Cattle industry update

June 2025

A quarterly newsletter outlining cattle numbers sold via domestic slaughter, live export and interstate transfers.

Total cattle turnoff

- Between January and June 2025 Western Australia (WA) turned off a total of 364,500 cattle, a 19% increase year on year (YOY). This is the highest 6 monthly turnoff since 2020 at which time WA was experiencing extended dry conditions.
- The largest increase was seen in the number of cattle sold via live exports, which increased 117%, while interstate transfers came back 63% YOY.

Table 1 Total WA cattle turnoff between January and June (based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) data, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) analysis)

	2022	2023	2024	2025	YOY change
Cattle slaughter	168,400	189,300	216,100	233,700	8%
Calf slaughter	300	200	300	600	100%
Live export	87,400	65,500	53,900	116,800	117%
Interstate transfer	20,500	5,000	35,800	13,400	-63%
Total	**276,600**	**260,000**	**306,100**	**364,500**	**19%**

- Despite the increase in cattle sold via live export, domestic slaughter remains the most utilised sale avenue accounting for 64% of cattle turned off in 2025 to date.
- Live export made up 32% of cattle turnoff compared to 18% this time last year, but a long way short of the 48% in 2016.
- Interstate transfers accounted for 4% of total cattle turnoff so far.

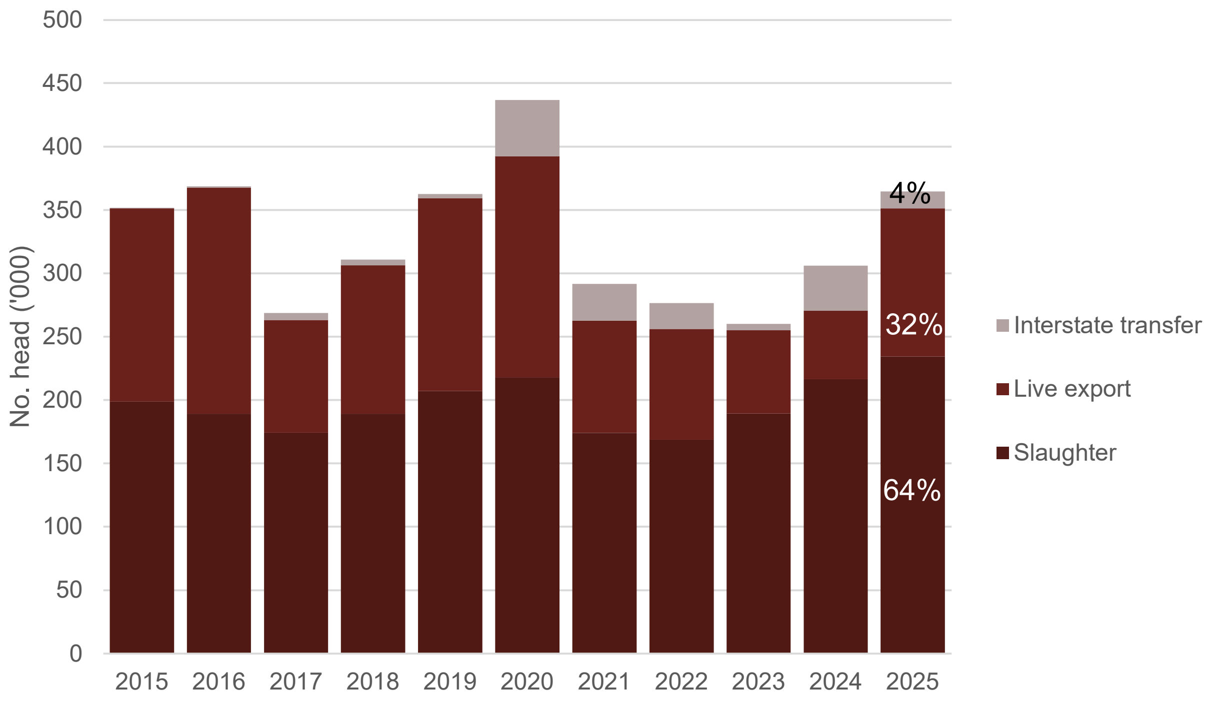

Figure 1 Total turn-off by sale avenue between January and June by year (Based on ABS and PIRSA data, DPIRD analysis)

Domestic slaughter

- In the first 6 months of 2025 WA cattle slaughter totalled 234,300, an 8% increase compared to this time last year. There were increases across all 3 components of cattle processing.
- Female cattle slaughter remains the largest component and had the most impactful increase compared to last year, increasing 14% from 122,300 to 139,300 head.
- Male slaughter increased slightly from 93,800 to 94,400 head while calf slaughter doubled from 300 to 600 head.

