



25 February 2016

# Media Release

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## Cattle on feed close 2015 at record levels

Cattle in Australian feedlots reached record levels in the final quarter of 2015 with 997,765 head on feed.

Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) President, Tess Herbert said that the increase was driven by more cattle in the large NSW feedlots, which offset a small decline in Queensland.

Ms Herbert said that the results reflected the decrease in the Australian dollar and grain prices, "The Australian dollar averaged 72US¢ in the December quarter, which is a 16% year-on-year decline".

"At the same time, Darling Downs wheat averaged \$281 per tonne, back 11%, and sorghum decreased 8%, to average \$270 per tonne for the last three months of the year," Ms Herbert said.

Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Manager of Market Information, Ben Thomas, observed the strong demand for grainfed beef, "December quarter grainfed beef shipments were on par with the previous record volume set in 2006, with a little over 69,100 tonnes swt exported"

"Japan continued to be the dominant market for Australian grainfed beef, taking just over 52% of Australian shipments for the quarter".

"Korean exports continued to grow during the quarter, with 13,000 tonnes swt exported over the three months, up 40% year-on-year".

Mr Thomas also explained that strong international demand resulted in solid cattle prices throughout the December quarter.

"Whilst the Queensland 100-day grain fed steer over-the-hook indicator finished the year below where it peaked at the end of September, it averaged 557¢/kg cwt during the quarter, up 133¢/kg cwt year-on-year," Mr Thomas said.

Ms Herbert said that it was expected that the first quarter of 2016 will more than likely see a decreased number on feed, "due to the high cattle prices and tighter supply."

-Ends -

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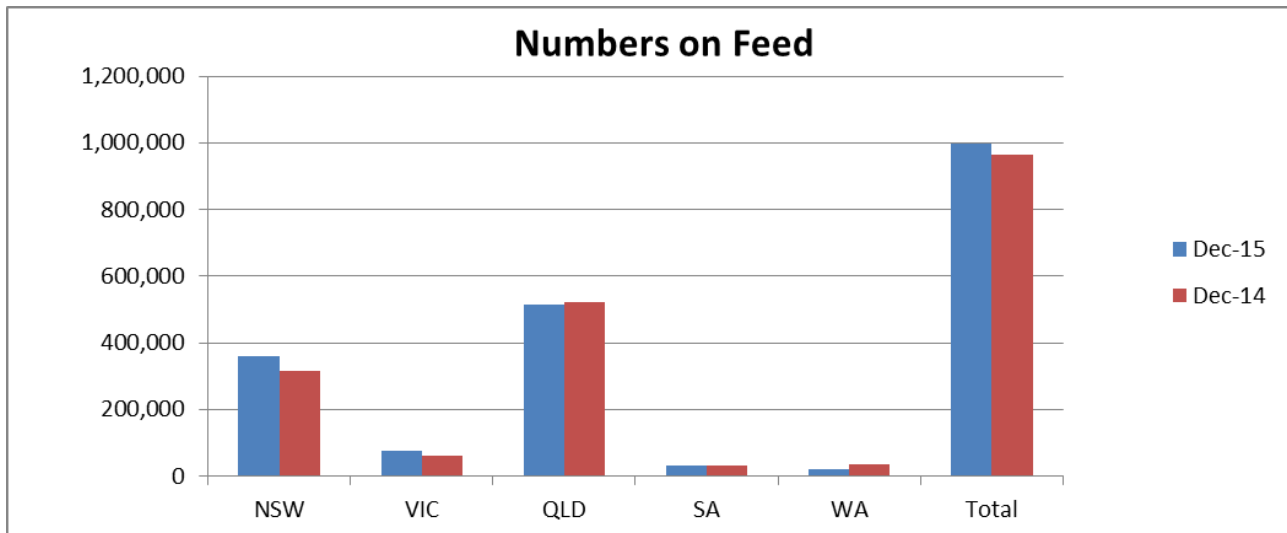
**ALFA / MLA FEEDLOT SURVEY**  
**Oct – Dec 2015**

