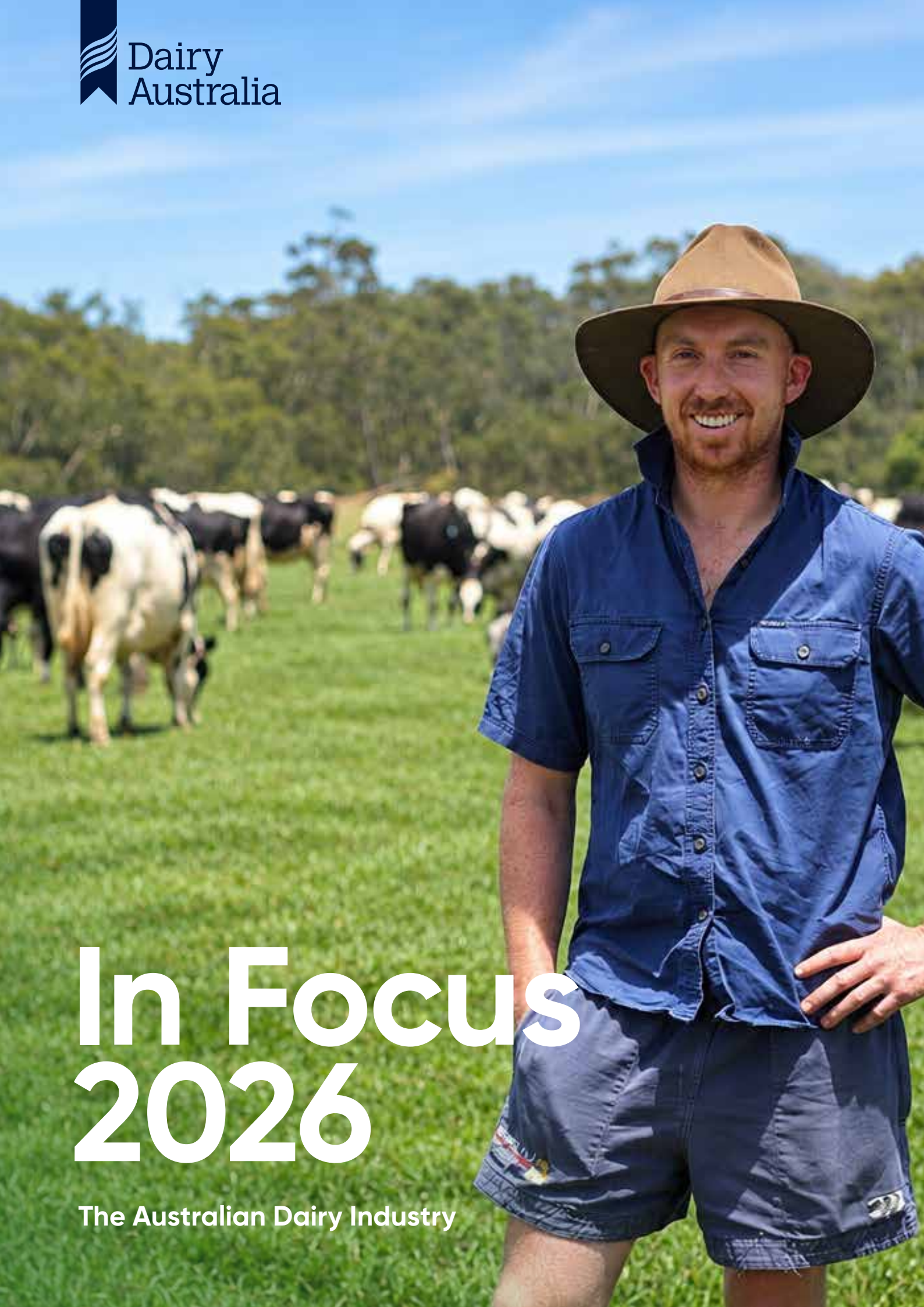
Dairy Australia



# In Focus 2026

## The Australian Dairy Industry



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# Key facts about Australia's dairy industry

Dairy is Australia's **third largest** rural industry




**8,654 million litres** of milk produced worth **$6.588 billion**. Average annual production per cow **6,533 litres**



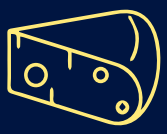
**3,597** dairy farms and a national herd of **1.33 million cows.** Average herd size **368 cows.**



**29,500** dairy industry workforce



Annual production of main commodities



**498,524 tonnes**
Cheese



**247,752 tonnes**
Milk powders




**85,298 tonnes**
Butter & AMF (CBE)

## Australian milk utilisation



**42%** Cheese
**30%** Drinking milk
**21%** Skim milk powder or butter
**2%** Whole milk powder
**5%** Other

Annual per capita consumption
**84 litres**
of drinking milk



**32%**
of milk production
exported

## Major export markets



**Greater China**
**166,299 tonnes**

**Indonesia**
**76,853 tonnes**

**Malaysia**
**60,038 tonnes**

**Singapore**
**59,569 tonnes**

**Japan**
**57,072 tonnes**



# Foreword

The Australian dairy industry continues to demonstrate its strength in a changing and increasingly complex operating environment.

Despite ongoing global uncertainty, fluctuating input costs and evolving market conditions, Australian dairy remains a significant contributor to the national economy, supporting regional communities, employment and economic activity across the country.

The 2025–26 season has been another important chapter for the industry, with national milk production increasing by 1.5 per cent to approximately 8.65 billion litres. This growth reflects the industry's capacity to adapt and respond to changing conditions, while maintaining a focus on productivity and sustainable profitability.

As we look to the future, understanding the trends shaping our industry has never been more important.

Dairy Australia's Australian Dairy Industry In Focus 2026 provides a comprehensive picture of the industry's performance, bringing together key statistics on milk production, farmgate returns, manufacturing, domestic consumption and international trade.

Beyond the figures themselves, this information helps us understand how the industry is evolving, where opportunities are emerging and the challenges that will influence its future competitiveness.

At Dairy Australia, we are committed to providing independent, reliable industry information that supports informed decision-making by farmers, processors, government and the broader dairy supply chain.

I would like to acknowledge the processors, government agencies and industry partners who contribute data and insights to this publication each year. Their collaboration is essential to ensuring the industry has access to a comprehensive and credible evidence base.

I hope this year's report provides a valuable resource for understanding the Australian dairy industry's performance and the opportunities ahead.



**Dr Matthew Shaffer**
Chief Executive Officer - Dairy Australia

# The Australian dairy industry

## An important rural industry

The dairy industry is a major rural industry in Australia, ranked third behind the red meat and wheat industries, with a farmgate production value of more than A$6 billion (as shown in Table 1). Dairy is a significant source of employment across regional areas, adding substantial value through further downstream processing. In 2025–26, approximately 29,500 people were directly employed on dairy farms and by dairy processing companies. Further employment connected to the industry is represented in associated transport, distribution, and farm services, as well as research and development activities. This mostly occurs close to farming areas, thereby generating significant economic activity and employment across regional Australia.

Dairying is well established across the temperate and some subtropical regions of Australia. While most of the milk is produced in South-east Australia, all states have dairy industries that supply fresh drinking milk to nearby cities and towns. Most states produce a range of high-quality consumer products, including fresh milks, custards, yoghurts, and specialty cheeses.

The manufacture of dairy commodity products for export is largely concentrated in south-eastern Australia and includes cheddar, mozzarella cheese, specialised milk powders and butterfats.

The dairy industry experienced strong growth throughout the 1990s, which eventually stalled in the early 2000s. In addition to industry deregulation, this period coincided with the severe and prolonged 'millennium drought.' Increased levels of market and margin volatility undermined confidence in the outlook for many farmers, who seek reliable returns on which to build a longer-term future. This has resulted in ongoing consolidation within both dairy farming and dairy processing.

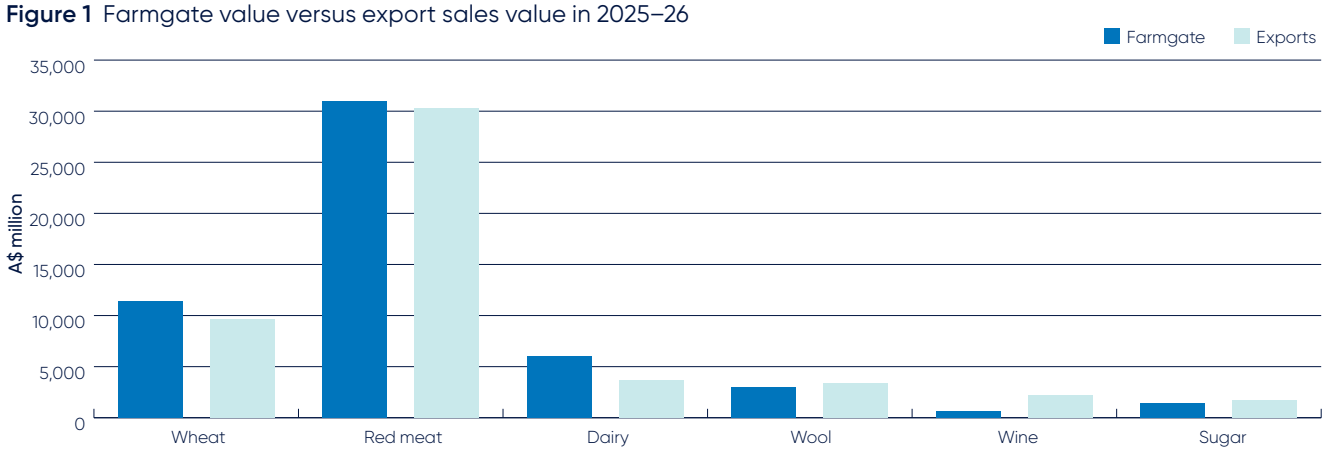
In line with long-term trends, the number of dairy farms continued to fall in 2025–26, down four per cent from the previous year. However, while farm numbers decreased, the average size of farms has grown, with the number of large farms – and their share of milk production– increasing. Additionally, there has been further consolidation among processors, with manufacturing facilities facing continued rationalisation.

**Table 1** Australian dairy industry – long-term trends

| At June 30 | 1990 | 2000 | CAGR % 1990s | 2010 | CAGR % 2000s | 2020 | CAGR % 2010s | 2026 (p) | CAGR % 2020s |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Milk production (ML) | 6,262 | 10,847 | 5.6 | 9,023 | -1.8 | 8,797 | -0.3 | 8,654 | -0.4 |
| Dairy cows ('000) | 1,654 | 2,171 | 2.8 | 1,596 | -3.0 | 1,394 | -1.3 | 1,325 | -1.3 |
| Farm numbers | 15,396 | 12,896 | -1.8 | 7,511 | -5.3 | 5,055 | -3.9 | 3,597 | -8.2 |
| Value of farm production*($m) | 3,388 | 4,297 | 2.4 | 3,366 | -2.4 | 4,829 | 3.7 | 6,588 | 8.1 |
| Per capita consumption (milk equivalent) | 245 | 274 | 1.1 | 301 | 0.9 | 319 | 0.7 | 344 | 1.7 |
| Export value ($m) | 613 | 3,918 | 20.4 | 2,391 | -4.8 | 3,378 | 3.5 | 3,756 | 2.7 |
| Export share of production (%) | 31 | 54 | | 45 | | 29 | | 32 | |

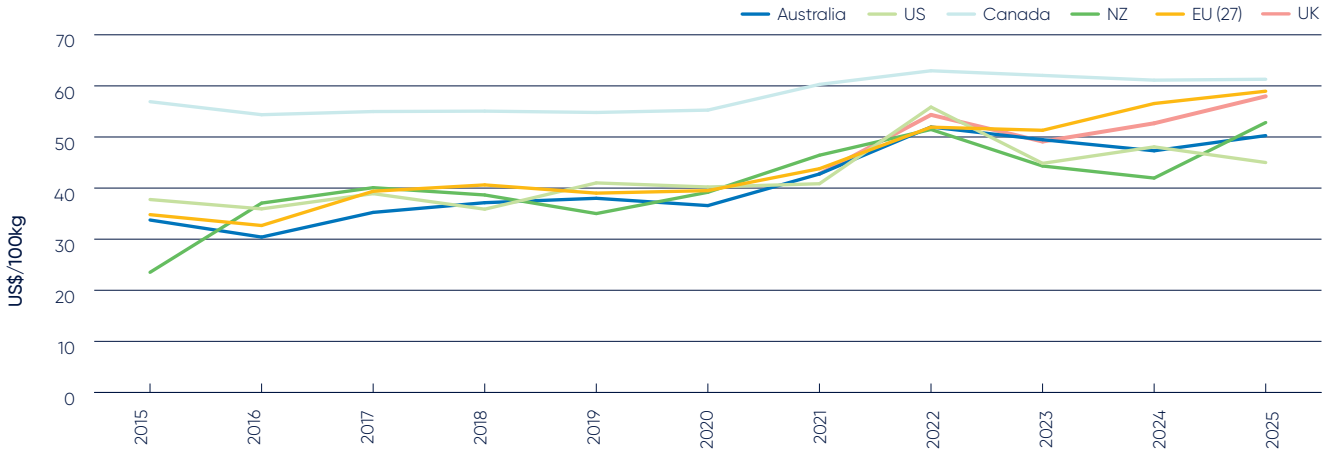
CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate
*Source: ABS, ADC, DA, state authorities*

**Figure 1** Farmgate value versus export sales value in 2025–26




*Source: ABARES Australian Commodities Quarterly Report (forecast)*

**Figure 2** International farmgate milk prices (US$/100kg)




*Source: Dairy Australia*

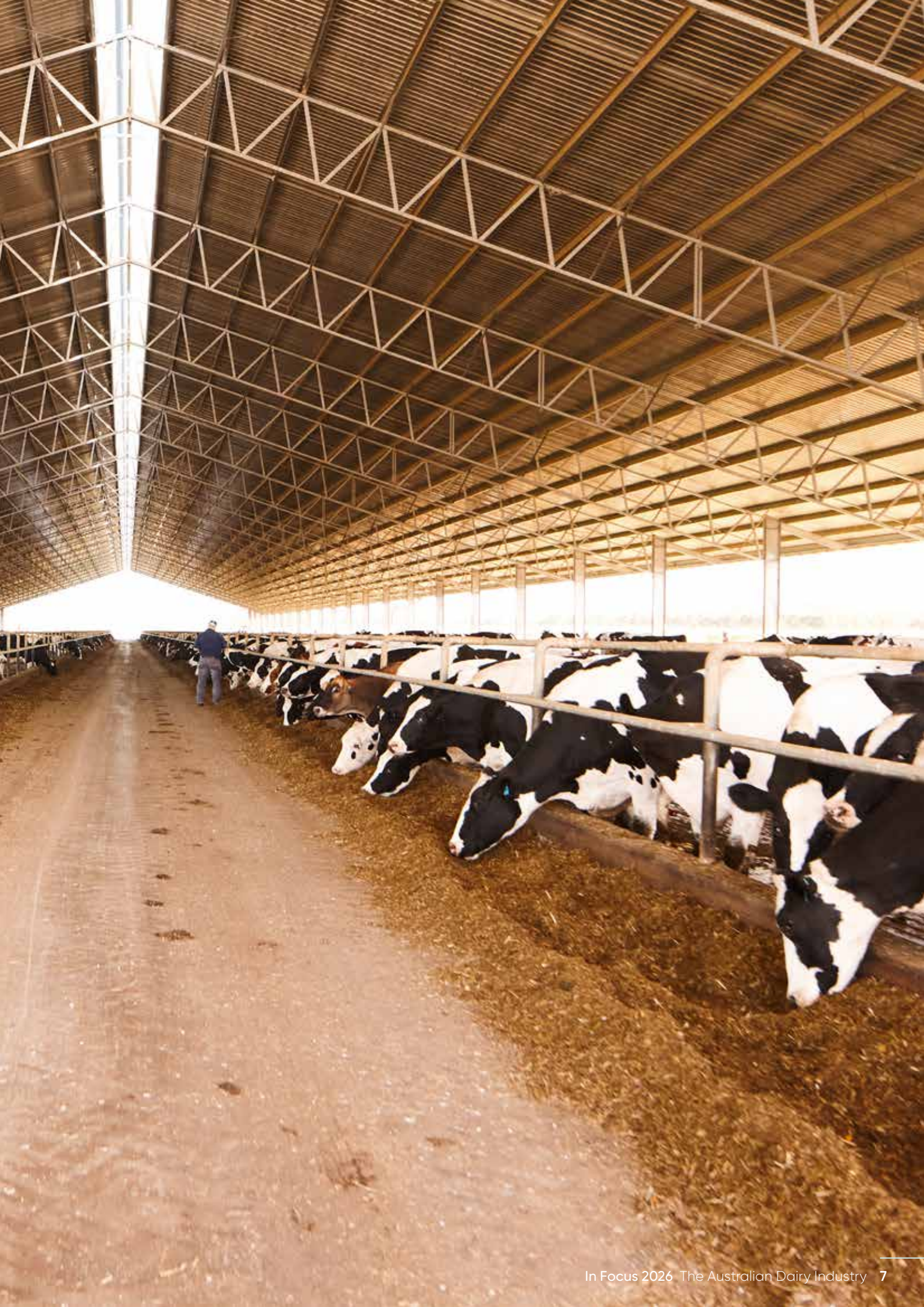
## A globally competitive industry

Since the dairy industry completed deregulation, Australian dairy farmers have operated in an open market with minimal government intervention. As a result, Australia's domestic dairy market is subject to international pressures, either through direct competition for export sales or competition from imports. International markets and events also have a major influence on Australian farmgate milk prices. While most milk produced is consumed domestically, Australia is also a major exporter and importer of dairy products (predominantly from New Zealand).