Table 2 Number of cattle slaughtered in WA (thousand head) between January and June (Based on ABS data, DPIRD analysis)

	2023	2024	2025	YOY change
Male slaughter	89.4	93.8	94.4	1%
Female slaughter	99.9	122.3	139.3	14%
Calf slaughter	0.2	0.3	0.6	100%
Total	**189.5**	**216.4**	**234.3**	**8%**

- Male cattle slaughter is following a similar pattern to the last 2 years as illustrated in Figure 2. If this continues male slaughter may reach around 190,000 by year's end.

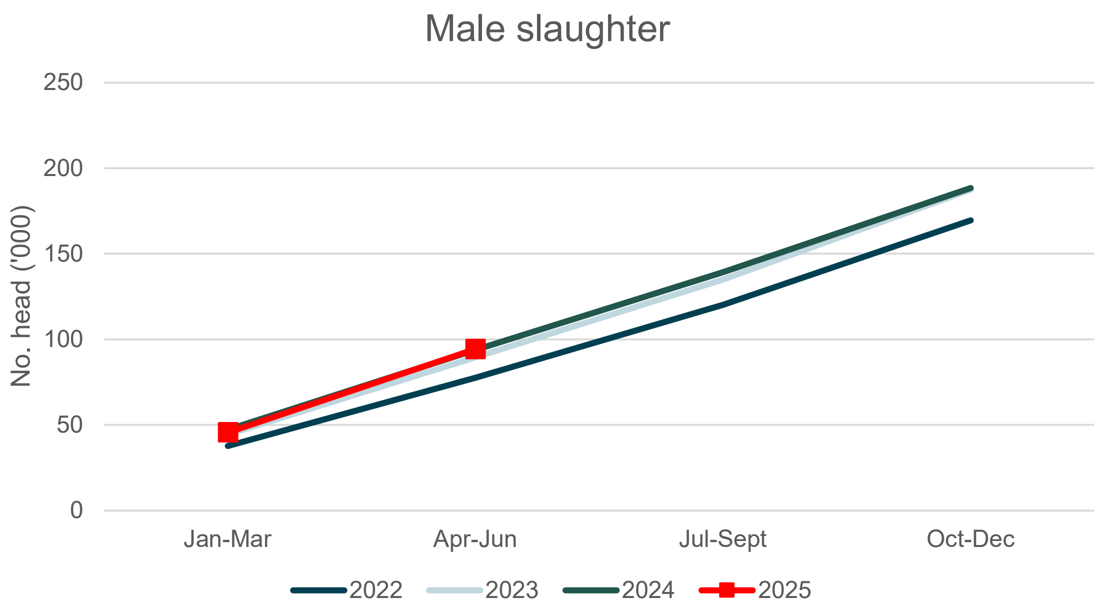

Figure 2 Cumulative male cattle slaughter in WA (thousand head) (Based on ABS data, DPIRD analysis)

- Female cattle slaughter has started the year strongly reaching 139,300 so far, the highest for this period since 2020 when 140,300 female cattle were processed.
- Current female slaughter is 22% higher than the long term (48 years) average of 114,000 head, but well below the 202,700 record from 1977.