**Cattle numbers on feed, capacity and capacity utilisation**

| <b>Numbers on Feed</b> | <b>NSW</b> | <b>VIC</b> | <b>QLD</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>WA</b> | <b>Total</b>   |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Dec-15                 | 358,068    | 75,387     | 513,969    | 30,738    | 19,603    | <b>997,765</b> |
| Sep-15                 | 281,960    | 66,735     | 575,242    | 24,371    | 13,020    | <b>961,328</b> |
| Dec-14                 | 315,863    | 60,394     | 522,997    | 31,033    | 34,682    | <b>964,968</b> |

| <b>Capacity</b> | <b>NSW</b> | <b>VIC</b> | <b>QLD</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>WA</b> | <b>Total</b>     |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Dec-15          | 409,571    | 85,344     | 658,510    | 39,619    | 45,694    | <b>1,238,739</b> |
| Sep-15          | 365,349    | 77,538     | 628,981    | 28,849    | 50,500    | <b>1,151,216</b> |
| Dec-14          | 360,075    | 76,137     | 606,021    | 41,995    | 58,649    | <b>1,142,877</b> |

| <b>Utilisation</b> | <b>NSW</b> | <b>VIC</b> | <b>QLD</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>WA</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Dec-15             | 87%        | 88%        | 78%        | 78%       | 43%       | <b>81%</b>   |
| Sep-15             | 77%        | 86%        | 91%        | 84%       | 26%       | <b>84%</b>   |
| Dec-14             | 88%        | 79%        | 86%        | 74%       | 59%       | <b>84%</b>   |



**Total Cattle Turnoff**

| <b>Total Turnoff (year ending)</b> | <b>NSW</b> | <b>VIC</b> | <b>QLD</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>WA</b> | <b>Total</b>     |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| Dec-15                             | 846,299    | 216,859    | 1,672,053  | 85,854    | 79,424    | <b>2,900,488</b> |
| Dec-14                             | 783,132    | 183,510    | 1,577,009  | 85,406    | 66,938    | <b>2,695,995</b> |
| Dec-13                             | 675,353    | 161,378    | 1,581,591  | 87,291    | 117,377   | <b>2,622,990</b> |
| Dec-12                             | 610,687    | 156,573    | 1,566,232  | 104,681   | 67,077    | <b>2,505,250</b> |
| Dec-11                             | 665,278    | 220,082    | 1,402,924  | 101,822   | 55,026    | <b>2,445,132</b> |

**ALFA / MLA FEEDLOT SURVEY**  
**Oct – Dec 2015**

| <b>Total Turnoff<br/>(quarterly)</b> | <b>NSW</b> | <b>VIC</b> | <b>QLD</b> | <b>SA</b> | <b>WA</b> | <b>Total</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Dec-15                               | 210,286    | 60,765     | 399,377    | 21,946    | 6,693     | <b>699,067</b> |
| Sep-15                               | 212,160    | 53,205     | 492,086    | 8,284     | 19,846    | <b>785,580</b> |
| Dec-14                               | 206,792    | 56,976     | 434,224    | 25,593    | 8,006     | <b>731,591</b> |