Farmgate milk prices rose in the 2025–26 season with Australian dairy farmers receiving an average price of A$9.89/kg/MS (US$50 per 100kg of milk). Across calendar year 2025, this price was above that of the United States, but below that paid to farmers in New Zealand, the European Union and the United Kingdom. These indices represent milk receipts only and do not include other components of total farm income, such as decoupled government support, livestock sales or other activities.

As shown in Figure 2, the price received by farmers around the world has continued to converge. Farmgate prices now more closely reflect global dairy commodity price trends due to the removal of many market-distorting industry policies, progressive deregulation and increased global trade. While broadly tracking other producers, Canada's dairy farmers operate in a highly regulated environment, which determines prices, production, and imports according to a scheme known as Supply Management.

Historically, Australia has been considered a low-cost producer of dairy products, however in recent years, farm cost structures have increased in response to the need to adapt to drier conditions. This has resulted in higher expenditure on supplementary feed and temporary water allocations, particularly in Northern Victoria and Southern New South Wales. Since deregulation, local milk production has declined while the size of the domestic market has increased due to population growth. As a result, the share of milk that is exported, and Australia's share of international dairy trade, have both contracted.



# Farm facts

Dairy farms are located in all states of Australia, with the majority of milk production occurring in south-eastern Australia, where the climate and natural resources are generally favourable for dairying. As such, the industry is predominantly pasture-based, resulting in cost efficient systems producing high-quality milk. In a year of 'normal' seasonal conditions, grazed pasture covers approximately 60-65% of cattle feed requirements.

While most farms are located in coastal areas where pasture growth is generally reliant on rainfall, there are also several inland dairying areas that use irrigation schemes, most notably in Northern Victoria and the New South Wales Riverina region. Dairy farm systems vary across Australia – while many farms use pasture as the herd's main feed source, the use of supplementary feed is widespread. There is a greater incidence of intensive feeding practices observed in states such as New South Wales and Queensland, with high rates of supplementary feeding.

Over the past decade, the use of supplementary feeding has increased significantly as farmers adapt to drier conditions and seek to flatten their farm's seasonal milk production profile. Supplementary feed can be purchased or homegrown, and includes grain, hay, silage and in some situations, feed byproducts.

Such changes in production systems can introduce additional input costs, price risk and management complexity, and can lead to greater variability of farm returns.

Dairy Australia's 2026 National Dairy Farmer Survey showed nearly all dairy farmers engaged in some level of supplementary feeding. Feeding moderate to high levels of concentrates is practised across all regions, with the national average feeding rate increasing in 2025–26 to 2.1 tonnes per cow per year.

*See Appendix 3 for detailed tables on feed prices by state dairying regions.*

Since 1979–80, the number of dairy farms in Australia has been steadily declining from 21,989 farms to 3,605 in 2025–26 (refer to Table 2). The rate of decrease in farm numbers has historically followed changes in farmgate milk prices from season to season. While strong prices can slow the rate of attrition, periods of weaker farmgate milk prices and adverse seasonal conditions can accelerate farm exits. Land prices and the performance of other agricultural industries can also encourage farm exits, regardless of farmgate milk prices.

**Table 2** Number of registered dairy farms

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2011–12 | 778 | 4,556 | 555 | 275 | 162 | 444 | **6,770** |
| 2012–13 | 731 | 4,284 | 518 | 268 | 160 | 437 | **6,398** |
| 2013–14 | 710 | 4,268 | 475 | 264 | 156 | 435 | **6,308** |
| 2014–15 | 704 | 4,127 | 448 | 252 | 157 | 440 | **6,128** |
| 2015–16 | 690 | 4,141 | 421 | 246 | 151 | 430 | **6,079** |
| 2016–17 | 661 | 3,889 | 406 | 240 | 148 | 427 | **5,771** |
| 2017–18 | 626 | 3,881 | 393 | 228 | 159 | 412 | **5,699** |
| 2018–19 | 575 | 3,516 | 356 | 212 | 150 | 404 | **5,213** |
| 2019–20 | 534 | 3,462 | 327 | 206 | 135 | 391 | **5,055** |
| 2020–21 | 523 | 3,080 | 307 | 198 | 132 | 378 | **4,618** |
| 2021–22 | 494 | 2,984 | 280 | 181 | 116 | 365 | **4,420** |
| 2022–23 | 466 | 2,774 | 278 | 182 | 112 | 351 | **4,163** |
| 2023–24 | 452 | 2,552 | 266 | 170 | 107 | 342 | **3,889** |
| 2024–25 | 443 | 2,476 | 253 | 166 | 99 | 335 | **3,772** |
| 2025–26 (p) | 425 | 2,349 | 242 | 162 | 96 | 323 | **3,597** |

*Source: State milk authorities and Dairy Australia*

Falling farm numbers reflects a worldwide trend in agriculture. Changing business practices have encouraged a shift to larger, more intensive production systems with greater economies of scale. However, while the number of farms across Australia has declined, the average herd size continues to grow. In 1985, the average herd size was 93 cows; this has grown to 368 cows in 2025–26. There is also an emerging trend of large farm operations milking more than 700 cows.

Despite the average herd size increasing over time, Australia's national herd has been declining. Increased volatility in farm cash incomes has seen many farmers participate in the export heifer trade or sell dairy cows for slaughter as an additional source of farm income. Strong beef and land prices, labour challenges and extreme weather events have also encouraged some farmers to destock or diversify their businesses, or even exit the dairy industry.

*See Appendix 8 for detailed tables on heifer exports.*

Consequently, a smaller national herd limits total milk production, relying on increased per cow yields to maintain production volumes. Improved herd genetics, as well as advances in pasture management and supplementary feeding regimes, have increased average annual per cow yields over time.

Over the past four decades, yields have more than doubled from 2,900 litres in 1979–80 to 6,536 litres in 2025–26. The average yield figure varies by state and with seasonal conditions.

In Australia, the dominant dairy breed is the Holstein, accounting for around two-thirds of all dairy cows. Other important breeds include the Jersey, Holstein/Jersey cross, Brown Swiss, Ayrshire and local breeds, the Australian Red, and the Illawarra. Australian farmers have access to some of the best genetic material in the world with artificial insemination the most commonly used breeding practice on farm. Herd recording is also widely used with around half of all dairy farms regularly recording herd performance.

**Table 3** Number of dairy cows ('000 head)

| At 31 March | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2011–12 | 204 | 1,115 | 101 | 76 | 57 | 148 | **1,700** |
| 2012–13 | 210 | 1,096 | 96 | 77 | 62 | 148 | **1,688** |
| 2013–14 | 181 | 1,093 | 98 | 73 | 66 | 137 | **1,647** |
| 2014–15 | 177 | 1,147 | 91 | 68 | 59 | 147 | **1,689** |
| 2015–16 | 182 | 1,005 | 89 | 78 | 60 | 149 | **1,562** |
| 2016–17 | 164 | 975 | 86 | 71 | 64 | 160 | **1,520** |
| 2017–18 | 166 | 1,023 | 85 | 67 | 56 | 149 | **1,547** |
| 2018–19 | 149 | 898 | 78 | 72 | 56 | 175 | **1,428** |
| 2019–20 | 144 | 883 | 64 | 70 | 51 | 182 | **1,394** |
| 2020–21 | 159 | 859 | 69 | 69 | 53 | 179 | **1,388** |
| 2021–22 | 151 | 830 | 66 | 65 | 50 | 173 | **1,335** |
| 2022–23 (r) | 153 | 800 | 60 | 65 | 49 | 175 | **1,302** |
| 2023–24 (r) | 154 | 814 | 60 | 64 | 50 | 179 | **1,321** |
| 2024–25 (r) | 157 | 822 | 59 | 64 | 49 | 174 | **1,325** |
| 2025–26 (e) | 160 | 828 | 57 | 61 | 49 | 170 | **1,325** |

From 2018–19, Tas data sourced from TDIA; From 2018/19, SA data source from DairySafe SA
*Source: Dairy Australia estimate based on informattion from ABS and state milk authorities*

## Farmgate milk prices

Farmgate milk prices paid to Australian dairy farmers vary between processors and payment structures from dairy companies to individual farmers can differ significantly. The price paid can be based on the volume of solids in the milk (specifically milkfat and protein) or on a cents per litre basis, depending on how the milk is utilised. Milk supply agreements can provide a range of incentives for milk quality, productivity, or volume levels and for year-round milk supply. There may also be volume growth incentives in place (to improve operating efficiencies), or loyalty incentives to guarantee supply for long periods. These all influence the final farmgate price received.

Unlike many countries around the world, the Australian government has no legislative control over the farmgate milk price. Since deregulation in 2000–01, all prices within the industry are set by market forces. Therefore, the returns received by an individual company are affected by various factors, including market and product mix, marketing strategies, utilisation and efficiencies in - factory processing capacity, and exchange rate hedging policies.

Competition among processors to secure milk may also influence farmgate milk prices from season to season.

Implemented in 2020, the Dairy Code of Conduct stipulates that prior to the start of each season, all dairy processing companies must publicly release a minimum opening milk price by 1 June. In a feature that is unique to the Australian dairy industry, farmgate milk prices cannot be reduced below the minimum announced price during the season.

Australian dairy companies operate in an open and internationally competitive market. This includes free trade under the Closer Economic Relations agreement with New Zealand, a major global dairy producer. As a result, the returns local processors can achieve are influenced by global dairy commodity prices, even if they are not directly participating in export trade.

**Table 4** Average annual milk production per cow (litres)

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1979–80 | 2,870 | 3,012 | 1,984 | 3,163 | 3,105 | 2,958 | 2,848 |
| 1989–90 | 3,602 | 3,920 | 3,122 | 3,934 | 4,205 | 3,791 | 3,781 |
| 1999–00 | 4,827 | 4,989 | 4,349 | 6,790 | 6,338 | 4,381 | 4,996 |
| 2005–06 | 5,039 | 5,221 | 4,076 | 5,791 | 5,369 | 4,581 | 5,108 |
| 2006–07 | 5,151 | 5,261 | 4,033 | 6,417 | 5,235 | 4,696 | 5,182 |
| 2007–08 | 5,031 | 5,393 | 4,163 | 5,799 | 5,907 | 4,961 | 5,275 |
| 2008–09 | 5,420 | 5,807 | 5,032 | 6,053 | 6,355 | 5,140 | 5,691 |
| 2009–10 | 5,329 | 5,518 | 5,052 | 5,907 | 6,641 | 4,640 | 5,448 |
| 2010–11 | 5,409 | 5,860 | 4,980 | 6,257 | 6,637 | 5,379 | 5,758 |
| 2011–12 | 5,760 | 6,027 | 5,008 | 6,646 | 5,967 | 5,636 | 5,930 |
| 2012–13 | 5,534 | 5,473 | 4,667 | 7,099 | 5,996 | 5,166 | 5,498 |
| 2013–14 | 5,542 | 5,639 | 4,640 | 6,896 | 5,443 | 5,578 | 5,615 |
| 2014–15 | 6,572 | 5,795 | 4,388 | 7,411 | 5,752 | 6,400 | 5,917 |
| 2015–16 | 6,719 | 5,621 | 4,644 | 7,634 | 6,669 | 5,981 | 5,841 |
| 2016–17 | 6,434 | 5,749 | 4,823 | 6,520 | 6,342 | 5,511 | 5,813 |
| 2017–18 | 6,949 | 6,058 | 4,670 | 7,195 | 6,199 | 5,805 | 6,108 |
| 2018–19 (r) | 6,753 | 5,622 | 4,325 | 7,271 | 6,674 | 5,843 | 5,808 |
| 2019–20 (r) | 7,131 | 6,289 | 4,220 | 6,866 | 6,661 | 5,375 | 6,197 |
| 2020–21 (r) | 7,279 | 6,446 | 4,734 | 7,180 | 7,052 | 5,293 | 6,363 |
| 2021–22 (r) | 6,584 | 6,390 | 4,277 | 6,970 | 6,448 | 4,977 | 6,156 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 6,850 | 6,296 | 4,478 | 7,620 | 6,906 | 5,253 | 6,222 |
| 2023–24 (r) | 6,883 | 6,672 | 4,858 | 7,728 | 7,058 | 5,335 | 6,500 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 6,882 | 6,682 | 4,663 | 7,380 | 6,833 | 5,162 | 6,449 |
| 2025–26 (p) | 6,910 | 6,745 | 4,917 | 7,032 | 6,885 | 5,445 | 6,533 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers, ABS, state milk authorities and Dairy Australia*

World dairy prices directly affect returns for the 32% of Australian milk exported as butter, cheese, and milk powders, which must compete with other countries' exports. Global prices also influence the additional 41% of production that goes into locally consumed manufactured dairy products, which must be competitively priced against imports. As a result, over 70% of milk produced in Australia is exposed to global dairy prices, while the remainder is consumed domestically as liquid drinking milk.

The strength of the Australian dollar on foreign exchange markets also affects farmgate milk prices. Dairy companies benefit from a 'weaker' Australian dollar, which makes exports more competitive and imports relatively more expensive, all other things being equal.

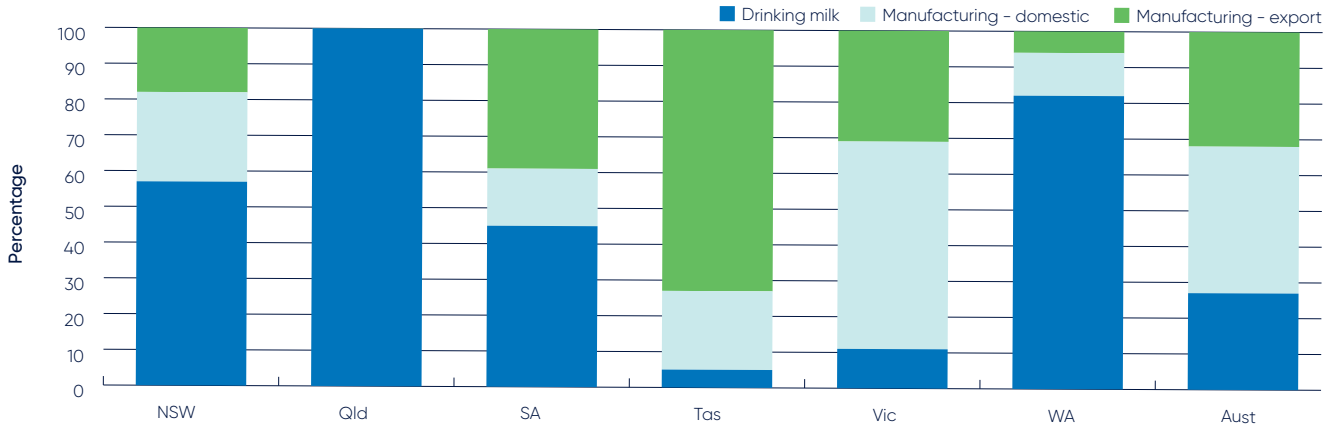
The farmgate milk price received by farmers can therefore vary significantly around Australia, depending on how milk is used in the marketplace. As shown in Figure 3, in the northern and western dairy regions, fresh drinking milk makes up a larger proportion of the production mix.

Farmers in these regions will receive farmgate milk prices tied to the drinking milk market, where a stable year-round supply is more important, and prices will often be paid on a cents per litre basis.

Alternatively, in south-east Australia, milk for processing (export and domestic use) accounts for most of the milk produced. As such, the average farmgate milk price received in these regions tends to follow global markets and export returns and be paid based on a $/kgMS (milk solids) basis. Most farmers in exporting regions receive a 'blended' price that incorporates returns from milk for manufacturing and the proportionately smaller local fresh drinking milk market.

Dairy products produced in some states are often exported out of another. For instance, some product manufactured in South Australia or Tasmania is regularly exported from the port of Melbourne. As such, this can cause the percentage of milk exported from each state to fluctuate based on changes in shipping arrangements.

**Figure 3** Use of Australian milk by state in 2025–26




*Source: Dairy Australia*

**Table 5** Indicative factory paid milk prices by state

| | | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NSW | ¢/litre | 62.66 | 64.05 | 82.07 | 84.54 | 83.34 | 84.40 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 8.58 | 8.78 | 11.18 | 11.60 | 11.36 | 11.46 |
| Vic | ¢/litre | 50.83 | 55.24 | 73.26 | 72.40 | 68.81 | 73.86 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 6.62 | 7.26 | 9.58 | 9.42 | 8.91 | 9.51 |
| Qld | ¢/litre | 66.80 | 70.00 | 87.52 | 90.00 | 91.60 | 91.14 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 9.06 | 9.51 | 11.90 | 12.25 | 12.31 | 12.21 |
| SA | ¢/litre | 52.89 | 53.66 | 71.93 | 72.17 | 71.35 | 73.70 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 7.32 | 7.48 | 9.96 | 9.92 | 9.58 | 9.85 |
| WA | ¢/litre | 53.76 | 55.14 | 69.02 | 71.23 | 71.91 | 72.61 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 7.44 | 7.67 | 9.74 | 9.85 | 9.89 | 9.98 |
| Tas | ¢/litre | 51.00 | 57.02 | 75.51 | 72.66 | 69.21 | 77.76 |
| | $/kg milk solids | 6.41 | 7.17 | 9.46 | 9.21 | 8.63 | 9.59 |
| **Aust** | **¢/litre** | 52.95 | 56.91 | 74.75 | 74.43 | 71.67 | 76.17 |
| | **$/kg milk solids** | 6.95 | 7.52 | 9.85 | 9.79 | 9.35 | 9.89 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers*



# Milk production

While the number of dairy farms in Australia has steadily decreased, the average farm size has grown. The number of cows and per cow yields increased, until the major widespread 'millennium drought' in 2002–03. The next decade was a period of consolidation for the industry, with falling cow numbers and dry seasonal conditions constraining production. This was especially the case in Northern Victoria, where reduced availability of irrigation water saw prices rise significantly.