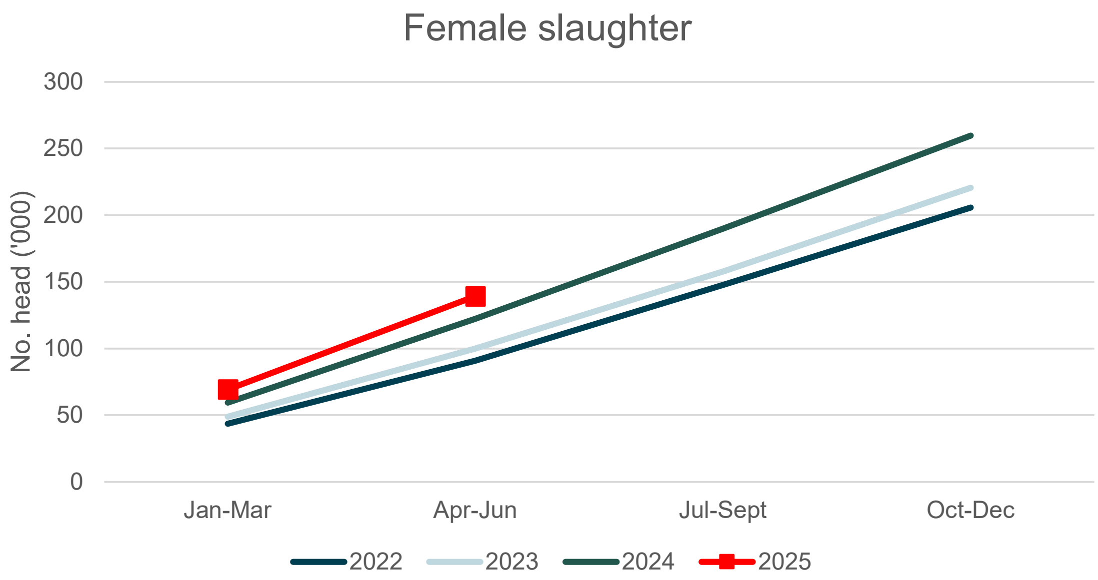

Figure 3 Cumulative female cattle slaughter in WA (thousand head) (Based on ABS data, DPIRD analysis)

Feedlot turn-off

- The number of cattle turned off from WA feedlots reached 99,800 in the first half of 2025, 24% higher than the same period in 2024.
- Provided all these animals were sold to slaughter, this would make up 43% of slaughter.

Table 3 Number of cattle turned off from WA feedlots between January and June (Based on Australian Lot Feeders Association (ALFA) and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) data, DPIRD analysis)

	2023	2024	2025	YOY change
Feedlot turn-off	76,000	80,400	99,800	24%

- WA feedlot turn-off was very strong between April and June totalling 48,600, 44% higher than the same time last year.
- The 6 monthly feedlot turnoff reached 99,800 head which was the highest since 2020 for this period and the third highest since 2006.

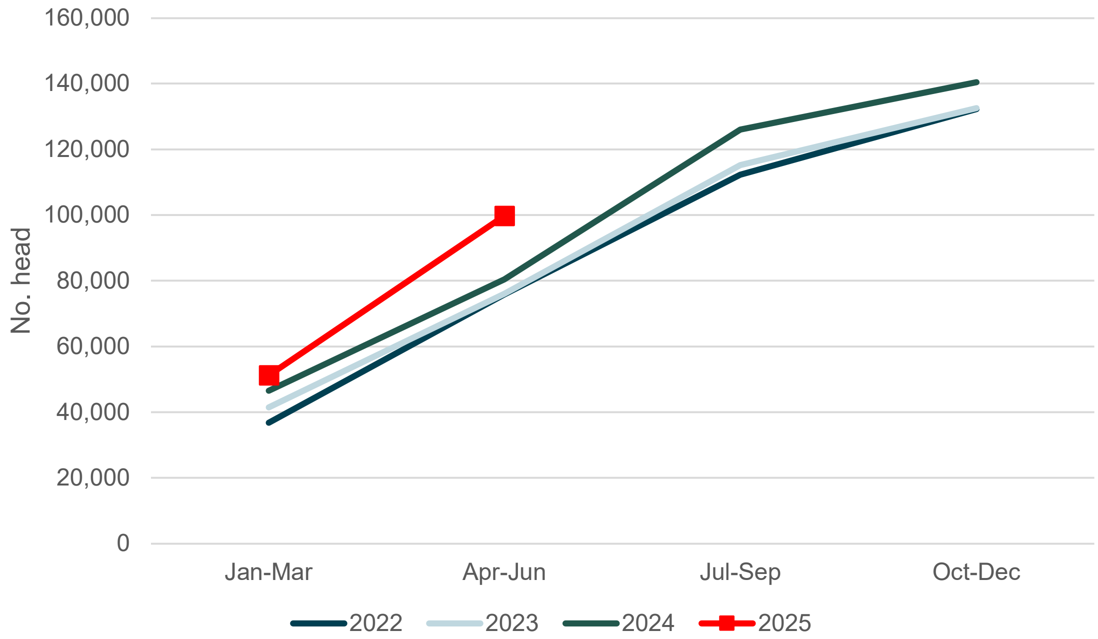

Figure 4 Cumulative cattle turn-off from WA feedlots (Based on ALFA and MLA data, DPIRD analysis)

Live export

- So far this year a total of 116,800 cattle have been exported from WA, a 117% increase YOY.
- Indonesia remains WA's largest live cattle market in 2025 accounting for 54% of exports or 62,500 head. This is a 114% increase on this time last year.
- Vietnam was the second largest market with 25% of exports or 29,000 head and a YOY increase of 107%. There were another 6 markets and all experienced growth in the first half of 2025.

