

# Victorian sheep industry

Fast Facts  
June 2024



## Sheep flock facts and figures

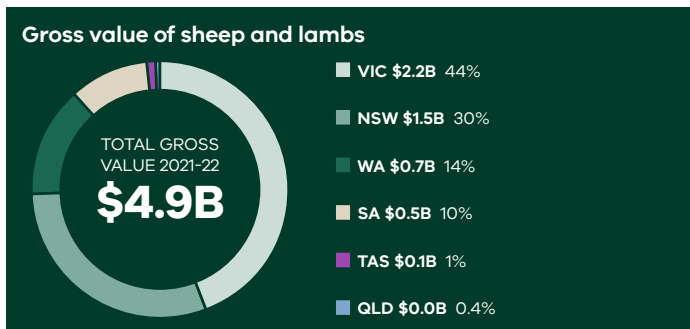
- In 2021-22, 2,500 farms in Victoria specialised in sheep farming, which is 24% of Australia's total 10,400 sheep farms. Additionally, Victoria had 2,100 mixed livestock-cropping farms and 650 sheep-beef farms.
- Victoria accounted for about 21% of Australia's sheep flock, with a total of 14.6 million sheep out of 70 million.
- Victoria has the second-largest sheep population in Australia, after New South Wales (NSW) (which has 27 million sheep).

## How much sheep meat is produced?



- In 2021-22, Victoria processed 12.8 million sheep to produce 314,000 tonnes of sheep meat, a 2.2% increase from the previous year's production of 307,000 tonnes.
- Victoria accounts for 46% of Australia's 679,000 tonnes of sheep meat production.
- Victoria is Australia's largest sheep meat producer, followed by NSW (195,000 tonnes) and Western Australia (91,000 tonnes).

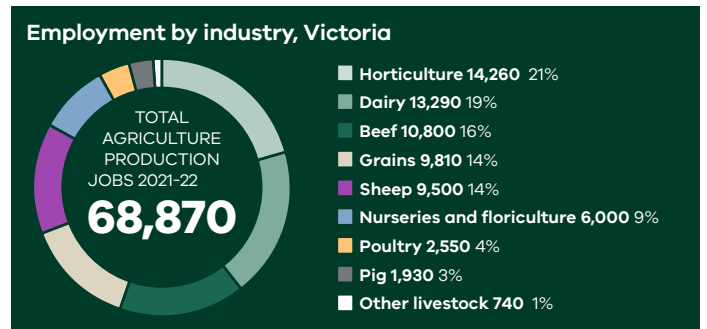
## What is the gross value of sheep and lambs?



- In 2021-22, Victorian sheep and lambs processed for meat production grossed \$2.2 billion, accounting for 11% of the state's \$20.2 billion agricultural production.
- The sheep meat is the fifth largest agricultural industry in Victoria after grains (\$4.2 billion), horticulture (\$3.9 billion), dairy (\$3.0 billion), and beef (\$2.9 billion)

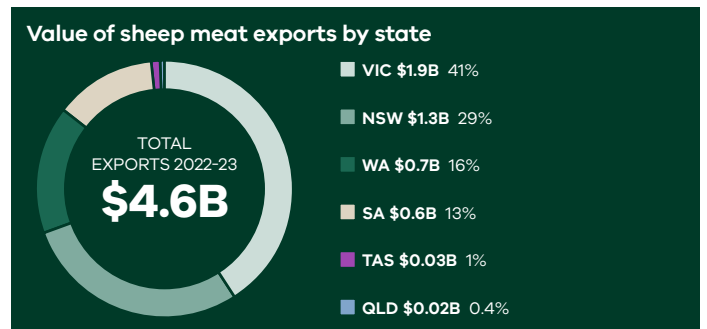
- Victoria contributed 44% to Australia's gross sheep meat production value, approximately \$4.9 billion.

## Industry employment



- There were 9,500 individuals employed on sheep meat/wool farms in 2021-22, representing a 3.3% increase in job numbers from 2020-21.
- The sheep industry accounts for 14% of agricultural employment in Victoria.

## How much sheep meat is exported?



- In 2022-23, Victoria's sheep meat exports were worth \$1.9 billion, representing 42% of all meat exports.
- Victoria exported 227,000 tonnes of sheep meat, comprising 144,000 tonnes of lamb and 82,000 tonnes of mutton. Sheep meat exports include fresh, frozen and chilled cuts and exclude live sheep exports.
- Sheep meat exports contributed approximately 10% to Victoria's total food and fibre exports.
- By value, Victoria is Australia's largest sheep meat exporter, accounting for 41% of its exports.
- The top three export markets for Victoria's sheep meat in 2022-23 were the United States (\$482 million), China (\$185 million), and South Korea (\$143 million).

Data attribution: Sourced from publicly available data published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) | ABARES | Agriculture Policy and Programs Branch analysis. Data are the latest available as of June 2024.