Volatility in farmgate milk prices and farm incomes have also impacted farmer confidence and the industry's ability to grow. The disruption caused by the late season step-downs in 2015–16, lower average milk prices and challenging seasonal conditions in the subsequent years, shifted the focus of many farmers.

Their priority transitioned from longer-term investments and increasing milk production, to cost control, refinancing and business consolidation. In many cases, farmers culled extensively during these years, taking advantage of higher beef prices to maintain cashflow.

Australia's milk pool increased one per cent in 2025–26 to 8,654 million litres. The season started with drought and flood recovery, which weakened the production outlook. However, a solid autumn break and generally favourable conditions across most dairy regions lifted milk supply. Better feed and pasture conditions played an important role in supporting milk flow through the second half of the season. Longer-term constraints still weigh on Australian milk production however, including farm exits and labour challenges.

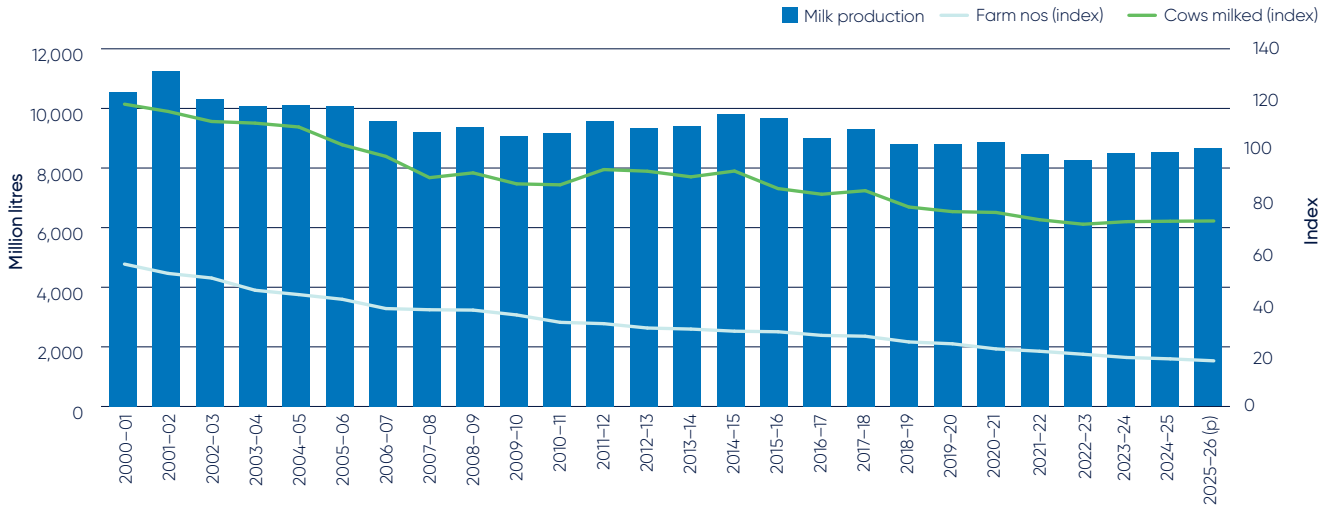
As Figure 4 indicates, the underlying trend has continued towards fewer farms, larger herds and increasing levels of milk production per farm.

**Table 6** Milk production by state (million litres)

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2006–07 | 1,104 | 6,297 | 537 | 655 | 349 | 641 | 9,583 |
| 2007–08 | 1,048 | 6,102 | 486 | 606 | 319 | 661 | 9,223 |
| 2008–09 | 1,064 | 6,135 | 513 | 628 | 340 | 709 | 9,388 |
| 2009–10 | 1,099 | 5,813 | 530 | 605 | 359 | 677 | 9,084 |
| 2010–11 | 1,087 | 5,936 | 487 | 572 | 372 | 726 | 9,180 |
| 2011–12 | 1,136 | 6,246 | 491 | 575 | 349 | 792 | 9,589 |
| 2012–13 | 1,137 | 6,076 | 465 | 542 | 349 | 765 | 9,334 |
| 2013–14 | 1,124 | 6,174 | 446 | 525 | 342 | 810 | 9,421 |
| 2014–15 | 1,184 | 6,411 | 422 | 530 | 367 | 891 | 9,805 |
| 2015–16 | 1,198 | 6,249 | 421 | 538 | 392 | 883 | 9,681 |
| 2016–17 | 1,141 | 5,732 | 425 | 497 | 385 | 836 | 9,016 |
| 2017–18 | 1,144 | 5,979 | 399 | 505 | 385 | 913 | 9,325 |
| 2018–19 | 1,094 | 5,576 | 359 | 497 | 374 | 910 | 8,810 |
| 2019–20 | 1,054 | 5,625 | 315 | 489 | 364 | 950 | 8,797 |
| 2020–21 | 1,075 | 5,651 | 309 | 500 | 362 | 961 | 8,858 |
| 2021–22 (r) | 1,034 | 5,443 | 292 | 474 | 337 | 883 | 8,463 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 1,038 | 5,178 | 289 | 495 | 344 | 911 | 8,255 |
| 2023–24 (r) | 1,055 | 5,361 | 291 | 500 | 348 | 939 | 8,494 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 1,065 | 5,452 | 279 | 472 | 340 | 917 | 8,525 |
| 2025–26 (p) | 1,090 | 5,555 | 288 | 444 | 337 | 941 | 8,654 |

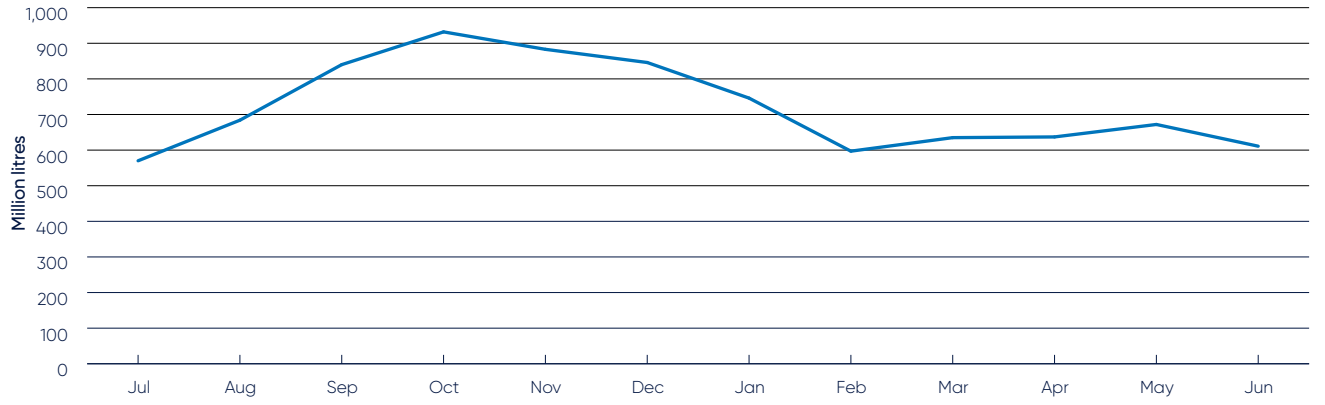
*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

**Figure 4** Australian milk production vs indices of farms and cows milked




*Source: Dairy manufacturers, ABS, state authorities and Dairy Australia*

**Figure 5** Seasonality of milk production in Australia in 2025–26




*Source: Dairy manufacturers*



As shown in Table 6, dairy farming is concentrated in the temperate zone of Australia. Australian milk production remains strongly seasonal in key south-eastern dairying regions, reflecting the predominantly pasture-based nature of the industry. Milk production peaks in October, tapers off until late summer, and then flattens out into the cooler winter months (as illustrated in Figure 5). The production of long shelf-life manufactured products in these parts of the country has enabled maximum milk utilisation within the seasonal cycle. However, the seasonality of milk output in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia is much less pronounced, due to a greater focus on drinking milk and fresh products. Farmers in these states manage calving and feed systems to ensure flatter, year-round milk production.

*See Appendix 4 for more details on the seasonality of milk production by state dairying regions.*

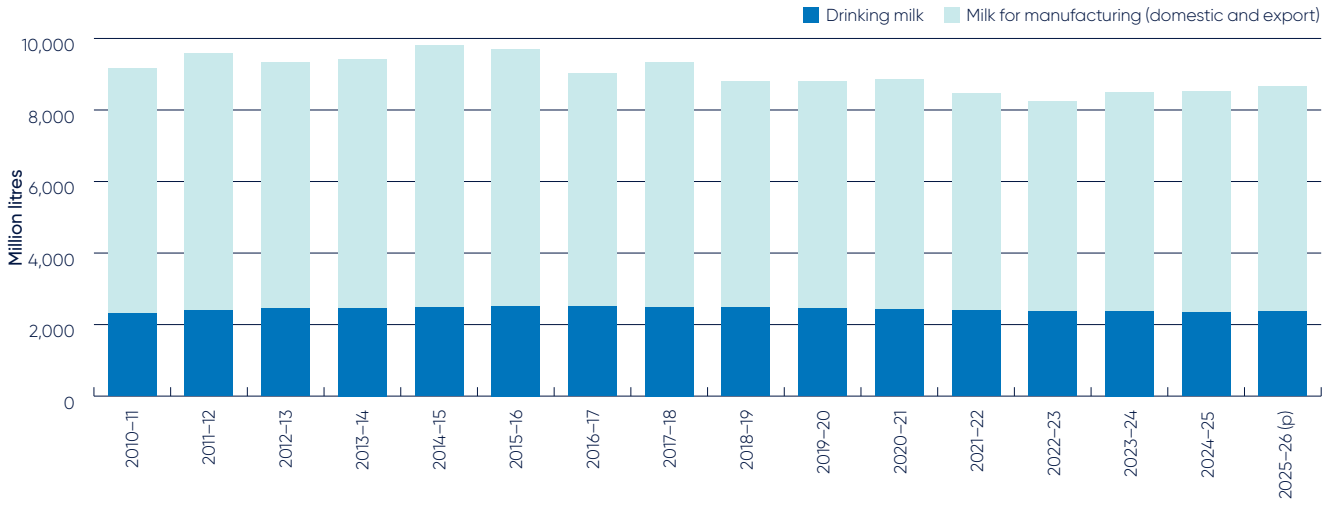
Solids such as milkfat, protein, lactose, and minerals are the core constituents of cows' milk, with water comprising about 87% of the volume. Companies base their farmgate milk prices on the milkfat and protein components of the milk.

Milk composition can vary between regions and seasons, as shown in Table 7. This can be due to several factors, including cow breed, age, nutrition, and feed quality.

With ongoing population growth since 2001–02, the proportion of milk destined for domestic consumption, as either drinking milk or manufactured products (e.g. cheese and butter), has increased. In 2025–26, 27% of Australia's production was used for domestic drinking milk, compared to 18% in 2001–02. About 41% of milk produced in 2025–26 was used for domestically consumed manufactured products, up from 26% in 2001–02.

Conversely, the proportion of milk available for export, as manufactured product, has declined from 56% in 2001–02 to 32% in 2025–26. Over recent years, Australia's imports of dairy products for local consumption have increased. This has enabled the Australian dairy industry to continue to export a significant share of its milk production, despite having a larger domestic market and a smaller milk pool.

**Figure 6** Drinking and manufacturing milk production




*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

**Table 7** Average fat/protein composition by state (%)

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Milkfat | | | | | | | |
| 2013–14 | 3.90 | 4.11 | 3.98 | 3.80 | 3.98 | 4.31 | 4.07 |
| 2014–15 | 3.92 | 4.15 | 4.00 | 3.78 | 3.95 | 4.35 | 4.10 |
| 2015–16 | 3.90 | 4.13 | 4.00 | 3.78 | 3.97 | 4.30 | 4.08 |
| 2016–17 | 3.91 | 4.14 | 4.00 | 3.78 | 3.97 | 4.34 | 4.10 |
| 2017–18 | 3.93 | 4.12 | 4.03 | 3.79 | 3.95 | 4.30 | 4.09 |
| 2018–19 | 3.93 | 4.12 | 4.03 | 3.85 | 3.93 | 4.39 | 4.10 |
| 2019–20 | 4.00 | 4.16 | 4.00 | 3.87 | 3.90 | 4.37 | 4.13 |
| 2020–21 | 4.04 | 4.22 | 4.03 | 3.91 | 3.95 | 4.42 | 4.18 |
| 2021–22 (r) | 4.08 | 4.23 | 4.07 | 3.95 | 4.00 | 4.40 | 4.20 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 4.13 | 4.24 | 4.10 | 4.04 | 4.08 | 4.42 | 4.22 |
| 2023–24 (r) | 4.07 | 4.26 | 4.10 | 4.03 | 4.05 | 4.39 | 4.22 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 4.11 | 4.28 | 4.14 | 4.04 | 4.06 | 4.48 | 4.25 |
| 2025/26 (p) | 4.10 | 4.30 | 4.15 | 4.08 | 4.07 | 4.51 | 4.27 |
| Protein | | | | | | | |
| 2013–14 | 3.28 | 3.39 | 3.29 | 3.27 | 3.26 | 3.47 | 3.37 |
| 2014–15 | 3.28 | 3.40 | 3.32 | 3.28 | 3.27 | 3.49 | 3.38 |
| 2015–16 | 3.28 | 3.40 | 3.32 | 3.27 | 3.26 | 3.48 | 3.37 |
| 2016–17 | 3.28 | 3.42 | 3.31 | 3.27 | 3.29 | 3.51 | 3.39 |
| 2017–18 | 3.31 | 3.41 | 3.31 | 3.28 | 3.28 | 3.51 | 3.39 |
| 2018–19 | 3.27 | 3.40 | 3.28 | 3.28 | 3.27 | 3.50 | 3.38 |
| 2019–20 | 3.33 | 3.46 | 3.30 | 3.34 | 3.27 | 3.58 | 3.43 |
| 2020–21 | 3.34 | 3.43 | 3.35 | 3.33 | 3.28 | 3.56 | 3.42 |
| 2021–22 (r) | 3.35 | 3.43 | 3.33 | 3.36 | 3.28 | 3.55 | 3.42 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 3.37 | 3.43 | 3.35 | 3.39 | 3.30 | 3.58 | 3.43 |
| 2023–24 | 3.37 | 3.46 | 3.34 | 3.41 | 3.29 | 3.59 | 3.45 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 3.39 | 3.46 | 3.38 | 3.40 | 3.34 | 3.61 | 3.46 |
| 2025–26 (p) | 3.41 | 3.49 | 3.39 | 3.43 | 3.34 | 3.68 | 3.49 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

# Dairy manufacturing

Farmer-owned cooperatives no longer dominate the Australian industry, with a wide range of companies now operating including national and multinational companies, both privately owned and publicly listed. Some large multinational companies have been established within the industry for many years, including Fonterra (New Zealand, Lactalis-Mainland as of April 2026), Lactalis (France) and Saputo (Canada).

Over the past two decades, Australia's contracting milk pool has reduced the need for local dairy companies to invest in processing capacity. The age of existing plants and the need to rationalise production has resulted in the closure of some plants to lower costs. Nevertheless, new developments continue to arise, with some processors choosing to increase capacity at remaining sites or upgrade plants to produce higher specification products.

Australia produces a variety of dairy products, with cheese consistently the largest utiliser of milk, accounting for 42% of Australia's milk production in 2025–26.

Investments in cheese production over recent years suggest this is likely to remain the case in future. Drinking milk and skim milk powder/butter represent the next two largest production streams, accounting for 30% and 21% of Australian milk respectively. While most of the drinking milk produced is consumed domestically, almost half of Australia's manufactured dairy products are exported.

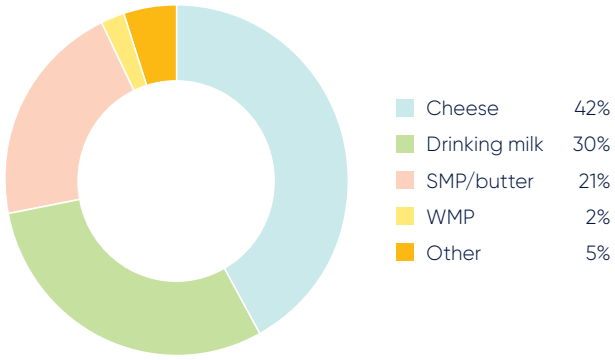
In 2025–26:

**56%** manufactured product sold on the Australian market

**44%** manufactured product exported

in milk equivalent terms

**Figure 7** Australian milk utilisation in 2025–26




*Source: Dairy Australia*



# Dairy markets

In Australia, milk production exceeds the volume required for domestic consumption, with surplus product therefore destined for export markets. As illustrated in Figure 8, the share of total production destined for export has declined from around 50% two decades ago, to approximately one-third in recent years, contracting due to population growth and an overall decline in milk production.