Table 4 Number of cattle exported from WA ports between January and June (Based on ABS data, DPIRD analysis)

	2023	2024	2025	YOY change
Live exports	65,500	53,900	116,800	117%

- The increase in 2025 is due to large numbers being exported in May and June, with 30,500 exported in May alone, the highest number since October 2020 when 38,200 were exported from WA. In June a further 25,200 cattle were exported.

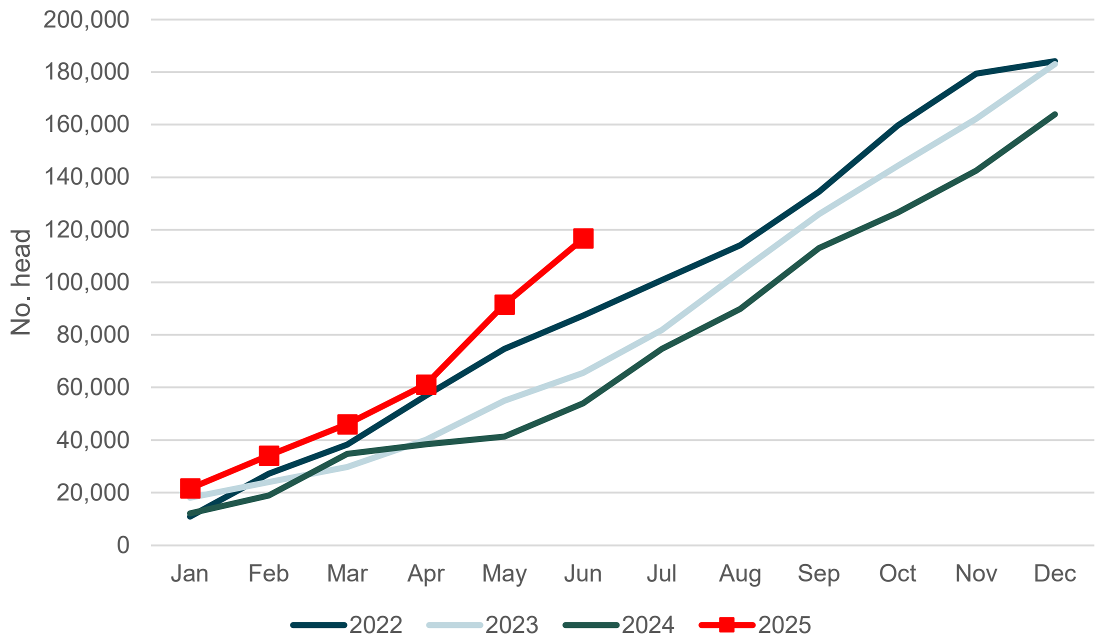

Figure 5 Cumulative number of cattle exported from WA (Based on ABS data, DPIRD analysis)

Interstate transfers (southern only)

- Interstate transfers of cattle across the southern WA border reached 13,400 in the first half of 2025, a decline of 63% YOY.
- Numbers trucked east have been fairly consistent in 2025 so far, varying between around 1,500 and 3,000 per month. Over the course of 2024, monthly numbers were much more varied shifting from 600 in December to 13,600 in February.

Table 5 Number of cattle sold east via Ceduna between January and June (Based on PIRSA data, DPIRD analysis)

