



AUSTRALIAN LOT FEEDERS' ASSOCIATION

MEDIA RELEASE

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18 February 2025

2024 largest year for grain fed beef ever

- **Australian feedlots turned off record numbers in 2024**
- **Consistent growth has seen a 1-2% lift in both capacity and numbers on feed**
- **China became Australia's largest market for grain fed beef, taking 29% of market share**

Recently released data from the Australian Lot Feeders' Association (ALFA) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) lot feeders survey has confirmed 2024 as the largest calendar year for grain fed beef on record.

ALFA President, Grant Garey, said that the data collected from feedlots across the country had shown continued growth thanks to a high supply of cattle and strong global demand for Australian grain fed beef.

"Investment in the sector has driven an additional 14,142 hd of feedlot capacity coming online under the National Feedlot Accreditation Scheme, lifting capacity to 1.65m, solidifying a strong close to 2024," Mr Garey said.

"Persistent dry conditions across southern states have highlighted the benefits from a grain fed production system which have influenced a lift across all major lot feeding states, and a 2% national increase in numbers on feed to 1,450,481 head with pen utilisation up to 87.5%.

"Stable trading conditions have enabled feedlots to be consistent with replacing turned-off cattle, keeping pen utilisation steady.

Four quarters of strong feedlot turnoff has produced record volumes, with 3,140,026 head exiting feedlots over the 2024 calendar year.

“This is the largest calendar-year turnoff on record and only the second time the annual turnoff hit over 3 million, showing how firm the supply of Australian grain fed beef has been.”

Erin Lukey, MLA’s Senior Market Information Analyst, confirmed that Australian beef has been entering a buoyant market.

“In a time when Australia is producing near-record beef, we have seen constriction of beef production from some of our competitors, ensuring strong avenues into new and old markets,” Ms Lukey said.

“We are exporting record volumes of all beef, but importantly, the grain fed proportion of that has kept up with demand.”

Over the past 12 months, Australia exported 375,195 tonnes of grain fed beef into a changing market share.

For the first time on record, China was our most significant market for grain fed exports, taking 29% of volume at 28,624 in Q4. A dramatic 22% reduction in exports to Japan enabled China to take this top market share.

China is a frozen-focused market, while Japan imports mainly chilled beef.

This market share shift can be attributed to a leveling of the Japanese market after three-quarters of dramatic import peaks accompanying consistent growth in China.

The Australian herd is past its cyclical peak, though remains productive. The availability of feeder cattle in 2024 was up 25% compared to the previous year, with over 620,000 feeder steers flowing through the National Livestock Reporting Service Feeder Steer Indicator.

“Dry conditions across southern states have inflated the availability of feeder steers. As cattle are turned off in dry regions, grass-fed finishing may not be available, hence a reliance on grain to reach finished weights.”

“Looking at quarterly averages, 2024 steer prices finished around 3% below the previous quarter to 347¢/kg, while Darling Downs wheat prices dipped 6% to \$332. A downward trend in both primary inputs reflects the enthusiasm of lot feeders,” Ms Lukey said.

ENDS.

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NUMBERS ON FEED

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-24	415,793	66,924	839,397	70,665	57,702	1,450,481
Sep-24	397,342	59,762	829,198	75,697	62,393	1,424,392
Dec-23	372,708	54,513	750,246	58,502	58,562	1,294,531

QUARTERLY TURNOFF

Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-24	210,996	36,305	482,793	39,919	14,437	784,450
Sep-24	227,883	39,869	499,834	46,690	45,654	859,930
Dec-23	166,821	32,068	426,857	25,397	17,470	668,613