In 2025–26, Australia exported 32% of milk produced; while accounting for just over one per cent of the world's estimated milk production, Australia remains a significant exporter of dairy products. The country holds a four per cent share of world dairy trade, and is currently ranked fifth behind the European Union, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

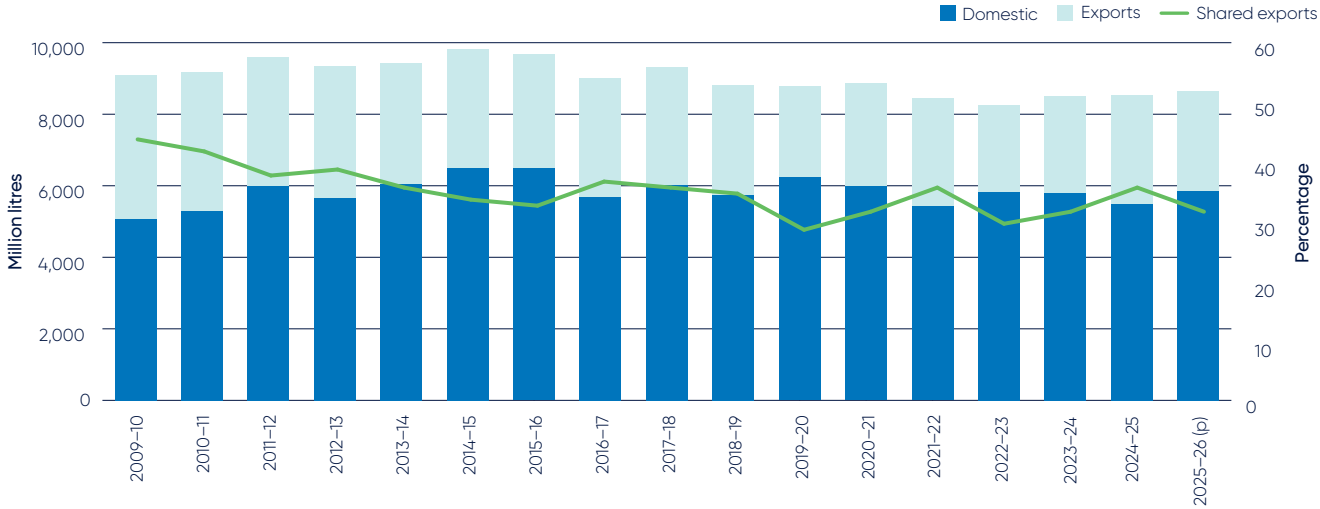
For a number of years, Greater China (including China, Hong Kong and Macau) has been Australia's largest market and in 2025–26 was a destination for about 25% of exports by volume. Other large export destinations include Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. As a mature, high-value market with long established business relationships, Japan is a vital trade partner for Australian exporters. About 85% of Australian exports in 2025–26 was destined for Asia.

In 2025–26, Australia's total exports were valued at A$3.8 billion. Measured by dollar value, the top five export markets were Greater China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. This order differs slightly from export rankings by volume, highlighting the differences in value for various dairy products imported.

The concentration of Australian exports to Asia reflects the geographical proximity to these markets, and the extent to which Australia has been hindered from accessing other major markets by direct restrictions (as in the case of the European Union). Increased competition in key importing markets has also played a role in creating this concentration. Asian markets hold considerable potential for consumption growth as incomes rise and diets become more 'westernised'. Australian dairy companies also have proven track records in supplying these markets over several decades.

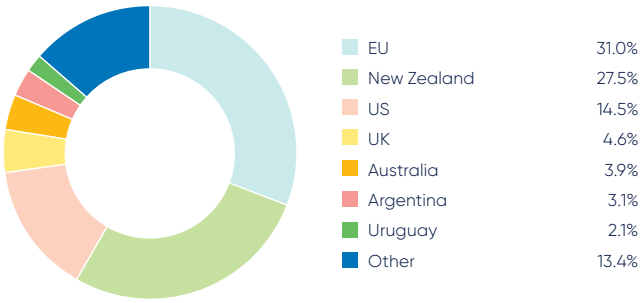
*See Appendix 8 for detailed tables of Australia's export markets.*

**Figure 8** Australian production and exports (milk equivalents)



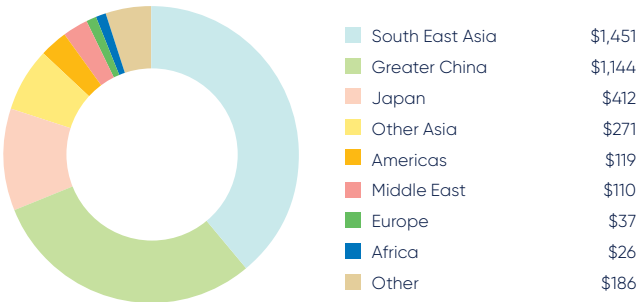

*Source: Dairy manufacturers and ABS*

**Figure 9** Exporters' share of world dairy trade in 2025 (milk equivalents)




*Source: Dairy Australia*

**Figure 10** Australian exports by region in 2025–26 (A$ million)




*Source: ABS*

**Table 8** Australian dairy exports by product by region 2025–26 ($A million)

| | SE Asia | Other Asia | Europe | Middle East | Africa | Americas | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Butter/AMF | 73 | 32 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 120 |
| Cheese | 367 | 724 | 8 | 41 | 22 | 46 | 49 | 1,257 |
| Milk | 135 | 113 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 273 |
| SMP | 539 | 143 | 0 | 43 | 1 | 0 | 14 | 740 |
| WMP* | 148 | 469 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 36 | 5 | 666 |
| Other | 189 | 346 | 29 | 19 | 0 | 30 | 87 | 700 |
| **Total** | **1,451** | **1,827** | **37** | **110** | **26** | **119** | **186** | **3,756** |

*Also includes infant powder.
Other includes buttermilk powder, casein, condensed milk, ice cream, lactose, whey powder, yoghurt and mixtures.
*Source: ABS*

**Table 9** Top 10 Australian export destinations in 2025–26

| Country | Volume (tonnes) | % of total | Country | Value (A$ million) | % of total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Greater China* | 166,299 | 25 | Greater China* | 1,144 | 30 |
| Indonesia | 76,853 | 12 | Japan | 412 | 11 |
| Malaysia | 60,038 | 9 | Indonesia | 395 | 11 |
| Singapore | 59,569 | 9 | Malaysia | 304 | 8 |
| Japan | 57,072 | 9 | Singapore | 212 | 6 |
| Thailand | 36,479 | 6 | Thailand | 196 | 5 |
| Philippines | 35,338 | 5 | Vietnam | 170 | 5 |
| Vietnam | 31,230 | 5 | New Zealand | 133 | 4 |
| New Zealand | 19,465 | 3 | Philippines | 130 | 3 |
| Cambodia | 18,584 | 3 | Korea, South | 113 | 3 |

*Includes China, Hong Kong and Macau
*Source: Dairy Australia and ABS*

# Australian consumption of dairy products

Dairy is considered a 'staple' food in many Australian households. Consumption trends have varied quite significantly over the past two decades, reflecting changes in tastes in response to multicultural influences on food trends; health perceptions around dairy products; and flavour and packaging innovations. In Australia, the main consumer dairy products are drinking milk, cheese, yoghurt, and butter/butter blends.

Currently, per capita consumption of drinking milk is estimated around 84 litres. This has marginally declined over recent years, however, in comparison to other developed countries, Australia's consumption of drinking milk remains high. Fresh milk remains the most popular variety among consumers, despite the popularity growth of UHT milk during the COVID-19 pandemic years.

Annual per capita consumption of cheese in Australia was over 16kg in 2025–26. While cheddar types remain the most popular variety of cheese, non-cheddar cheese varieties available in Australia have increased. These varieties have grown in popularity due to rising demand for mozzarella cheese in the foodservice sector and retail stores. Rising demand for protein across the food sector has also supported the category, boosting consumption of products such as cottage cheese.

Combining convenience and health attributes, yoghurt is a healthy snack for consumers with a growing per capita consumption estimated at 11kg in 2025–26. Consumer preferences have shifted in line with a heightened focus on natural and healthy products, and increased awareness of the health risks of sugar.

Consequently, consumers have shifted from sweetened and flavoured varieties towards Greek and natural-style yoghurts, supported by strong demand for protein.

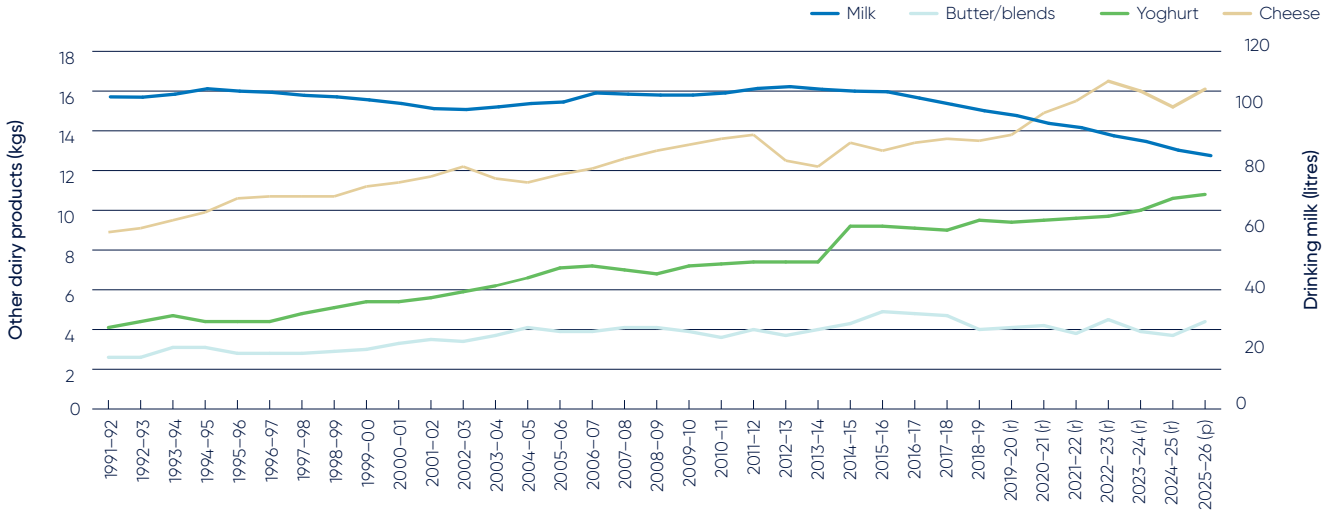
In 2025–26, per capita consumption of butter in Australia was approximately 4.4kg. Australian consumers are attracted to the natural characteristics of butter, along with its superior taste and cooking functionality. Sales of this product are also underpinned by findings in health and nutritional science and by changing consumer perception of health risks associated with saturated fats and butter.

**Table 10** Per capita consumption of major dairy products

| | Milk (l) | Cheese (kg) | Butter/ blends (kg) | Yoghurt (kg) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2021–22 (r) | 93.0 | 15.5 | 3.8 | 9.6 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 90.3 | 16.5 | 4.5 | 9.7 |
| 2023–24 (r) | 88.4 | 16.0 | 3.9 | 10.0 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 85.5 | 15.2 | 3.7 | 10.6 |
| 2025–26 (p) | 83.7 | 16.1 | 4.4 | 10.8 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers and Dairy Australia*

**Figure 11** Per capita consumption




*Source: Dairy manufacturers and Dairy Australia*

# Drinking milk

Drinking milk is a staple item in almost all Australian households. It is widely consumed, convenient and versatile and contains a valuable package of protein, vitamins, and minerals.

Australian consumers overwhelmingly prefer fresh, pasteurised milk (heated to 74 degrees for 15 seconds). This preference for fresh milk generally requires dairy farming close to major population centres and extensive cold-chain logistics to provide reliable, year-round fresh milk. While fresh milk accounts for the vast majority of milk sales in Australia, the share of supermarket sales by volume for UHT milk (heated to 140 degrees for two seconds) has increased over the past two decades. This was further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated panic buying, due to its longer shelf-life.

Regular or full cream milk has a milkfat content of 3.4 to 3.6%, while low-fat and skim milks are modified to contain less than 1.5 and 0.15% milkfat respectively. The cream removed during modification can be bottled as table cream or manufactured into butter and other dairy products. As the composition of milk produced changes through the course of a season, most milk is standardised to ensure a consistent taste and nutritional profile all year-round. Drinking milk generally undergoes further processing in the form of homogenisation, which disperses the fat equally throughout the milk, rather than allowing it to separate at the top.

The share of fresh white full cream milk as a percentage of the total fresh white milk market has increased over time, as sales volumes of low-fat and skim milks have declined. While white milk (unflavoured) still accounts for most of drinking milk sold, sales of flavoured milk have also grown.

Flavoured milk is an important source of revenue for the industry due to its higher unit prices. Sales of this milk variety remain distinctly regional, with strong local brands and varying consumption patterns. South Australia has historically consumed between two and three times the national average of flavoured milk, with much flatter year-round demand. Demand in states such as Victoria tends to be seasonal.

There are several major players in the Australian drinking milk market. The two largest are Bega Cheese and Lactalis Australia. Lactalis-Mainland Dairy and Saputo Dairy Australia both entered the drinking milk market after 2011, securing major supermarket private label contracts in Victoria and New South Wales. Some major retailers also directly source milk for private label supermarket sales. Brownes (Western Australia) and Norco (Queensland and Northern New South Wales) have more localised distribution.

*See Appendix 7 for more details of supermarket milk sales and average prices.*

Historically, Australia only exported relatively small volumes of liquid milk. However, the category now holds the largest exported volume share and is predominantly UHT. In 2025–26, Australian exports of liquid milk rose nine per cent, totalling close to 180 million litres. Around 92% of the total liquid milk exports were destined for Asia, with the remainder going towards the island countries of the Pacific and some markets in the Middle East and Africa.

*See Appendix 8 for more details of drinking milk exports.*



**Table 11** Drinking milk sales by type (million litres)

| | Regular | Reduced | No fat | Flavoured | UHT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1989–90 | 1,257 | 322 | | 111 | 40 | **1,730** |
| 1999–00 | 1,099 | 354 | 144 | 173 | 164 | **1,933** |
| 2009–10 | 1,133 | 590 | 117 | 215 | 211 | **2,267** |
| 2010–11 | 1,140 | 630 | 109 | 227 | 208 | **2,314** |
| 2011–12 | 1,160 | 677 | 104 | 236 | 208 | **2,385** |
| 2012–13 | 1,171 | 689 | 100 | 240 | 243 | **2,443** |
| 2013–14 | 1,192 | 688 | 93 | 241 | 250 | **2,464** |
| 2014–15 | 1,244 | 656 | 88 | 241 | 257 | **2,486** |
| 2015–16 | 1,311 | 615 | 80 | 246 | 266 | **2,518** |
| 2016–17 | 1,362 | 563 | 71 | 246 | 256 | **2,498** |
| 2017–18 | 1,398 | 536 | 64 | 242 | 251 | **2,491** |
| 2018–19 | 1,409 | 518 | 61 | 233 | 248 | **2,469** |
| 2019–20 | 1,424 | 496 | 56 | 228 | 256 | **2,460** |
| 2020–21 | 1,395 | 482 | 51 | 234 | 257 | **2,419** |
| 2021–22 | 1,366 | 468 | 49 | 234 | 273 | **2,390** |
| 2022–23 | 1,376 | 448 | 47 | 236 | 259 | 2,366 |
| 2023–24 | 1,403 | 440 | 43 | 241 | 256 | **2,383** |
| 2024–25 | 1,389 | 432 | 41 | 242 | 237 | **2,341** |
| 2025-26 (p) | 1,382 | 439 | 41 | 249 | 248 | **2,359** |

*Source: Milk processors and state milk authorities*

**Table 12** Drinking milk sales by state (million litres)

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1989–90 | 582 | 449 | 316 | 150 | 164 | 47 | 1,730 |
| 1999–00 | 597 | 531 | 383 | 185 | 190 | 48 | 1,933 |
| 2009–10 | 708 | 545 | 497 | 213 | 247 | 57 | 2,267 |
| 2010–11 | 714 | 566 | 501 | 213 | 262 | 58 | 2,314 |
| 2011–12 | 720 | 582 | 531 | 220 | 274 | 58 | 2,385 |
| 2012–13 | 718 | 600 | 562 | 222 | 280 | 61 | 2,443 |
| 2013–14 | 710 | 612 | 583 | 221 | 279 | 59 | 2,464 |
| 2014–15 | 714 | 624 | 581 | 221 | 285 | 61 | 2,486 |
| 2015–16 | 731 | 636 | 583 | 222 | 285 | 61 | 2,518 |
| 2016–17 | 719 | 632 | 578 | 226 | 283 | 60 | 2,498 |
| 2017–18 | 718 | 626 | 583 | 223 | 281 | 60 | 2,491 |
| 2018–19 | 706 | 636 | 576 | 217 | 276 | 58 | 2,469 |
| 2019–20 | 689 | 649 | 575 | 215 | 277 | 55 | 2,460 |
| 2020–21 | 680 | 621 | 573 | 210 | 280 | 55 | 2,419 |
| 2021–22 | 663 | 611 | 574 | 210 | 279 | 53 | 2,390 |
| 2022–23 | 652 | 608 | 571 | 207 | 275 | 53 | 2,366 |
| 2023–24 | 647 | 624 | 577 | 205 | 279 | 51 | 2,383 |
| 2024–25 | 633 | 609 | 570 | 201 | 278 | 50 | 2,341 |
| 2025-26 (p) | 631 | 623 | 574 | 203 | 279 | 49 | 2,359 |

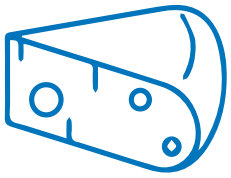
State figures exclude interstate traded milk prior to 2001, NSW includes ACT after June 2000.
*Source: Milk processors and state milk authorities*

# Cheese

In 2025–26, Australia produced almost 500,000 tonnes of cheese. In recent years, dairy companies have adjusted export mixes to take advantage of favourable movement in international commodity prices, which significantly impacts production volumes. This can lead to increased cheese production as international price trends can make it an attractive revenue stream (as has been the case for the past few years).

