

Fast Facts

2020

Australia's sheepmeat industry

The off-farm meat value (domestic expenditure plus export value, including live export) of the Australian sheepmeat industry was approximately \$7.2 billion in 2019 up 24% on the 2018 period (MLA estimate).

At the time of publication, figures included in this document were the most up to date available but may be subject to revision.

Flock facts and figures:

- There are 17,700 Australian farms producing at least 200 lambs for slaughter (ABARES).
- There were 65.8 million head of sheep in Australia as of 2018–19 (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- There were 37.8 million head of breeding ewes aged one-year and older as at 30 June 2019 (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- The majority of Australia's sheep population were located in New South Wales (34%), Western Australia (22%), Victoria (21%) and South Australia (16%). Tasmania and Queensland accounted for the remaining 4% and 3% respectively (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).

People in the industry:

- Around 189,000 people are employed in the red meat industry, including on-farm production, processing and retail (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).

How much is produced?

- In 2019, Australia produced 503,146 tonnes carcass weight (cwt) of lamb and 228,135 tonnes cwt of mutton (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Total sheepmeat production (lamb and mutton) was 731,281 tonnes cwt in 2019, just below year-ago levels, yet 3% above the five-year average (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).

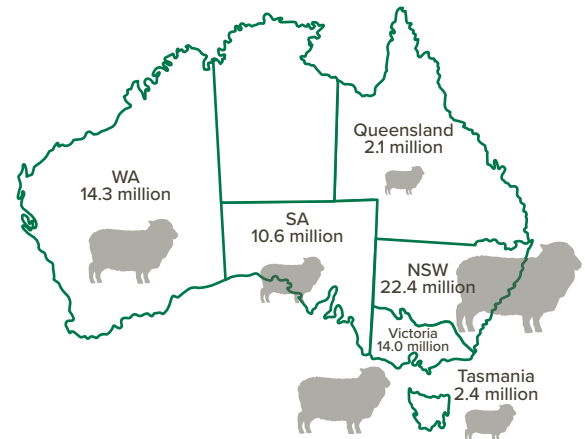
What is the value of production

- The gross value of Australian lamb and mutton production (including live exports) in 2019–20 was \$5.3 billion (ABARES Agricultural Commodities September 2019).
- Lamb and mutton production (including live exports) contributed 8% to the total farm value of \$66.5 billion estimated in 2019–20 (ABARES Agricultural Commodities September 2019).

Domestic value and consumption:

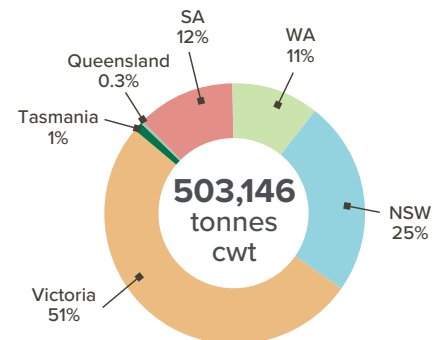
- Australia continues to be one of the largest per capita consumers of sheepmeat in the world. In 2019, Australians consumed approximately 6.8kg of sheepmeat per person (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Consumer preferences toward lamb combined with increased interest from export markets for quality sheepmeat has resulted in almost all of Australia's mutton being exported (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Domestic expenditure was approximately \$2 billion on lamb and \$50 million on mutton in 2018–19 (MLA estimate).

