Numbers on Feed Mar 13
<i>New South Wales</i>						
Less than 500 head	5,189	7,925	7,006	3,715	4,290	895
500 -1000 head	24,404	13,297	17,844	14,120	4,960	5,876
1000 - 10000 head	112,076	82,876	90,029	84,433	46,835	62,999
over 10000 head	216,573	264,006	216,303	162,959	189,144	170,076
State Total	358,242	368,104	331,182	265,227	245,229	239,846
<i>Queensland</i>						
Less than 500 head	27,147	34,407	39,113	8,859	10,475	5,937
500 -1000 head	37,089	34,754	45,910	21,734	10,640	12,431
1000 - 10000 head	225,632	204,023	273,629	154,789	161,579	217,801
over 10000 head	308,012	315,821	304,204	299,152	293,339	234,043
State Total	597,880	589,005	662,856	484,534	476,033	470,212
<i>Victoria</i>						
Less than 500 head	0	4,768	4,412	0	2,795	4,236
500 -1000 head	7,773	999	1,000	9,752	0	0
1000 - 10000 head	28,552	34,551	26,499	18,809	19,438	12,073
over 10000 head	40,000	34,229	43,445	29,243	26,817	24,064
State Total	76,325	74,547	75,356	57,804	49,050	40,373
<i>South Australia</i>						
Less than 500 head	1,530	5,315	1,918	1,348	2,296	1,209
500 -1000 head	4,540	1,017	6,312	2,861	0	2,453
1000 - 10000 head	20,429	21,899	21,965	23,188	19,430	18,698
over 10000 head	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Total	26,499	28,231	30,195	27,398	21,726	22,360
<i>Western Australia</i>						
Less than 500 head	3,928	8,231	13,488	7,802	964	2,526
500 -1000 head	7,300	7,300	12,800	3,119	1,862	2,400
1000 - 10000 head	37,500	61,424	62,938	27,900	15,541	21,317
over 10000 head	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Total	48,728	76,955	89,226	38,821	18,367	26,243
<i>Australia</i>						
Less than 500 head	37,794	60,646	65,937	21,724	20,820	14,803
500 -1000 head	81,106	57,367	83,866	51,587	17,462	23,160
1000 - 10000 head	424,189	404,773	475,060	309,119	262,823	332,888
over 10000 head	564,585	614,056	563,952	491,354	509,300	428,183
Total	1,107,674	1,136,842	1,188,815	873,783	810,405	799,034

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*The ALFA/ MLA survey process involves the following steps:

- All National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme feedlots are surveyed towards the end of the quarter;
- Analysis of survey results does not proceed until a minimum percentage response is reached for each feedlot size category in each state. This minimum response rate is determined based on the feedlot capacity and their contribution to both state and national figures. The required percentage threshold response rate by capacity categories and state is as follows (zeros indicate there are no feedlots in that size category);

Capacity	NSW	Qld	SA	Vic	WA	Tas
<500	20%	20%	20%	0	20%	0
500-1,000	20%	30%	30%	30%	30%	0
1,001-10,000	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	0
>10,000	50%	50%	0	100%	0	100%

- The results are then weighted up to represent the total Australian feedlot population.