Cheese is a major product for the Australian dairy industry, utilising more than one-third of Australian milk. Cheddar cheeses have historically held the majority share of total cheese production, however, there has been a long-term production trend away from cheddar varieties towards non-cheddar cheese types. As such, the non-cheddar share of total production volumes has increased from 30% three decades ago, to 51% in 2025–26.

The trend away from cheddar cheeses towards non-cheddar cheese types is also evident in Australia's cheese exports. The non-cheddar share of total export sales has increased steadily from around 60% two decades ago, to around 85% in 2025–26.



Australia exported close to

**167,000 tonnes**

of cheese to 51 different countries in 2025–26, worth close to A$1.3 billion.

Japan continues to be Australia's most important overseas market for cheese, accounting for around 30% of cheese exported in 2025–26. This product is mostly fresh cheese varieties, used for processing. Other important overseas markets include Greater China, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea, and Indonesia.

Australia is also a major importer of cheese, purchasing 30% more overseas cheese over the past 10 years. Imports from New Zealand and the United States totalled around 38,000 tonnes and 46,000 tonnes respectively, with the European Union accounting for the balance.

**Table 13** Australian cheese production by type of cheese (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 (r) | 2021–22 (r) | 2022–23 (r) | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cheddar | 210,599 | 228,221 | 218,047 | 235,592 | 236,116 | 242,961 |
| Semi hard | 86,259 | 82,841 | 96,225 | 98,563 | 94,408 | 92,144 |
| Hard grating | 16,336 | 19,950 | 20,556 | 17,607 | 14,933 | 21,649 |
| Fresh | 119,121 | 119,046 | 110,779 | 118,300 | 123,205 | 131,859 |
| Mould | 7,441 | 11,557 | 10,681 | 10,295 | 10,079 | 9,911 |
| **Total cheese** | 439,756 | 461,615 | 456,288 | 480,358 | 478,741 | 498,524 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers*



# Butter

In 2025–26, Australia produced over 85,000 tonnes of butter and anhydrous milkfat (AMF) in commercial butter equivalent terms (CBE). AMF (commonly known as butter oil) is butter with the water removed, similar to ghee. When manufacturing butter, skim milk powder is created as a coproduct, using the solids non-fat components of the milk. It is primarily produced for export and domestic food manufacturing applications, such as bakery and confectionery. While these sectors all utilise butter, most domestic butter sales are through retail and foodservice outlets.

In 2025–26, around 68% of domestic dairy spread sales were through supermarkets. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, sales through grocery outlets have held a significantly larger share compared to foodservice. Volumes sold through supermarkets have increased, as inflation eased and retail prices steadied.

In 2025–26, butter imports accounted for 38% of the Australian butter market by volume. Of the 51,000 tonnes of butter and AMF imported into Australia, 67% was from New Zealand, 22% was from the United States, while the remaining product was sourced from various European countries and Asia. Australian exports of butter and AMF can vary significantly from year to year, depending on milk availability during the season and how local dairy companies respond to international prices for competing products.




In 2025–26, export volumes of butter and AMF decreased 43% to around **12,000 tonnes.**

Out of 33 countries, Australia's most important overseas markets for butter and AMF were Malaysia, Thailand, Greater China, Taiwan, and Singapore.

*See Appendix 8 for more details of butter and AMF exports.*

**Table 14** Butter and AMF production (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 (r) | 2021–22 (r) | 2022–23 (r) | 2023–24 (r) | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Butter/butter blends/AMF (CBE) | 95,739 | 84,082 | 74,814 | 79,524 | 83,772 | 85,298 |

*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

**Table 15** Australian exports of butter and AMF (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Butter/butter blends (CBE) | 17,479 | 15,824 | 5,896 | 11,400 | 15,568 | 7,936 |
| AMF (CBE) | 7,201 | 6,723 | 4,832 | 3,878 | 5,563 | 4,150 |

*Source: ABS*



# Other fresh and frozen dairy products

Australian manufacturers produce a range of fresh dairy products, including yoghurts, dairy desserts, chilled custards and creams, and frozen products such as ice-cream.

Over the past two decades, yoghurt production has grown considerably. The product category's ability to meet rising consumer preferences for convenient, yet healthy snacks has been advantageous in an environment of time-poor lifestyles. Growth in yoghurt sales has also been underpinned by regular product innovation, particularly in areas such as packaging, flavour combinations and the use of probiotic cultures. New products, such as drinking yoghurts and single snack servings in convenience outlets, have also helped drive growth.

Yoghurt sales strengthened from the initial COVID-19 outbreak and have continued to grow as consumers look for healthy products and purchased more for cooking and baking at home. Featuring international brands, such as Ski, Yoplait and Chobani, there is an ongoing trend away from sweetened and flavoured varieties in the yoghurt market.

Health-conscious consumers perceive traditional, unflavoured products such as Greek-style yoghurt as healthier and more natural. This shift in consumer preferences has lifted sales of traditional, unflavoured yoghurts above those of sweetened and flavoured varieties. Strong protein demand has provided further support for Greek and natural-style yoghurts.

Dairy desserts are a low volume and high value dairy category, including products such as mousses, crème caramels and fromage frais. Marketed as an indulgence or treat item, these products are generally targeted to adult consumers however, fromage frais and flavoured custards are examples of children's products which often feature popular cartoon characters on-pack.

As a traditional favourite, chilled custard sales have marginally increased in recent years, as manufacturers expand their product offerings. This includes branching out into new flavours and small, snack-sized, single serve plastic cups sold in multi-packs.

Cream remains an important fresh dairy product widely used in cooking, with annual sales increasing in 2025–26. Regular and sour creams are used extensively as accompaniments or ingredients and similar to butter, consumers remain interested in cream's superior taste and cooking functionality, relative to plant-based substitutes.

*See Appendix 6 for more details on cream, custard and dairy dessert sales.*



# Milk powders

Australian manufacturers produce a wide range of milk powders. The technology used in the production and utilisation of powders, has allowed the range of specifications available from Australian manufacturers to expand in line with customer needs.

Only a small portion of Australia's powder production is sold domestically, with local product primarily used as an ingredient in food manufacturing. Infant formula is a high-value product that has shown considerable growth in recent years, generated through Australian supermarket sales (partly due to the demand from informal re-export trades, such as the Diagou trade), and through direct exports.

Following several challenging years for the dairy industry, manufacturers have had access to a smaller national milk pool and a wider variety of markets. As a result, companies have had to be more flexible with their product mixes, taking advantage of relative movements in international commodity prices. Differing market access arrangements also impact the competitiveness of product pricing. For example, local producers will be at a competitive disadvantage where Australia may not have negotiated a free trade agreement, but a competitive supplier country has done so. This impacts local production mixes because the bulk of Australia's milk powders are exported overseas.

Up to the year 2000, as milk production grew steadily, whole milk powder (WMP) production expanded to represent a larger share of total milk powder production. However, this trend reversed in 2001–02, with skim milk powder (SMP) becoming more prominent.



In 2025–26, skim milk powder accounted for

**86%**

of milk powders produced.

In 2025–26, Australia also imported over 62,000 tonnes of milk powders, increasing 2% from 2024-25, most of which is sourced from New Zealand.

Exported milk powder is often recombined into liquid milkliquid milk products, particularly in tropical climates where fresh milk supplies are not readily available. This is mainly due to insufficient local production or limited development of cold chain distribution facilities. These products are also used in bakery items (improving the volume and binding capacity of bread and ensuring crisper pastry and biscuits), confectionery and milk chocolates, processed meats, ready-to-cook meals, baby foods, ice-cream, yoghurt, health foods and reduced-fat milks. Industrial grade powder is often used for animal stockfeed.

The major export markets for Australian milk powders are mostly concentrated to Asia. Out of 27 export destinations, the largest export markets for Australian-produced skim milk powder in 2025–26 were Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Greater China, and Thailand. Australian produced whole milk powder was exported to 33 destinations in 2025–26, with Greater China, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates representing the largest markets.

*See Appendix 8 for more details on milk powder exports.*



**Table 16** Australian production of milk powders (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 (r) | 2021–22 (r) | 2022–23 (r) | 2023–24 (r) | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Skim milk powder | 201,309 | 188,659 | 168,815 | 204,375 | 206,348 | 212,126 |
| Whole milk powder* | 66,211 | 51,013 | 40,378 | 29,711 | 38,993 | 35,626 |

*Includes infant powder
*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

**Table 17** Australian exports of skim milk powder by region (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asia | 112,334 | 132,752 | 105,881 | 124,135 | 136,551 | 138,024 |
| Middle East | 9,944 | 14,147 | 9,731 | 17,735 | 15,685 | 10,077 |
| Africa | 150 | 175 | 160 | 900 | 515 | 188 |
| Pacific | 478 | 1,850 | 1,299 | 29 | 5,219 | 3,223 |
| Americas | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Europe | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **122,911** | **148,931** | **117,071** | **142,799** | **157,970** | **151,512** |

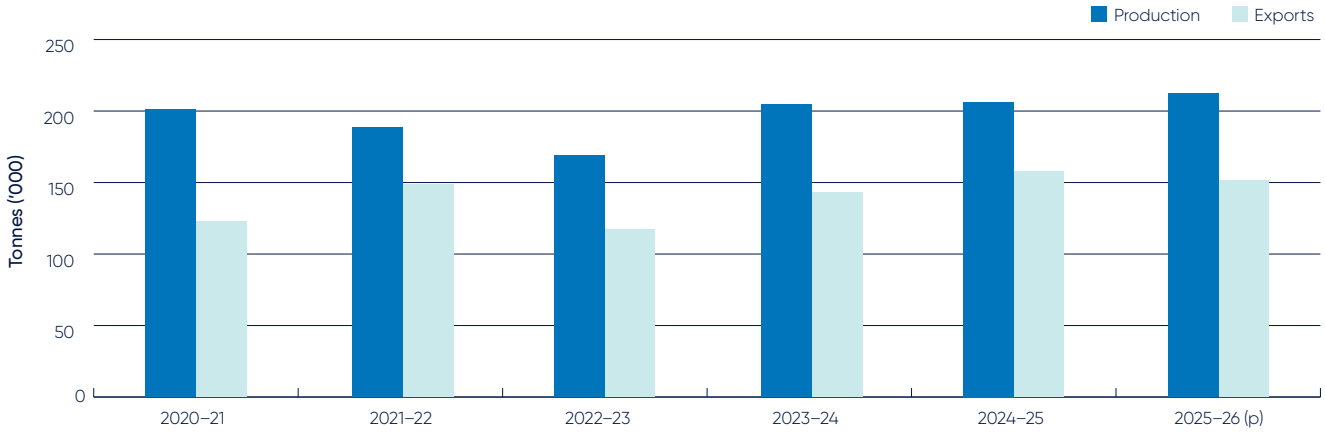
*Source: ABS*

**Table 18** Australian exports of whole milk powder by region* (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asia | 52,029 | 54,517 | 38,022 | 41,626 | 50,278 | 49,597 |
| Middle East | 636 | 5,973 | 17,705 | 3,851 | 9,241 | 1,708 |
| Africa | 172 | 668 | 186 | 404 | 304 | 91 |
| Pacific | 1,125 | 1,094 | 1,019 | 746 | 988 | 398 |
| Americas | 217 | 618 | 1,134 | 1,713 | 1,396 | 1,664 |
| Europe | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| **Total** | **54,179** | **62,871** | **58,066** | **48,365** | **62,207** | **53,458** |

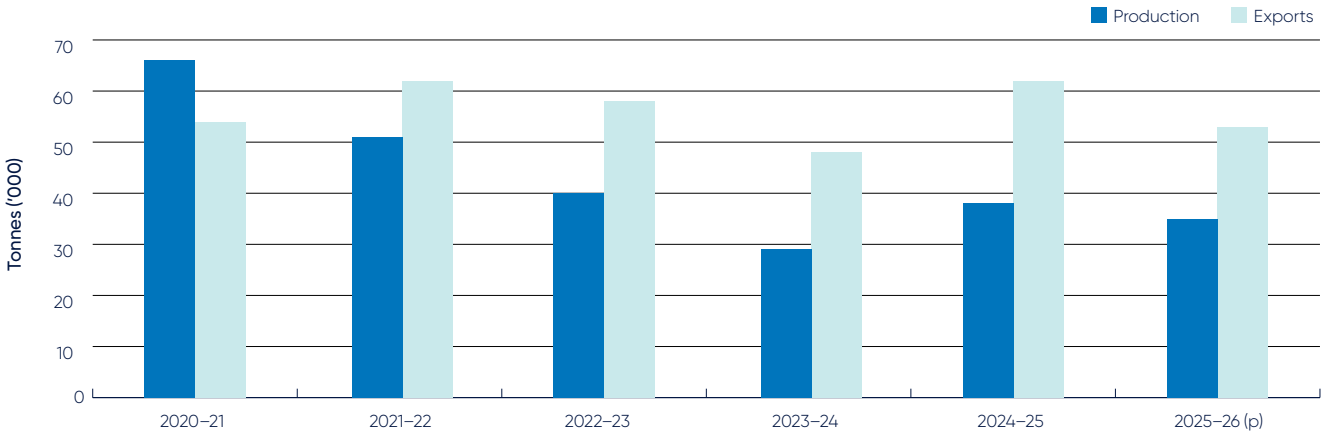
*Includes infant powder
*Source: ABS*

**Figure 12** Australian production and exports of skim milk powder




*Source: Dairy manufacturers and ABS*

**Figure 13** Australian production and exports of whole milk powder




*Source: Dairy manufacturers and ABS*

# Whey products and casein

As a byproduct of the cheese-making process, whey has traditionally been disposed of in its liquid form. However, over the past few decades, the value of whey's components and properties have been recognised, increasing the utilisation of whey powder and protein concentrates.

Food-grade whey powder is used in the manufacture of ice-cream, bakery products (cakes, biscuits), chocolate flavouring, infant formula, yoghurt, beverages and processed meat. Industrial uses include animal feed (for pigs, horses and poultry), calf milk replacer and even as a carrier for herbicides.

Whey protein concentrates are used in snack foods, juices, confectionery, ice-cream, biscuits, processed meats, protein drinks, desserts, infant foods and dietetic products. Products such as cosmetics, skin creams, bath salts and detergents also contain protein concentrates.

In Australia, whey is used domestically in manufacturing infant formula, biscuits and ice-cream, while the remainder is exported. In 2025–26, Indonesia, Greater China, Indonesia, Thailand, and India were the largest export markets for Australian whey powders.

Australia is no longer a significant producer of casein and imports the vast majority of its requirements. These mostly originate from New Zealand (over 90% of the total volume), with the balance being met by Europe and the United States in 2025–26.

Casein and caseinates are used as binding ingredients, emulsifiers and milk substitutes in processed foods such as noodles, chocolate, sweets, mayonnaise, ice-cream and cheese. Industrial uses of casein and caseinates include plastics (buttons, knitting needles); the manufacture of synthetic fibres and chemicals (plants, glues, glazed paper, putty and cosmetics); a nutritional supplement and binder in calf milk replacers; as well as a range of other technical applications.




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# Industry levies

## Dairy Service

Dairy farmers contribute to Dairy Australia through the Dairy Service Levy, which is calculated on the fat and protein content of milk produced. Dairy Australia is the industry-owned research, development and services organisation that invests in activities that support farm business performance, industry capability, market development and the promotion of Australian dairy. Dairy Australia also receives matching Commonwealth Government funding for eligible research and development activities.

## Animal Health Australia

Dairy farmers contribute to Animal Health Australia (AHA) through the Animal Health Levy. AHA brings together livestock industries and governments to support national animal health systems and coordinate responses to animal health and biosecurity challenges.