ANNUAL TURNOFF

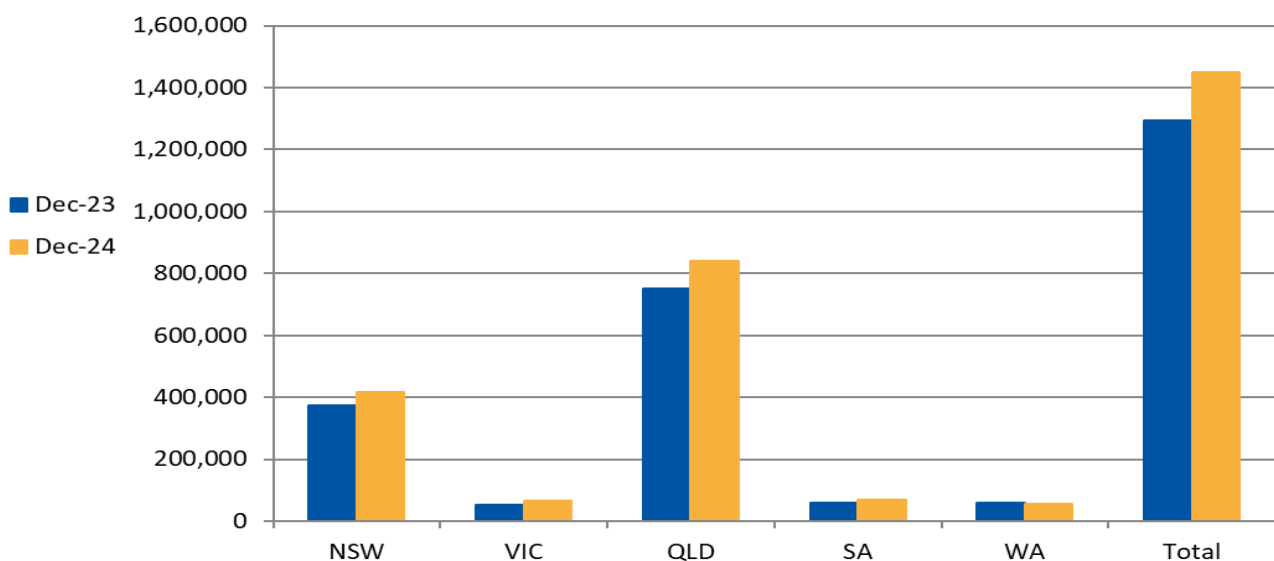
Year Ending	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-24	783,374	163,875	1,885,683	166,632	140,462	3,140,026
Dec-23	668,836	151,923	1,585,515	99,015	132,629	2,637,918
Dec-22	689,079	167,456	1,650,538	102,913	132,313	2,742,299

CAPACITY

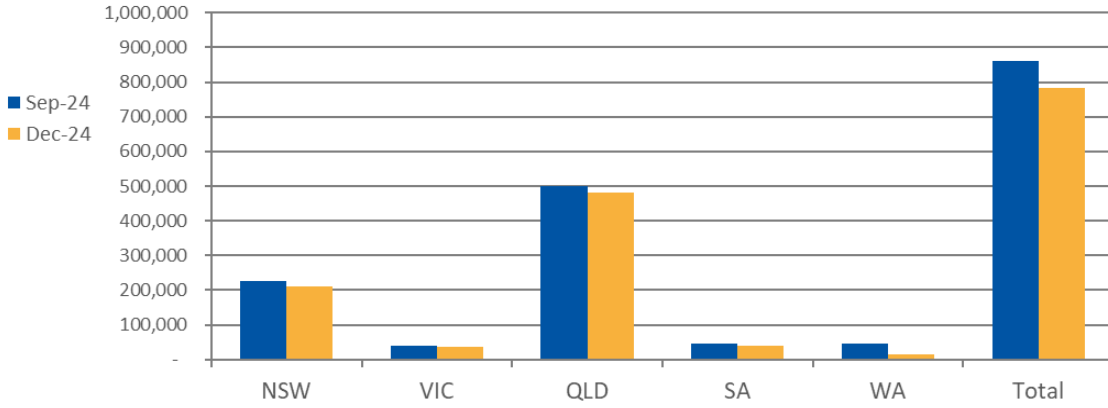
Quarter	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	Total
Dec-24	491,299	84,575	915,504	77,618	88,764	1,657,760
Sep-24	471,340	84,575	918,874	79,215	89,614	1,643,618
Dec-23	467,574	83,250	887,763	65,215	90,763	1,594,565

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.