**State Breakdown by Feedlot Size**

|                          | <b>Capacity<br/>Dec 15</b> | <b>Capacity Sep<br/>15</b> | <b>Capacity<br/>Dec 14</b> | <b>Numbers on<br/>Feed Dec 15</b> | <b>Numbers on<br/>Feed Sep 15</b> | <b>Numbers on Feed Dec<br/>14</b> |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>New South Wales</b>   |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| Less than 500 head       | 4,777                      | 6,160                      | 5,222                      | 3,514                             | 4,758                             | 3,348                             |
| 500 -1000 head           | 25,871                     | 24,824                     | 23,247                     | 11,248                            | 11,892                            | 14,085                            |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 122,529                    | 105,556                    | 100,004                    | 113,575                           | 82,825                            | 94,304                            |
| over 10000 head          | 256,394                    | 228,809                    | 231,602                    | 229,730                           | 182,485                           | 204,126                           |
| <b>State Total</b>       | <b>409,571</b>             | <b>365,349</b>             | <b>360,075</b>             | <b>358,068</b>                    | <b>281,960</b>                    | <b>315,863</b>                    |
| <b>Queensland</b>        |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| Less than 500 head       | 22,529                     | 24,398                     | 26,780                     | 5,492                             | 14,269                            | 9,397                             |
| 500 -1000 head           | 64,358                     | 37,472                     | 35,097                     | 9,468                             | 21,826                            | 18,001                            |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 212,144                    | 213,065                    | 235,841                    | 157,935                           | 198,784                           | 201,220                           |
| over 10000 head          | 359,479                    | 354,046                    | 308,303                    | 341,074                           | 340,363                           | 294,380                           |
| <b>State Total</b>       | <b>658,510</b>             | <b>628,981</b>             | <b>606,021</b>             | <b>513,969</b>                    | <b>575,242</b>                    | <b>522,997</b>                    |
| <b>Victoria</b>          |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| 500 -1000 head           | 9,051                      | 8,038                      | 8,637                      | 7,518                             | 6,529                             | 8,637                             |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 28,293                     | 29,500                     | 29,500                     | 26,937                            | 29,500                            | 26,154                            |
| over 10000 head          | 48,000                     | 40,000                     | 38,000                     | 40,932                            | 30,706                            | 25,603                            |
| <b>State Total</b>       | <b>85,344</b>              | <b>77,538</b>              | <b>76,137</b>              | <b>75,387</b>                     | <b>66,735</b>                     | <b>60,394</b>                     |
| <b>South Australia</b>   |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| Less than 500 head       | 1,749                      | 1,651                      | 2,154                      | 757                               | 0                                 | 1,647                             |
| 500 -1000 head           | 5,040                      | 4,540                      | 4,540                      | 1,680                             | 3,847                             | 2,697                             |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 32,830                     | 22,658                     | 35,301                     | 28,301                            | 20,524                            | 26,688                            |
| over 10000 head          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                                 | 0                                 | 0                                 |
| <b>State Total</b>       | <b>39,619</b>              | <b>28,849</b>              | <b>41,995</b>              | <b>30,738</b>                     | <b>24,371</b>                     | <b>31,033</b>                     |
| <b>Western Australia</b> |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| Less than 500 head       | 3,797                      | 3,178                      | 3,178                      | 2,088                             | 851                               | 1,199                             |
| 500 -1000 head           | 5,800                      | 7,122                      | 7,787                      | 2,909                             | 2,331                             | 3,278                             |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 36,097                     | 40,200                     | 47,684                     | 14,607                            | 9,839                             | 30,206                            |
| over 10000 head          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                          | 0                                 | 0                                 | 0                                 |
| <b>State Total</b>       | <b>45,694</b>              | <b>50,500</b>              | <b>58,649</b>              | <b>19,603</b>                     | <b>13,020</b>                     | <b>34,682</b>                     |
| <b>Australia</b>         |                            |                            |                            |                                   |                                   |                                   |
| Less than 500 head       | 32,851                     | 35,387                     | 37,335                     | 11,851                            | 19,877                            | 15,590                            |
| 500 -1000 head           | 110,120                    | 81,995                     | 79,307                     | 32,822                            | 46,425                            | 46,698                            |
| 1000 - 10000 head        | 431,894                    | 410,979                    | 448,330                    | 341,356                           | 341,472                           | 378,572                           |
| over 10000 head          | 663,874                    | 622,855                    | 577,905                    | 611,736                           | 553,554                           | 524,108                           |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>1,238,739</b>           | <b>1,151,216</b>           | <b>1,142,877</b>           | <b>997,765</b>                    | <b>961,328</b>                    | <b>964,968</b>                    |

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