**Table 19** Average rate of milk levies for 2025–26

| | Milkfat (¢/kg) | Protein (¢/kg) | Milk* (¢/litre) | Milk solids (¢/kg) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Animal Health | 0.0580 | 0.1385 | 0.007 | 0.09 |
| Dairy Service | 2.8683 | 6.9914 | 0.366 | 4.72 |

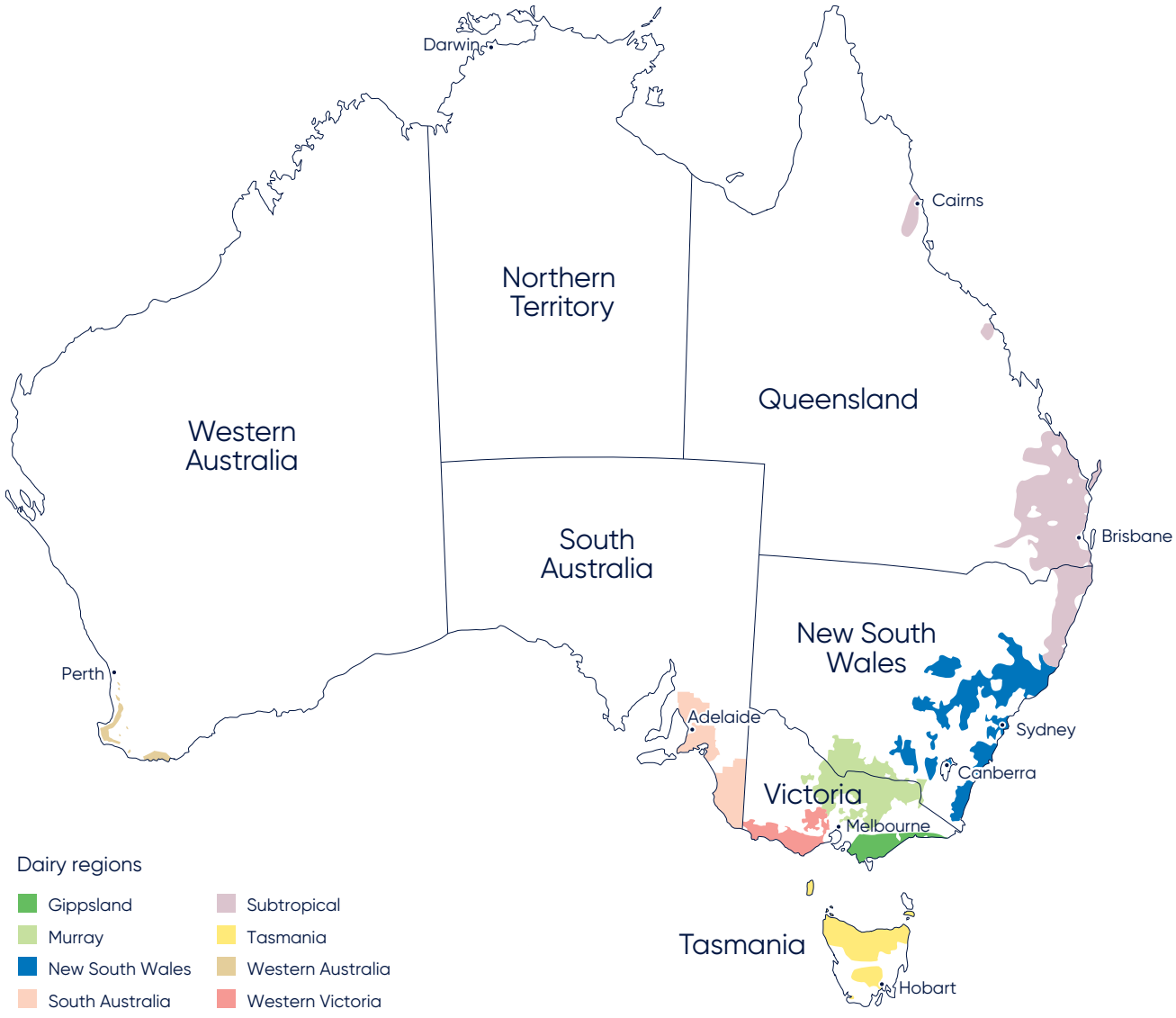
*Based on average 2025-26 Australian milk composition of 4.27% milkfat and 3.49% protein





# Appendices

## Appendix 1 Dairy regions



## Appendix 2 Australian industry footprint

**Table A1** Australian state/region breakdown 2025–26

| | Qld | NSW | Vic | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dairy farms[1] | 242 | 425 | 2,349 | 162 | 96 | 323 | 3,597 |
| Cows in milk and dry ('000)[2] | 57 | 160 | 828 | 61 | 49 | 170 | 1,325 |
| People employed on farm (full time and part-time)[3] | 800 | 1,600 | 7,200 | 1,100 | 400 | 1,400 | 12,500 |
| People employed in processing (full time and part-time)[3] | 1,700 | 3,700 | 9,300 | 600 | 600 | 1,100 | 17,000 |
| People directly working in dairy (full time and part-time)[3] | 2,500 | 5,300 | 16,500 | 1,700 | 1,000 | 2,500 | 29,500 |
| Volume of milk produced (ML)[4] | 288 | 1,090 | 5,555 | 444 | 337 | 941 | 8,654 |
| Share of national milk production (%) | 3.3 | 12.6 | 64.2 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 10.9 | |
| Value of milk leaving farms ($m)[5] | 262 | 920 | 4,102 | 327 | 245 | 731 | 6,588 |
| Value of dairy products exported ($m)[6] | 24 | 435 | 2,606 | 278 | 40 | 372 | 3,756 |
| Share of national dairy exports – value (%) | 1 | 12 | 69 | 7 | 1 | 10 | |
| Volume of dairy products exported ('000) | 3 | 38 | 474 | 51 | 21 | 68 | 655 |
| Share of national dairy exports – volume (%) | 0 | 6 | 72 | 8 | 3 | 10 | |

*Source: [1] Dairy farm no.s by State from InFocus - & estimated by state dairy authorities. [2] Cow no.s by State from InFocus - & estimated by RDP from ABS Farm Census data. [3] Number derived from a three-yearly median state level figures from ABS Labor Force Statistics, May 2020 Quarter publication: split on the basis of milk production within states. [4] Milk production from Dairy Australia milk production database. [5] Value of milk leaving farms is region milk flow multiplied by State average milk prices from Dairy Australia's farmgat survey. [6] ABS Export data: split on the basis of milk production.*

| | Subtropical | New South Wales | Gippsland | Murray | Western Victoria | South Australia | Western Australia | Tasmania | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dairy farms[1] | 327 | 287 | 887 | 718 | 797 | 162 | 96 | 323 | 3,597 |
| Cows in milk and dry ('000)[2] | 76 | 114 | 299 | 276 | 280 | 61 | 49 | 170 | 1,325 |
| People employed on farm (full time and part-time)[3] | 900 | 1,350 | 2,650 | 2,250 | 2,450 | 1,100 | 400 | 1,400 | 12,500 |
| People employed in processing (full time and part-time)[3] | 2,100 | 2,900 | 3,450 | 3,100 | 3,150 | 600 | 600 | 1,100 | 17,000 |
| People directly working in dairy (full time and part-time)[3] | 3,000 | 4,250 | 6,100 | 5,350 | 5,600 | 1,700 | 1,000 | 2,500 | 29,500 |
| Volume of milk produced (ML)[4] | 399 | 778 | 1,986 | 1,869 | 1,902 | 444 | 337 | 941 | 8,654 |
| Share of national milk production (%) | 4.6 | 9.0 | 22.9 | 21.6 | 22.0 | 5.1 | 3.9 | 10.9 | |
| Value of milk leaving farms ($m)[5] | 363 | 656 | 1,471 | 1,385 | 1409 | 327 | 245 | 731 | 6,588 |
| Value of dairy products exported ($m)[6] | 54 | 345 | 932 | 843 | 892 | 278 | 40 | 372 | 3,756 |
| Share of national dairy exports – value (%) | 1 | 9 | 25 | 22 | 24 | 7 | 1 | 10 | |
| Volume of dairy products exported ('000) | 7 | 25 | 170 | 151 | 162 | 51 | 21 | 68 | 655 |
| Share of national dairy exports – volume (%) | 1 | 4 | 26 | 23 | 25 | 8 | 3 | 10 | |

*Source: [1] Dairy farm no.s by State from InFocus - & estimated by RDP from LMR data - methodology change for Subtropical, dairy NSW and Murray due to improved data availability; [2] Cow no.s by State from InFocus - & estimated by RDP from ABS Farm Census data; [3] Number derived from a three-yearly median state level figures from ABS Labor Force Statistics, May 2020 Quarter publication: split on the basis of milk production within states; [4] Milk production from Dairy Australia milk production database; [5] Value of milk leaving farms is region milk flow multiplied by State average milk prices. Average ratio of farm cash costs vs. cash income [Aust] for 2010/119 (76%), 2011/12 (77%) & 2012/13 (85%) of 80%. Expectation is that 80% of farm cash income is absorbed by cash expenses, thus flowing back into community. ABARES Farm Performance Survey data. [6] ABS Export data: split on the basis of milk production.*



## Appendix 3 Feed prices

**Table A2** Indicative Australian grain prices ($ per tonne)

| | | Wheat | Barley | Maize | Sorghum | Canola meal | Oats | Lupins |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Atherton Tablelands | 2023–24 | 415 | 410 | 443 | 406 | | | |
| | 2024–25 | 374 | 357 | 417 | 363 | | | |
| | 2025–26 | 389 | 381 | 467 | 383 | | | |
| Darling Downs | 2023–24 | 422 | 419 | 434 | 399 | | | |
| | 2024–25 | 344 | 328 | 395 | 336 | | | |
| | 2025–26 | 353 | 345 | 447 | 342 | | | |
| North Coast NSW | 2023–24 | 375 | 377 | 431 | 365 | | | |
| | 2024–25 | 332 | 300 | 415 | 327 | | | |
| | 2025–26 | 345 | 333 | 457 | 345 | | | |
| Central West NSW | 2023–24 | 366 | 348 | 399 | 365 | | | |
| | 2024–25 | 317 | 294 | 385 | 337 | | | |
| | 2025–26 | 330 | 314 | 437 | 346 | | | |
| Bega Valley | 2023–24 | 386 | 349 | 427 | | 552 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 348 | 298 | 357 | | 496 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 355 | 303 | 457 | | 482 | | |
| Goulburn/Murray Valley | 2023–24 | 359 | 333 | 427 | | 539 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 344 | 323 | 357 | | 501 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 338 | 320 | 457 | | 482 | | |
| Gippsland | 2023–24 | 383 | 355 | 433 | | 551 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 363 | 345 | 357 | | 516 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 360 | 336 | 457 | | 497 | | |
| South West Victoria | 2023–24 | 351 | 321 | 433 | | 536 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 322 | 314 | 357 | | 501 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 313 | 301 | 457 | | 482 | | |
| South East SA | 2023–24 | 376 | 326 | 425 | | 581 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 364 | 330 | 352 | | 546 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 341 | 315 | 447 | | 527 | | |
| Central Districts SA | 2023–24 | 360 | 327 | 427 | | 414 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 320 | 316 | 352 | | 407 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 286 | 305 | 447 | | 366 | | |
| South West WA | 2023–24 | 383 | 347 | | | | 437 | 444 |
| | 2024–25 | 354 | 337 | | | | 404 | 504 |
| | 2025–26 | 329 | 331 | | | | 294 | 370 |
| North West Tasmania | 2023–24 | 473 | 445 | 443 | | 641 | | |
| | 2024–25 | 452 | 434 | 371 | | 606 | | |
| | 2025–26 | 449 | 429 | 471 | | 587 | | |

Data represents a simple yearly average of weekly data in each region.
*Source: Bendigo Bank Agribusiness*

**Table A3** Indicative Australian hay prices ($ per tonne)

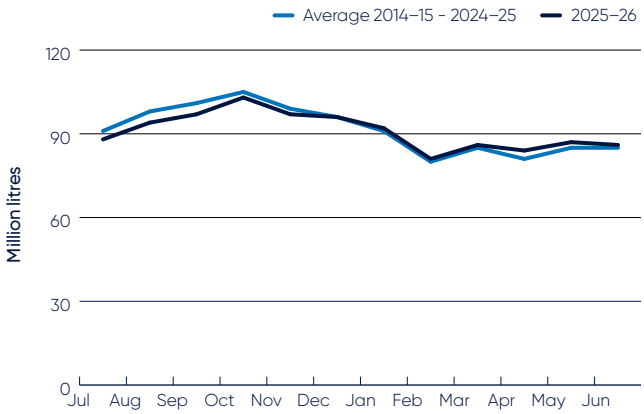
| | | Pasture hay | Cereal hay | Lucerne hay | Straw |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Atherton Tablelands | 2023–24 | 395 | | | |
| | 2024–25 | 355 | | | |
| | 2025–26 | 341 | | | |
| Darling Downs | 2023–24 | 294 | 289 | 407 | 106 |
| | 2024–25 | 276 | 371 | 442 | 182 |
| | 2025–26 | 278 | 393 | 585 | 212 |
| North Coast NSW | 2023–24 | 291 | 313 | 402 | 104 |
| | 2024–25 | 283 | 336 | 407 | 159 |
| | 2025–26 | 270 | 327 | 450 | 181 |
| Central West NSW | 2023–24 | 290 | 300 | 397 | 109 |
| | 2024–25 | 288 | 330 | 422 | 150 |
| | 2025–26 | 329 | 391 | 523 | 162 |
| Bega Valley | 2023–24 | 319 | 315 | 424 | 129 |
| | 2024–25 | 384 | 410 | 506 | 239 |
| | 2025–26 | 432 | 477 | 601 | 264 |
| Goulburn/Murray Valley | 2023–24 | 290 | 305 | 392 | 107 |
| | 2024–25 | 304 | 340 | 433 | 149 |
| | 2025–26 | 343 | 386 | 526 | 127 |
| Gippsland | 2023–24 | 256 | 297 | 398 | 120 |
| | 2024–25 | 300 | 380 | 485 | 193 |
| | 2025–26 | 361 | 431 | 581 | 171 |
| South West Victoria | 2023–24 | 243 | 304 | 378 | 104 |
| | 2024–25 | 302 | 368 | 426 | 157 |
| | 2025–26 | 333 | 409 | 536 | 151 |
| South East SA | 2023–24 | 267 | 303 | 360 | 107 |
| | 2024–25 | 323 | 398 | 445 | 170 |
| | 2025–26 | 370 | 398 | 540 | 180 |
| Central Districts SA | 2023–24 | | 303 | 378 | 107 |
| | 2024–25 | | 362 | 426 | 169 |
| | 2025–26 | | 329 | 464 | 188 |
| South West WA | 2023–24 | 241 | 323 | 392 | 116 |
| | 2024–25 | 297 | 313 | 432 | 126 |
| | 2025–26 | 267 | 253 | 593 | 144 |
| North West Tasmania | 2023–24 | 264 | 274 | 344 | 111 |
| | 2024–25 | 313 | 328 | 401 | 137 |
| | 2025–26 | 273 | 277 | 382 | 147 |

Data represents a simple yearly average of weekly data in each region.
*Source: Australian Fodder Industry Association (AFIA)*

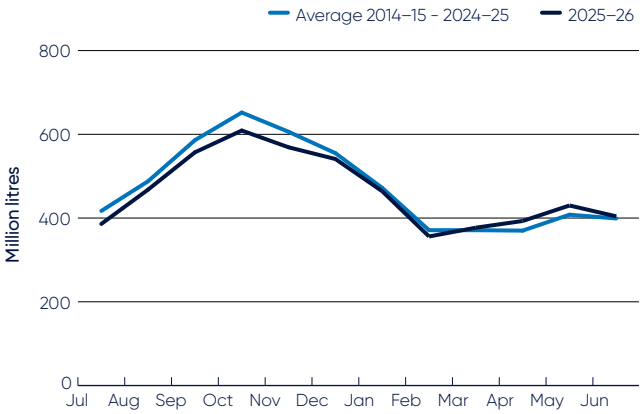
## Appendix 4 Milk production

**Figure A1** Seasonality of milk production in 2025–26

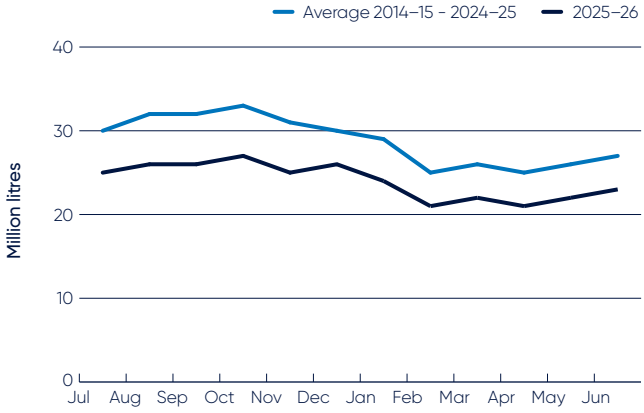
New South Wales



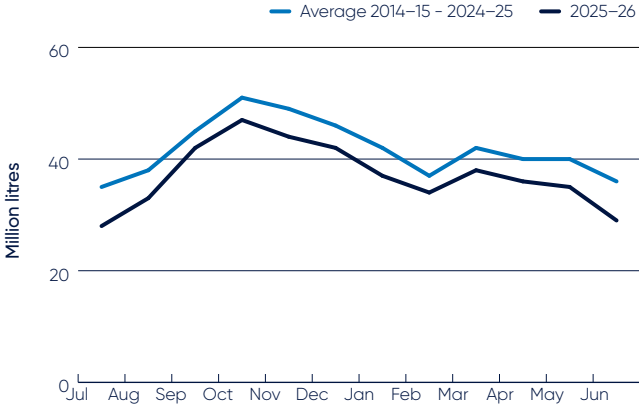

Victoria



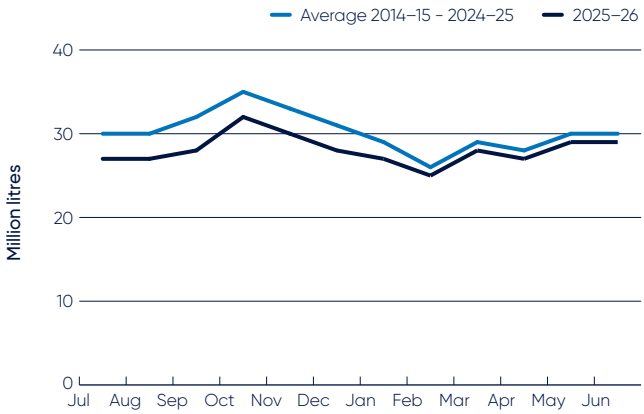

Queensland



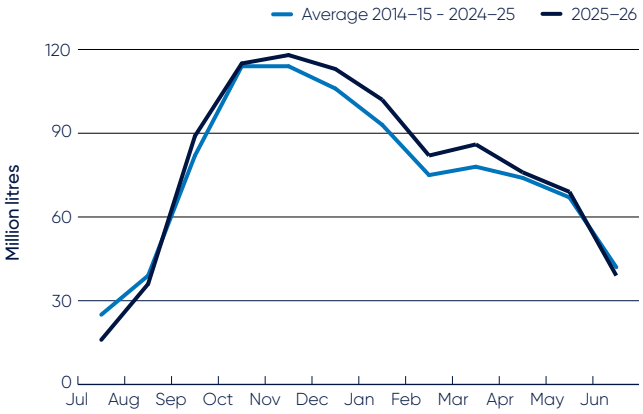

South Australia




Western Australia

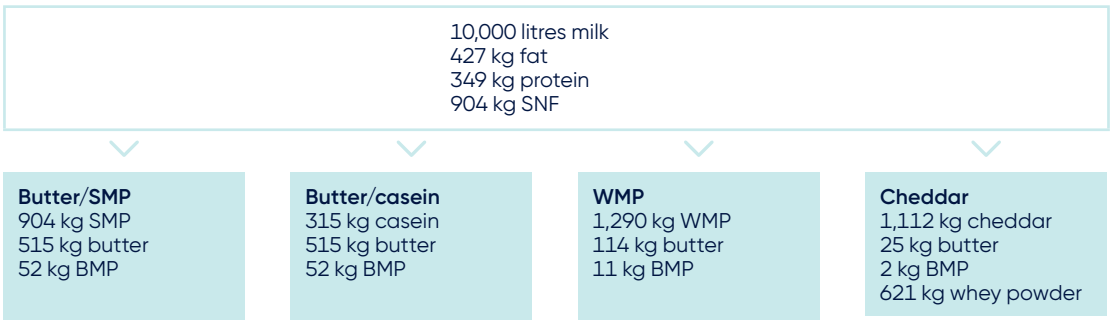



Tasmania



## Appendix 5 Manufacturing processes

**Figure A2** Product yield from 10,000 litres of milk 2025–26




The milkfat and solids in manufacturing milk can be used to produce a wide variety of dairy products. There are four major production processes: two joint product processes for butter/skim milk powder (SMP) production and butter/casein production, and single product processes for whole milk powder (WMP) and cheese production. For each of these separate product lines, numerous other dairy products can be made from the residual milk components.