National sheep numbers as at June 2019: 65.8 million head



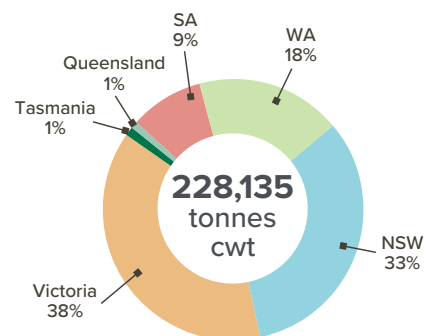
Source: ABS

Australian lamb production



Source: ABS, 2019

Australian mutton production



Source: ABS, 2019

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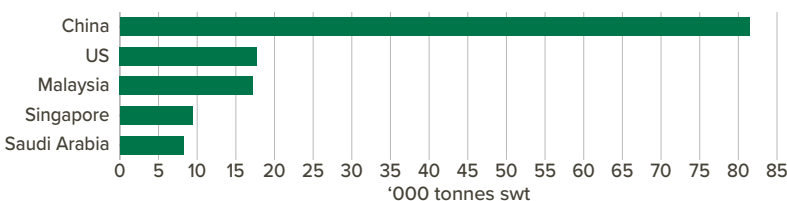
Export value and volume:

- In 2019, Australian lamb exports totalled 281,518 tonnes swt, up 5% year-on-year and 14% above the five-year average (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Australian mutton exports were 183,833 tonnes swt in 2019, 2% higher year-on-year and up 16% on the five-year average (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- The value of Australian sheepmeat (lamb and mutton) exports in 2019 was \$4.1 billion, up 14% from the previous year (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- In 2019, Australian live sheep exports totalled 1.1 million head, steady year-on-year (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).

Australia's place in the world:

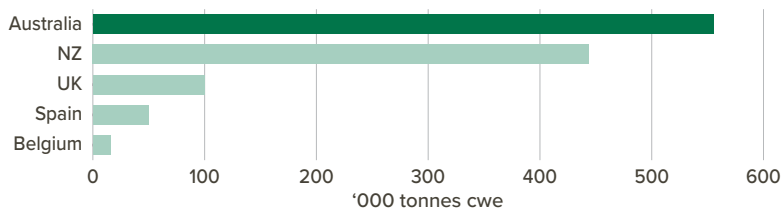
- In 2019, Australia's top three sheepmeat (lamb and mutton) export destinations (in volume terms) were China (152,683 tonnes swt, or 32.8% of total exports), the US (76,240 tonnes swt, or 16.4% of total exports) and UAE (26,913 tonnes swt, or 5.8% of total exports) (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Australia is the largest exporter of sheepmeat in the world (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).
- Australia accounted for around 7% of global sheepmeat production in 2019 (MLA State of the Industry Report – 2020).

Australia's top 5 mutton export markets



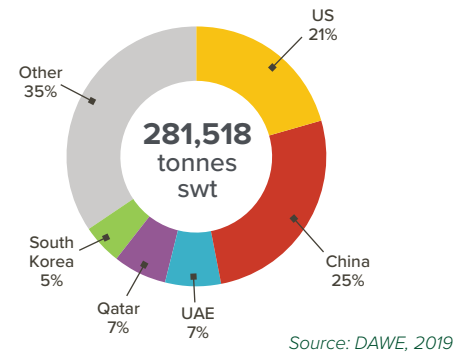
Source: DAWE, 2019

Top five sheepmeat producing countries



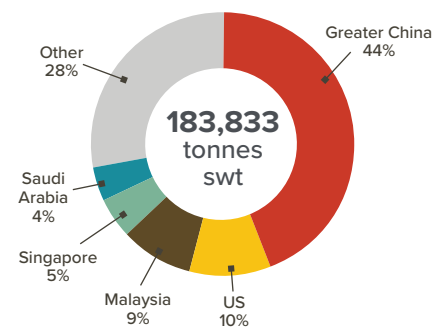
Source: ABS, FAO, latest available data 2019

Australian lamb exports



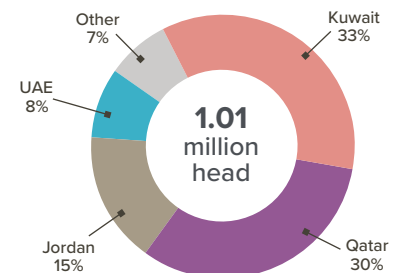
Source: DAWE, 2019

Australian mutton exports



Source: DAWE, 2019

Australian live sheep exports



Source: DAWE, 2019

For further information read MLA's *State of the Industry Report – 2020* [Click here to read the report](#)

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