	2023	2024	2025	YOY change
Interstate transfers	5,000	35,800	13,400	-63%

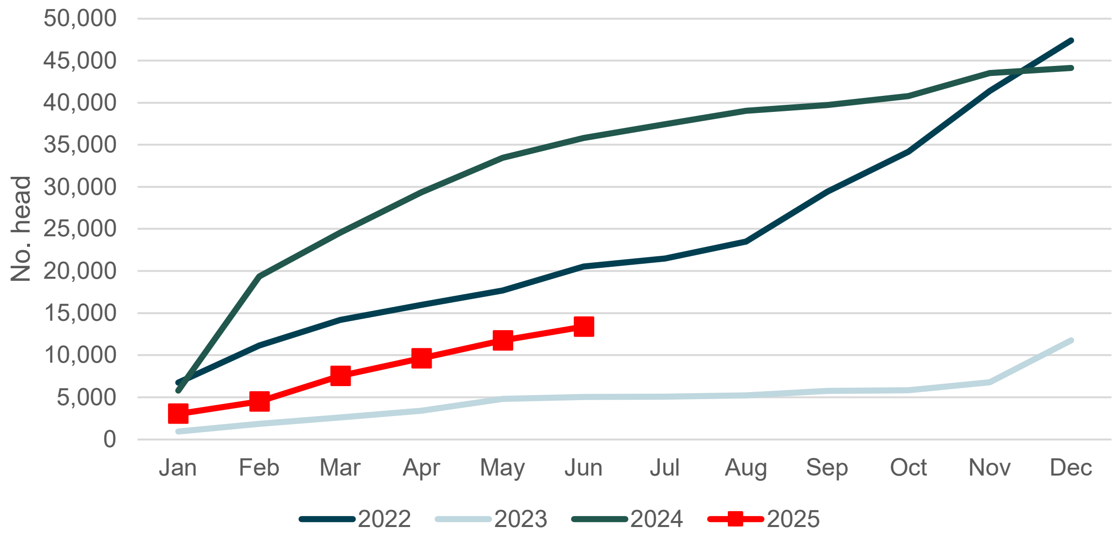

Figure 6 Cumulative number of cattle sold east via Ceduna (Based on PIRSA data, DPIRD analysis)

Saleyard prices

- The Western Young Cattle Indicator (WYCI) and Eastern Young Cattle Indicator (EYCI) have continued to follow a similar pattern in 2025 with the EYCI remaining slightly stronger than the WYCI.
- The WYCI has seen solid growth over the course of 2025. In August the WYCI averaged 759 c/kg, 27% higher than January when it averaged 597 c/kg and 14% higher than June.
- The EYCI averaged 858 c/kg in August.

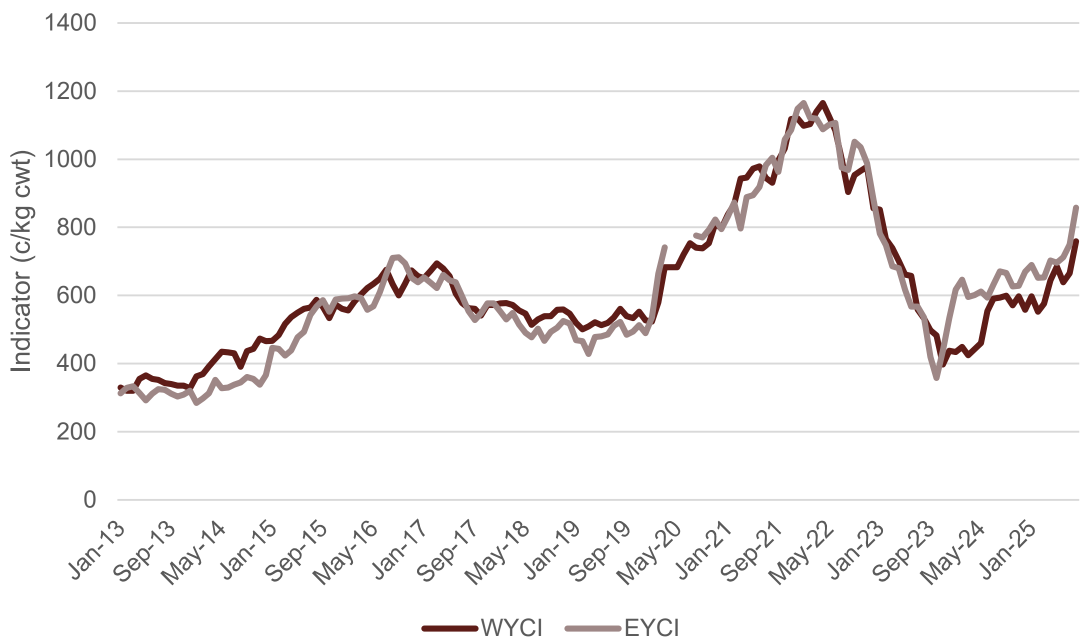

Figure 7 Saleyard indicator comparing the WYCI and the EYCI (Based on MLA data, DPIRD analysis)

Contact

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