The first step in making butter is to separate whole milk into cream and skim milk. The liquid skim milk is evaporated, and spray dried to produce SMP. The cream is churned until the fat globules form into solid butter, leaving a liquid by-product, buttermilk. This liquid can be dried to make buttermilk powder (BMP).

While there are various ways of making casein, one of the most common methods stems from the joint product process for creating butter. After separating whole milk into cream and skim milk, the skim milk can be set by mixing with acid to produce curd. The curd is shaken to remove large clumps, leaving a liquid whey by-product which is removed. The curd is then repeatedly rinsed in water and drained, with any excess moisture extracted by pressing the curd. This is then milled, dried, ground down and passed through a sieve to be broken into particle size.

To produce WMP, milk, with some cream removed, is evaporated, concentrated and dried, either by roller or spray process to form a powder. The spray drying method is more commonly used and involves spraying a fine mist of concentrated milk into a current of hot air to form granules of powder. The granules can be treated with steam to 'instantise' the powder and make it easier to reconstitute into milk.

The techniques to produce cheese can vary substantially, differing by the producer and variety of cheese created. To make cheddar cheese, some cream is removed from the pasteurised milk. Starter culture is added to the milk to produce both acid and flavour. Then rennet is added to form curd and whey. The curd is cut, heated, and stirred to allow the whey to drain. A process called cheddaring then takes place, and involves the curd being allowed to mat together, before it is milled, salted, pressed and packed.

The cheese is stored to develop the desired maturity and flavour - the longer it is stored, the stronger the flavour. Mild cheddar is matured for approximately three months, semi-matured cheddar for three to six months, and mature or tasty cheddar for up to a year.

The liquid whey extracted during cheese manufacturing contains protein, lactose, and a small portion of fat. It can be dried to make products for pharmaceutical purposes, as a useful supplement in stock feed, and in the creation of ice-cream.

The cream from the standardisation of milk for WMP, casein and cheddar production can be used to make butter and BMP.

**Table A4** Product composition

| | % fat | % SNF |
|---|---|---|
| Skim milk powder | 1.0 | 94.5 |
| Butter | 80.5 | 2.0 |
| Ghee | 99.6 | 0.1 |
| Casein | 1.5 | 88.5 |
| Whole milk powder | 26.0 | 70.4 |
| Cheddar cheese | 33.0 | 31.0 |
| Gouda | 31.5 | 23.5 |
| Edam | 21.2 | 31.8 |
| Parmesan | 21.8 | 46.2 |
| Cottage cheese | 4.0 | 16.0 |
| Brie | 25.0 | 25.0 |
| Mozzarella | 23.1 | 30.9 |

**Table A5** Australian production of dairy products (tonnes)

| | Butter* | AMF (CBE) | SMP | WMP** | Whey products | Cheese |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1989–90 | 78,053 | 26,105 | 130,976 | 56,476 | 19,895 | 175,087 |
| 1999–00 | 110,325 | 71,295 | 236,322 | 186,653 | 66,258 | 379,717 |
| 2005–06 | 92,850 | 52,904 | 205,495 | 158,250 | 98,436 | 379,698 |
| 2006–07 | 101,667 | 31,434 | 191,475 | 135,364 | 86,198 | 364,496 |
| 2007–08 | 99,202 | 28,416 | 164,315 | 141,974 | 82,652 | 362,233 |
| 2008–09 | 109,753 | 38,742 | 212,030 | 147,544 | 81,136 | 343,902 |
| 2009–10 | 100,134 | 28,245 | 190,233 | 126,024 | 79,094 | 350,943 |
| 2010–11 | 96,360 | 26,160 | 222,484 | 151,269 | 61,488 | 341,464 |
| 2011–12 | 100,681 | 19,164 | 230,286 | 140,424 | 64,645 | 353,137 |
| 2012–13 | 99,137 | 19,193 | 224,061 | 108,838 | 63,440 | 345,281 |
| 2013–14 | 101,789 | 14,417 | 210,964 | 126,322 | 55,506 | 320,369 |
| 2014–15 | 101,767 | 16,943 | 242,266 | 96,840 | 51,806 | 353,119 |
| 2015–16 | 99,120 | 19,610 | 255,792 | 66,125 | 44,669 | 353,477 |
| 2016–17 | 85,540 | 14,539 | 222,109 | 63,342 | 50,209 | 355,252 |
| 2017–18 | 79,795 | 13,570 | 201,426 | 83,999 | 49,469 | 385,475 |
| 2018–19 | 61,211 | 12,270 | 192,373 | 48,534 | 48,663 | 381,953 |
| 2019–20 | 63,742 | 9,507 | 158,381 | 44,616 | 53,646 | 386,512 |
| 2020–21 (r) | 84,645 | 11,094 | 201,309 | 66,211 | 46,447 | 439,756 |
| 2021–22 (r) | 71,371 | 12,711 | 188,659 | 51,013 | 47,033 | 461,615 |
| 2022–23 (r) | 65,896 | 8,918 | 168,815 | 40,378 | 49,100 | 456,288 |
| 2023–24 (r) | 70,364 | 9,160 | 204,375 | 29,711 | 44,056 | 480,358 |
| 2024–25 (r) | 74,597 | 9,175 | 206,348 | 38,993 | 36,746 | 478,741 |
| 2025–26 (p) | 76,726 | 8,572 | 212,126 | 35,626 | 33,547 | 498,524 |

*includes butter blends as CBE ** includes infant powders r
*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

## Appendix 6 Domestic sales

**Table A6** Dairy company domestic sales (tonnes)

| Major dairy products (excl drinking milk) | Sales channel | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Butter | Grocery | 42,022 | 42,857 | 46,190 |
| | Non-grocery | 21,575 | 26,068 | 22,046 |
| **Butter total** | | **63,596** | **68,925** | **68,237** |
| Cheese | Grocery | 150,784 | 151,755 | 151,287 |
| | Non-grocery | 95,079 | 101,793 | 104,175 |
| **Cheese total** | | **245,864** | **253,547** | **255,462** |
| Cream | Grocery | 78,113 | 76,911 | 76,533 |
| | Non-grocery | 48,589 | 52,017 | 56,135 |
| | Not Specified | 64,716 | 63,970 | 113,536 |
| **Cream total** | | **191,417** | **192,898** | **246,204** |
| Yoghurt | Grocery | 148,458 | 156,954 | 169,387 |
| | Non-grocery | 10,399 | 11,116 | 12,017 |
| | Not Specified | 2,112 | 2,217 | 2,383 |
| **Yoghurt total** | | **160,968** | **170,287** | **183,787** |

This data is dairy company wholesale sales to distributors/warehouses/retailers. Grocery refers to major supermarket chains. Non-Grocery refers to other retailers including convenience stores, the foodservice and industrial channels.

*Source: Dairy manufacturers*

# Appendix 7 Supermarket sales

## Milk

**Table A7** Supermarket milk sales by state ('000 litres)

| | NSW | Vic inc Tas | Qld | SA inc NT | WA | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAT 14 Jul 2024 | 446,551 | 381,336 | 307,167 | 128,512 | 154,684 | 1,418,250 |
| MAT 13 Jul 2025 | 456,523 | 382,399 | 308,982 | 127,776 | 155,391 | 1,431,071 |
| MAT 12 Jul 2026 | 448,806 | 383,592 | 308,930 | 128,191 | 147,998 | 1,417,517 |

Dairy Milk, Total outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Milk category for the three-year period ending July 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market (Copyright © 2026, Nielsen Consumer LLC)

**Table A8** Supermarket milk sales by type ('000 litres)

| | Regular | Reduced Fat | No Fat | UHT | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAT 14 Jul 2024 | 825,636 | 339,501 | 21,786 | 231,328 | 1,418,250 |
| MAT 13 Jul 2025 | 840,567 | 336,121 | 20,318 | 234,064 | 1,431,071 |
| MAT 12 Jul 2026 | 844,977 | 335,739 | 24,847 | 211,953 | 1,417,517 |

*Fresh milk, regular (full fat), reduced fat (semi skim), no fat (skimmed), UHT (longlife)
Total Outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Milk category for the three-year period ending July 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market (Copyright © 2026, Nielsen Consumer LLC)

**Table A9** Supermarket milk sales - flavoured vs unflavoured ('000 litres)

| | Flavoured | Unflavoured | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| MAT 14 Jul 2024 | 115,795 | 1,302,455 | 1,418,250 |
| MAT 13 Jul 2025 | 128,674 | 1,302,397 | 1,431,071 |
| MAT 12 Jul 2026 | 136,771 | 1,280,746 | 1,417,517 |

Dairy Milk, Total outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Milk category for the three-year period ending July 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market (Copyright © 2026, Nielsen Consumer LLC)

**Table A10** Supermarket milk sales - branded vs private label

| | MAT 14 Jul 2024 | | | MAT 13 Jul 2025 | | | MAT 12 Jul 2026 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Volume | Value | Price/Litre | Volume | Value | Price/Litre | Volume | Value | Price/Litre |
| | '000 litres | '000 dollars | | '000 litres | '000 dollars | | '000 litres | '000 dollars | |
| Total branded milk | 519,803 | 1,505,916 | $2.90 | 529,594 | 1,586,015 | $3.00 | 533,118 | 1,706,882 | $3.20 |
| Total private label milk | 898,447 | 1,462,474 | $1.63 | 901,477 | 1,438,346 | $1.60 | 884,399 | 1,521,328 | $1.72 |
| **Total milk** | **1,418,250** | **2,968,390** | **$2.09** | **1,431,071** | **3,024,361** | **$2.11** | **1,417,517** | **3,228,210** | **$2.28** |

Dairy Milk, Total outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Milk category for the three-year period ending July 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market (Copyright © 2026, Nielsen Consumer LLC)

## Dairy spreads

**Table A11** Supermarket yellow spreads sales by type

| | MAT 14 Jul 2024 | | | MAT 13 Jul 2025 | | | MAT 12 Jul 2026 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg |
| | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | |
| Butter | 29,358 | 438,413 | $14.93 | 30,065 | 467,641 | $15.55 | 30,216 | 497,484 | $16.46 |
| Butter blends | 32,018 | 387,379 | $12.10 | 31,482 | 381,618 | $12.12 | 29,811 | 383,124 | $12.85 |
| Margarine | 29,381 | 231,771 | $7.89 | 27,747 | 209,670 | $7.56 | 26,878 | 197,671 | $7.35 |
| **Total yellow spreads** | **90,757** | **1,057,563** | **$11.65** | **89,294** | **1,058,929** | **$11.86** | **86,905** | **1,078,279** | **$12.41** |

Total Outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Yellow Spreads category for the three-year period ending June 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market
(Copyright © 2026, Nielsen Consumer LLC).

**Table A12** Retail sales of dairy spreads by pack size

| | MAT 14 Jul 2024 | | | MAT 13 Jul 2025 | | | MAT 12 Jul 2026 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg |
| | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | |
| **Butter** | **29,358** | **438,413** | **$14.93** | **30,065** | **467,641** | **$15.55** | **30,216** | **497,484** | **$16.46** |
| 250 gram | 8,174 | 135,520 | $16.58 | 7,302 | 126,039 | $17.26 | 7,205 | 128,605 | $17.85 |
| 500 gram | 16,833 | 224,505 | $13.34 | 16,845 | 237,995 | $14.13 | 16,183 | 238,024 | $14.71 |
| Other sizes | 4,351 | 78,388 | $18.02 | 5,919 | 103,607 | $17.51 | 6,828 | 130,855 | $19.17 |
| **Butter blends** | 32,018 | 387,379 | $12.10 | 31,482 | 381,618 | $12.12 | 29,811 | 383,124 | $12.85 |
| 250 gram | 840 | 15,965 | $19.00 | 855 | 16,354 | $19.13 | 826 | 16,846 | $20.39 |
| 500 gram | 18,960 | 236,787 | $12.49 | 18,610 | 230,182 | $12.37 | 18,040 | 235,240 | $13.04 |
| Other sizes | 12,217 | 134,627 | $11.02 | 12,017 | 135,082 | $11.24 | 10,944 | 131,038 | $11.97 |
| **Total dairy spread sales** | **61,376** | **825,792** | **$13.46** | **61,547** | **849,259** | **$13.80** | **60,027** | **880,608** | **$14.67** |

*Total Outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Yellow Spreads category for the three-year period ending June 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market
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**Table A13** Retail sales of margarine by pack size

| | MAT 14 Jul 2024 | | | MAT 13 Jul 2025 | | | MAT 12 Jul 2026 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg | Volume | Value | Price/kg |
| | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | | Tonnes | '000 dollars | |
| 250 gram | 635 | 7,864 | $12.38 | 766 | 8,956 | $11.70 | 725 | 9,245 | $12.75 |
| 500 gram | 15,270 | 139,561 | $9.14 | 13,735 | 124,968 | $9.10 | 13,294 | 117,392 | $8.83 |
| Other sizes | 13,475 | 84,346 | $6.26 | 13,247 | 75,746 | $5.72 | 12,859 | 71,034 | $5.52 |
| **Total margarine sales** | **29,381** | **231,771** | **$7.89** | **27,747** | **209,670** | **$7.56** | **26,878** | **197,671** | **$7.35** |

Total Outlets
Based on NIQ CPS data for the Yellow Spreads category for the three-year period ending June 12th, 2026, for the Australia total retail market
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## Appendix 8 Australian exports

**Table A14** Australian exports of cheese (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| China, Hong Kong | 25,520 | 27,747 | 20,691 | 24,932 | 29,107 | 40,062 |
| Indonesia | 2,491 | 3,298 | 3,200 | 3,584 | 7,284 | 7,072 |
| Japan | 60,446 | 60,210 | 53,285 | 62,832 | 67,848 | 50,253 |
| Korea, South | 7,926 | 8,385 | 7,653 | 8,213 | 8,444 | 7,704 |
| Malaysia | 12,889 | 11,756 | 6,288 | 9,190 | 9,484 | 10,802 |
| Philippines | 7,488 | 7,717 | 7,023 | 6,691 | 8,708 | 8,382 |
| Singapore | 5,505 | 5,642 | 4,274 | 5,132 | 4,809 | 4,668 |
| Taiwan | 3,193 | 3,792 | 3,041 | 3,830 | 4,579 | 4,166 |
| Thailand | 4,075 | 5,447 | 5,751 | 7,448 | 8,406 | 10,359 |
| Other Asia | 3,573 | 2,892 | 2,771 | 3,883 | 3,372 | 3,539 |
| **Total Asia** | **133,106** | **136,886** | **113,977** | **135,734** | **152,042** | **147,007** |
| **Middle East** | | | | | | |
| Saudi Arabia | 1,451 | 1,357 | 1,324 | 1,146 | 2,272 | 2,262 |
| U.A.E. | 1,150 | 1,067 | 954 | 1,294 | 913 | 1,400 |
| Other Middle East | 2,884 | 2,317 | 2,775 | 2,481 | 1,824 | 1,586 |
| **Total Middle East** | **5,485** | **4,741** | **5,053** | **4,921** | **5,010** | **5,248** |
| **Africa** | **1,733** | **1,918** | **1,778** | **1,689** | **2,280** | **2,517** |
| **Pacific** | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 3,491 | 4,664 | 2,699 | 3,297 | 3,673 | 3,480 |
| Others | 1,328 | 1,401 | 1,296 | 1,303 | 1,233 | 1,366 |
| **Total Pacific** | **4,819** | **6,065** | **3,995** | **4,600** | **4,906** | **4,846** |
| **Americas** | | | | | | |
| Caribbean | 139 | 782 | 62 | 190 | 161 | 73 |
| United States | 5,551 | 2,804 | 1,327 | 1,126 | 1,951 | 1,739 |
| Others | 1,877 | 3,195 | 1,914 | 2,053 | 2,173 | 3,292 |
| **Total Americas** | **7,567** | **6,781** | **3,303** | **3,369** | **4,285** | **5,104** |
| **Europe** | 698 | 169 | 60 | 127 | 69 | 1,117 |
| **Total** | **153,408** | **156,560** | **128,166** | **150,440** | **168,592** | **165,837** |