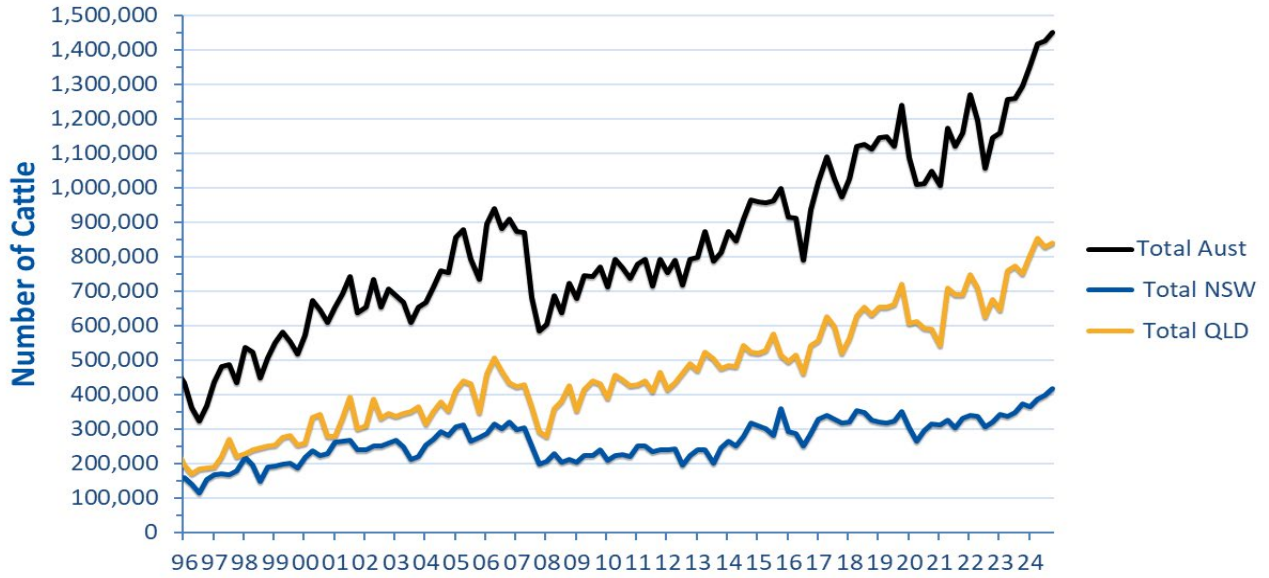
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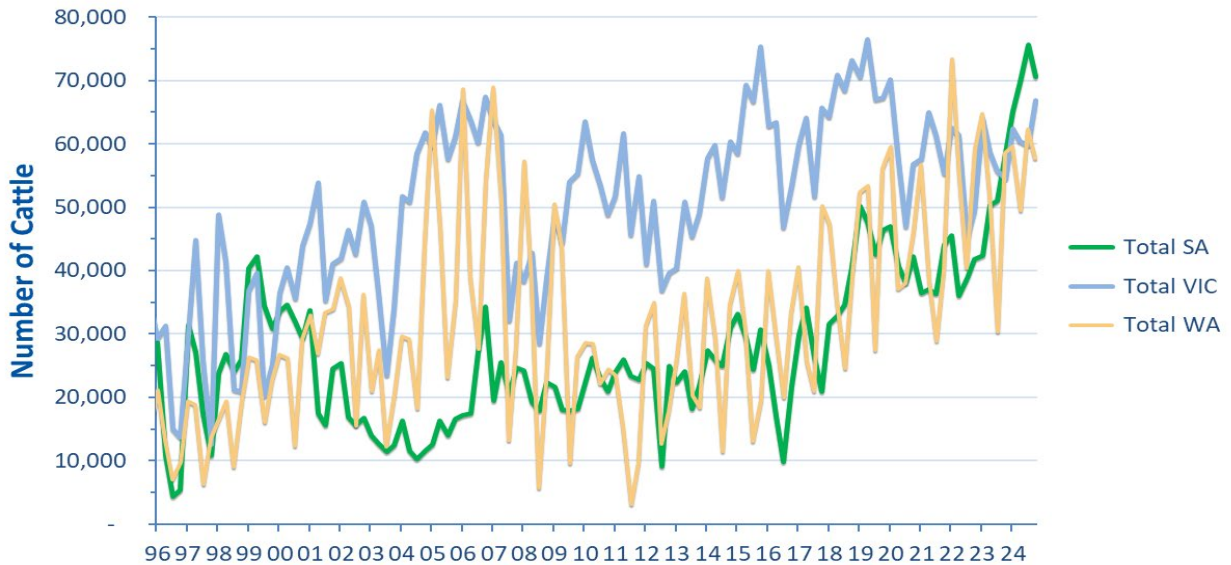
QUARTERLY TURNOFF



CATTLE NUMBERS ON FEED - HISTORIC



CATTLE NUMBERS ON FEED - HISTORIC



	Numbers on Feed Dec 24	Numbers on Feed Sep 24	Numbers on Feed Dec 23
New South Wales			
Less than 500 head	571	0	788
500 - 1000 head	7,355	10,599	11,912
1001 - 10,000 head	115,804	114,004	116,794
over 10,000 head	292,063	272,739	243,214
State Total	415,793	397,342	372,708
Queensland			
Less than 500 head	5,511	9,902	7,089
500 - 1000 head	17,685	23,971	13,727
1001 - 10,000 head	212,054	202,448	197,226
over 10,000 head	604,147	592,877	532,204
State Total	839,397	829,198	750,246
Victoria			
Less than 500 head	0	0	0
500 - 1000 head	2,795	2,479	2,487
1001 - 10,000 head	26,964	22,099	17,779
over 10,000 head	37,165	35,184	34,247
State Total	66,924	59,762	54,513
South Australia			
Less than 500 head	303	0	1,188
500 - 1000 head	1,541	1,699	850
1001 - 10,000 head	21,489	26,954	28,464
over 10,000 head	47,332	47,044	28,000
State Total	70,665	75,697	58,502
Western Australia			
Less than 500 head	1,511	0	1,820
500 - 1000 head	0	0	6,257
1001 - 10,000 head	41,571	51,816	32,991
over 10,000 head	14,620	10,577	17,494
State Total	57,702	62,393	58,562
Australia			
Less than 500 head	7,896	9,902	10,885
500 - 1000 head	29,376	38,748	35,233
1001 - 10,000 head	417,882	417,321	393,254
over 10,000 head	995,327	958,421	855,159
Total	1,450,481	1,424,392	1,294,531

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

Source: ALFA/MLA, December 2024, National Accredited Feedlot Survey