

# VICTORIAN SHEEP INDUSTRY FAST FACTS

JUNE 2021

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

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**8,603** ▲ 4.7%  
**Sheep farm businesses**  
 (2019–20)

**12,900** ▲ 1.1%  
**Jobs in sheep industry**  
 (2020–21)

**\$2.2B** ▲ 14.4%  
**Value of sheep meat production**  
 (2019–20)

**\$1.8B** ▲ 2.5%  
**Sheep meat exports**  
 (2019–20)

## Flock facts and figures

- There were 8,600 sheep farm businesses in Victoria in 2019–20, representing 27 per cent of the 31,500 sheep farms in Australia.
- In 2019–20, Victoria had 15 million head of sheep – 10 million head of sheep are one year old and over and around 5 million head of lambs less than one year old. Majority of Australia's sheep population (63 million head) is located in NSW (32%), Victoria (24%), WA (21%) and SA (16%).

## How much is produced?

- Victoria processed 3.1 million adult sheep and 10.4 million lambs in 2019–20, producing 314,000 tonnes carcass weight of sheep meat comprising 73,000 tonnes of mutton and 241,000 tonnes of lamb.
- Victoria is Australia's largest sheep meat producer, producing around half (46%) of Australian sheep meat followed by NSW (28%).
- Victoria's sheep meat production increased by 5 per cent (15,100 tonnes) between 2015–16 and 2019–20.

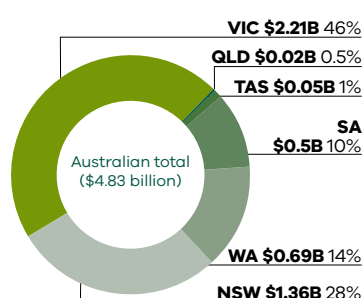
## Victoria's mutton and lamb production (tonnes)



## What is the value of production?

- Gross value of Victorian lamb and mutton production in 2019–20 was \$2.2 billion while the gross value of wool was \$0.8 billion, totaling to \$3.0 billion.
- Sheep meat and wool contributed 12 and 4 per cent, respectively, to Victoria's total farm value of \$17.8 billion estimated in 2019–20.
- Victoria contributed 46 per cent to the national total value of sheep meat production estimated at \$4.8 billion, cementing its position as Australia's largest sheep meat producer.
- By value, Victoria is Australia's equal largest wool producer with NSW accounting for 28 per cent of national production.
- The gross value of red meat processing in Victoria, including beef and sheep meat, is approximately \$4.4 billion.

## Gross value of sheep meat by state, 2019–20



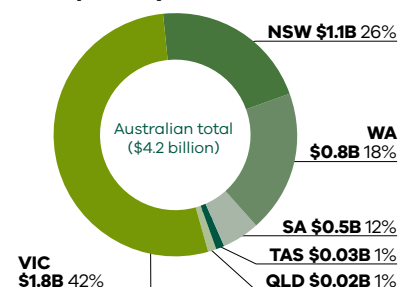
## Sector employment

- It is estimated that approximately 12,900 persons work on farms that produce sheep meat/wool in the year to May 2021.

## Exports and domestic consumption of sheep products

- In 2019–20, Victorian sheep meat exports totaled 220,000 tonnes, down 10 per cent year-on-year. The value of sheep meat exports was \$1.8 billion, up 3 per cent from the previous year.
- Sheep meat exports represent 38 per cent of all meat exports, and 16 per cent of Victoria's total food exports (\$11.4 billion).
- Victoria is the largest sheep meat exporter accounting for 42 per cent of Australia's total sheep meat exports of \$4.2 billion. Victoria is also Australia's largest wool exporter—exporting 137,000 tonnes in 2019–20 valued at \$1.4 billion.
- China was the highest value sheep meat export market valued at \$418 million, followed by the USA (\$330 million) and the UAE (\$156 million).
- Australia's per capita sheep meat consumption was around 8 kilogram in 2019–20.

## Australia's sheep meat exports by state, 2019–20



## Prices

- The Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator (ESTLI) was 819 cents per kg carcass weight as of 25 June 2021, 13 per cent higher year-on-year.

## Farm financial performance

- ABARES reported improved farm financial performance of livestock farms in 2020–21. Better seasonal conditions resulted in reduced expenditure on fodder, higher receipts from beef cattle but lower receipts for sheep, lambs and wool because of a focus on flock rebuilding due to improved seasonal conditions.
- For specialist sheep farms, average farm cash incomes increased marginally by around \$500 to \$102,000 in 2020–21, with farm business profit decreasing by \$3,800, from an average of \$35,800 in 2019–20 to \$32,000 in 2020–21.
- Improved seasonal conditions to support sheep producers despite lower lamb prices.