*Source: ABS*

**Table A15** Australian exports of whole milk powder* (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| Bangladesh | 5,184 | 1,571 | 2,086 | 1,480 | 1,684 | 1,912 |
| China, Hong Kong | 29,146 | 24,021 | 20,816 | 18,241 | 25,245 | 28,392 |
| Indonesia | 365 | 6,265 | 4,789 | 2,536 | 3,954 | 3,770 |
| Japan | 9 | 950 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Malaysia | 2,734 | 2,175 | 451 | 1,036 | 1,659 | 1,915 |
| Philippines | 172 | 48 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 35 |
| Singapore | 3,474 | 3,616 | 1,655 | 2,074 | 2,183 | 1,620 |
| Sri Lanka | 2,047 | 233 | 139 | 346 | 345 | 123 |
| Taiwan | 1,076 | 1,162 | 902 | 575 | 333 | 315 |
| Thailand | 4,891 | 11,154 | 4,493 | 10,668 | 11,546 | 8,595 |
| Others | 2,931 | 3,322 | 2,683 | 4,668 | 3,328 | 2,916 |
| **Total Asia** | **52,029** | **54,517** | **38,022** | **41,626** | **50,278** | **49,597** |
| **Africa** | 172 | 668 | 186 | 404 | 304 | 91 |
| **Americas** | 217 | 618 | 1,134 | 1,713 | 1,396 | 1,664 |
| **Europe** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| **Middle East** | 636 | 5,973 | 17,705 | 3,851 | 9,241 | 1,708 |
| **Pacific** | 1,125 | 1,095 | 1,019 | 746 | 988 | 398 |
| **Total** | **54,179** | **62,871** | **58,066** | **48,365** | **62,207** | **53,458** |

*Also includes infant powder
*Source: ABS*

**Table A16** Australian exports of butter* (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| China, Hong Kong | 7,009 | 5,088 | 1,180 | 3,097 | 1,908 | 1,305 |
| Japan | 177 | 696 | 107 | 156 | 1,001 | 53 |
| Korea, South | 910 | 2,892 | 1,308 | 1,765 | 1,767 | 224 |
| Malaysia | 1,483 | 1,227 | 778 | 1,020 | 1,949 | 2,002 |
| Singapore | 1,893 | 1,908 | 838 | 1,227 | 1,595 | 1,066 |
| Taiwan | 926 | 975 | 436 | 1,417 | 1,884 | 1,218 |
| Others | 1,052 | 1,077 | 437 | 635 | 1,630 | 1,050 |
| **Total Asia** | **13,450** | **13,863** | **5,084** | **9,317** | **11,734** | **6,918** |
| **Middle East** | 1,332 | 833 | 5 | 241 | 298 | 39 |
| **Africa** | 1,030 | 229 | 218 | 383 | 393 | 174 |
| **Pacific** | 236 | 183 | 552 | 167 | 683 | 314 |
| **Americas** | 1,230 | 666 | 37 | 1,292 | 993 | 490 |
| **Europe** | 200 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 1,467 | 1 |
| **Total** | **17,478** | **15,824** | **5,896** | **11,400** | **15,568** | **7,936** |

*Includes butter blends converted at the rate of 1kg butter blend = 0.7kg butter
*Source: ABS*

**Table A17** Australian exports of skim milk powder (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2024–25 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| China, Hong Kong | 56,817 | 62,150 | 64,070 | 32,924 | 24,412 | 13,435 |
| Indonesia | 23,508 | 30,340 | 22,230 | 37,604 | 37,229 | 58,912 |
| Japan | 2,201 | 793 | 384 | 1,702 | 1,766 | 2,390 |
| Malaysia | 3,158 | 5,537 | 2,256 | 11,098 | 18,332 | 17,705 |
| Philippines | 3,335 | 4,227 | 2,768 | 2,231 | 6,890 | 4,329 |
| Singapore | 4,851 | 7,674 | 3,165 | 4,637 | 5,292 | 5,374 |
| Taiwan | 1,763 | 986 | 894 | 856 | 766 | 1,280 |
| Thailand | 5,171 | 7,839 | 5,916 | 9,931 | 11,355 | 10,482 |
| Others | 11,531 | 13,206 | 4,198 | 23,153 | 30,509 | 24,117 |
| **Total Asia** | **112,335** | **132,752** | **105,881** | **124,135** | **136,551** | **138,024** |
| **Africa** | 150 | 175 | 160 | 900 | 515 | 188 |
| **Americas** | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Europe** | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Middle East** | 9,944 | 14,147 | 9,731 | 17,735 | 15,685 | 10,077 |
| **Pacific** | 478 | 1,850 | 1,299 | 29 | 5,219 | 3,223 |
| **Total** | **122,912** | **148,931** | **117,071** | **142,799** | **157,970** | **151,512** |

*Source: ABS*

**Table A18** Australian exports of AMF (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (p) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| Bangladesh | 42 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Indonesia | 0 | 48 | 6 | 3 | 94 | 5 |
| Malaysia | 460 | 313 | 772 | 543 | 559 | 584 |
| Philippines | 1,338 | 83 | 563 | 148 | 367 | 401 |
| Singapore | 167 | 126 | 83 | 64 | 83 | 104 |
| Others | 3,111 | 3,077 | 2,782 | 2,245 | 1,986 | 1,697 |
| **Total Asia** | **5,118** | **3,669** | **4,207** | **3,003** | **3,090** | **2,791** |
| **Middle East** | 0 | 1,169 | 0 | 38 | 250 | 0 |
| **Africa** | 370 | 313 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Americas** | 897 | 1,177 | 277 | 422 | 1,715 | 292 |
| **Europe** | 750 | 298 | 177 | 118 | 102 | 0 |
| **Pacific** | 66 | 98 | 170 | 298 | 405 | 1,067 |
| **Total** | **7,201** | **6,723** | **4,832** | **3,879** | **5,563** | **4,150** |

Actual product weight (not CBE)
*Source: ABS*

**Table A19** Australian exports of liquid milk ('000 litres)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| Singapore | 46,808 | 51,408 | 43,342 | 38,872 | 35,582 | 37,183 |
| Philippines | 19,871 | 24,558 | 22,693 | 25,451 | 16,462 | 19,551 |
| Malaysia | 23,428 | 20,881 | 13,762 | 9,737 | 13,806 | 9,159 |
| Indonesia | 295 | 311 | 170 | 374 | 545 | 599 |
| Hong Kong | 15,034 | 13,641 | 10,928 | 9,093 | 7,565 | 7,501 |
| China | 126,087 | 129,657 | 110,194 | 64,981 | 49,636 | 54,072 |
| Other Asia | 28,148 | 29,197 | 22,311 | 20,531 | 25,792 | 35,347 |
| **Total Asia** | **259,671** | **269,653** | **223,399** | **169,039** | **149,386** | **163,411** |
| **Africa** | 95 | 344 | 492 | 474 | 617 | 548 |
| **Pacific** | 14,581 | 14,342 | 13,453 | 11,810 | 13,187 | 14,094 |
| **Others** | 298 | 145 | 178 | 218 | 496 | 493 |
| **Total** | **274,645** | **284,484** | **237,522** | **181,541** | **163,686** | **178,546** |

*Source: ABS*

**Table A20** Australian exports of whey products* (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Asia | 33,177 | 33,747 | 28,697 | 39,139 | 23,131 | 21,547 |
| Europe | 173 | 135 | 75 | 40 | 46 | 240 |
| Other | 2,329 | 1,618 | 1,789 | 1,911 | 1,925 | 2,337 |
| **Total** | **35,679** | **35,500** | **30,561** | **41,090** | **25,102** | **24,124** |

*Includes whey protein concentrates
*Source: ABS*

**Table A21** Australian exports of live dairy heifers (cows) by market

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Asia** | | | | | | |
| China | 86,228 | 93,216 | 100,207 | 52,719 | 15,813 | 9,159 |
| Indonesia | 338 | 2,193 | 1,590 | 1,586 | 5,106 | 563 |
| Japan | 350 | | | | | |
| Malaysia | 3,267 | 2,836 | 3,859 | 1,638 | 2,785 | 1,350 |
| Pakistan | | | 1,388 | 1,232 | 5,471 | 7,489 |
| Taiwan | | | | | 11 | |
| Vietnam | | 4 | | | | |
| Other Asia | 200 | 215 | 3,363 | 904 | 240 | 220 |
| **Total Asia** | **90,383** | **98,464** | **110,407** | **58,079** | **29,426** | **18,781** |
| Middle East | | | | | 1,898 | 19,303 |
| Others | 340 | | | | 12,688 | 13,200 |
| **Total** | **90,723** | **98,464** | **110,407** | **58,079** | **44,012** | **51,284** |

*Source: ABS*

**Table A22** Australian exports of live dairy heifers (cows) by state

| | NSW | Vic | Qld | SA | WA | Tas | Aust |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2010–11 | 219 | 61,817 | 978 | | 12,081 | 103 | 75,198 |
| 2011–12 | 806 | 57,926 | 304 | 3,130 | 2,656 | 454 | 65,276 |
| 2012–13 | 305 | 69,359 | 620 | 2,282 | 12,188 | 2,668 | 87,422 |
| 2013–14 | | 89,640 | 1,171 | 4 | 1,525 | | 92,340 |
| 2014–15 | 910 | 64,638 | 122 | | 7,535 | | 73,205 |
| 2015–16 | 242 | 69,486 | | 230 | 1,949 | | 71,907 |
| 2016–17 | 647 | 70,395 | 240 | | 1,769 | | 73,051 |
| 2017–18 | 1,612 | 43,258 | 345 | 48 | 1,616 | | 46,879 |
| 2018–19 | 719 | 90,869 | 459 | 24 | 276 | | 92,347 |
| 2019–20 | | 86,007 | 2,660 | | 5,616 | | 94,283 |
| 2020–21 | 92 | 89,612 | 340 | | 679 | | 90,723 |
| 2021–22 | 4 | 91,679 | 3,813 | | 2,968 | | 98,464 |
| 2022–23 | | 107,494 | | 1,600 | 1,313 | | 110,407 |
| 2023–24 | 1,205 | 55,116 | | 8 | 1,750 | | 58,079 |
| 2024–25 | 1,567 | 42,341 | | 104 | | | 44,012 |
| 2025–26 | | 49,029 | | | 2,255 | | 51,284 |

*Source: ABS*

## Appendix 9 Australian imports

Both locally made and international dairy products are utilised and consumed in Australia. Overseas dairy products have always had a presence within the Australian market, however, the nature and scale of imports have changed over time. While imports now service a higher portion of domestic dairy demand, they allow the Australian dairy industry to adapt to changing market conditions by putting milk components to best use and export a significant share of its milk production.

The diversity of the Australian dairy manufacturing and lack of significant category level gaps in local production has meant that imported dairy products have served a host of purposes over time. Mainly utilised in the food service and ingredient sectors, imported dairy has traditionally been purchased for provenance marketing or to cut costs in low margin applications such as fast food. In recent years, the price difference between Australian and other origin product has encouraged dairy imports, especially during periods of high inflation. The presence of overseas dairy products on the supermarket shelves has also risen as consumers look for low-cost dairy products.

Before the 2000s, cheese accounted for over half of all imported dairy (by volume). These days, the volume is much higher, but the category now represents closer to 30% of imported dairy, with butter, WMP, ice cream and mixtures also prominent categories. Australia is no longer a significant producer of casein, and as such, the vast majority of requirements are imported.

**Table A23** Total Australian imports (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New Zealand | 139,254 | 133,611 | 172,335 | 160,416 | 148,979 | 140,903 |
| Europe | 77,131 | 74,292 | 76,018 | 70,175 | 78,607 | 78,394 |
| United States | 44,843 | 47,594 | 55,490 | 41,579 | 43,802 | 75,121 |
| Other | 14,284 | 14,021 | 15,310 | 17,176 | 21,306 | 21,141 |
| **Total imports** | **275,511** | **269,518** | **319,153** | **289,346** | **292,694** | **315,559** |

*Includes butter blends converted at the rate of 1kg butter blend = 0.7kg butter*
*Source: ABS (excludes goats cheese: tariff code 0406901040)*

**Table A24** Australian imports of dairy products (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 (r) | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Skim milk powder | 14,598 | 13,003 | 14,537 | 13,661 | 10,862 | 10,620 |
| Buttermilk powder | 2,096 | 3,760 | 4,546 | 1,708 | 2,436 | 1,490 |
| Wholemilk powder* | 57,932 | 57,905 | 64,060 | 55,472 | 50,428 | 51,889 |
| Whey powder & concentrates | 12,469 | 9,618 | 9,410 | 7,668 | 11,767 | 12,044 |
| Condensed milk | 10,101 | 14,227 | 15,119 | 16,036 | 17,664 | 17,490 |
| Milk | 1,569 | 1,795 | 2,644 | 3,510 | 2,304 | 1,460 |
| Cream | 3,525 | 3,013 | 4,502 | 5,192 | 5,580 | 5,511 |
| Yoghurt | 1,336 | 1,130 | 1,422 | 1,440 | 1,642 | 1,581 |
| Butter** | 31,267 | 27,101 | 41,383 | 31,596 | 29,426 | 39,522 |
| Butter oil | 5,764 | 7,526 | 9,426 | 9,094 | 10,951 | 11,985 |
| Cheese*** | 94,624 | 92,554 | 104,466 | 99,040 | 103,991 | 114,406 |
| Casein | 787 | 1,007 | 1,695 | 2,047 | 1,771 | 1,672 |
| Caseinates | 1,707 | 1,614 | 991 | 718 | 722 | 975 |
| Lactose | 13,788 | 13,123 | 11,160 | 7,964 | 7,710 | 10,287 |
| Ice cream ('000 lts) | 23,948 | 22,142 | 33,792 | 34,200 | 35,441 | 34,627 |
| **Total Imports** | **275,511** | **269,518** | **319,153** | **289,346** | **292,694** | **315,559** |

**Includes infant powder*
***Includes butter blends converted at the rate of 1kg butter blend = 0.7kg butter*
****Excludes goats cheese (Tariff code: 0406901040)*
*Source: ABS*

**Table A25** Australian cheese imports by country (tonnes)

| | 2020–21 | 2021–22 | 2022–23 | 2023–24 | 2024–25 | 2025–26 (p) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | 537 | 482 | 631 | 448 | 511 | 626 |
| Bulgaria | 970 | 768 | 922 | 941 | 802 | 832 |
| Denmark | 2,464 | 2,183 | 2,359 | 2,433 | 2,299 | 2,770 |
| France | 1,856 | 2,333 | 3,256 | 2,533 | 2,522 | 3,163 |
| Germany | 2,703 | 2,567 | 2,394 | 2,249 | 1,702 | 749 |
| Greece | 2,544 | 2,236 | 1,836 | 1,508 | 1,726 | 1,494 |
| Italy | 5,318 | 5,451 | 6,046 | 6,000 | 6,872 | 7,273 |
| Netherlands | 3,704 | 3,662 | 3,041 | 3,112 | 3,643 | 4,295 |
| Poland | 1,122 | 892 | 116 | 60 | 111 | 125 |
| Other | 3,767 | 4,365 | 4,289 | 4,560 | 5,486 | 6,529 |
| **Total EU** | **24,985** | **24,939** | **24,890** | **23,844** | **25,674** | **27,855** |
| **New Zealand** | 42,110 | 35,941 | 43,120 | 47,064 | 46,165 | 37,842 |
| **United States** | 24,713 | 28,978 | 34,121 | 25,696 | 29,498 | 46,445 |
| **Norway** | 588 | 253 | 20 | 4 | 5 | 4 |
| **Switzerland** | 248 | 323 | 379 | 324 | 384 | 294 |
| **United Kingdom** | 1,706 | 1,867 | 1,805 | 1,987 | 2,110 | 1,821 |
| **Other** | 274 | 254 | 131 | 121 | 157 | 144 |
| **Total cheese imports** | **94,624** | **92,554** | **104,466** | **99,040** | **103,992** | **114,405** |

*Excludes goat cheese (Tariff code 0406901040)*
*Source: ABS*

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ABARES | Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences |
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACT | Australian Capital Territory |
| ADC | Australian Dairy Corporation |
| ADF | Australian Dairy Farmers Ltd |
| ADHIS | Australian Dairy Herd Improvement Service |
| ADIC | Australian Dairy Industry Council Inc. |
| ADPF | Australian Dairy Products Federation Inc. |
| A$ | Australian Dollar |
| AEST | Australian Eastern Standard Time |
| AHA | Animal Health Australia |
| AMF | Anhydrous milk fat |
| Aust | Australia |
| BMP | Buttermilk powder |
| CAGR | Compound annual growth rate |
| CBE | Commercial butter equivalent, a unit of conversion of AMF to butter (1kg butter = 0.805kg AMF) |
| CER | The Closer Economic Relations Agreement between NZ and Australia |
| DA | Dairy Australia |
| DFMP | Dairy Farm Monitor Project |
| (e) | Estimated data |
| EU | European Union |
| LGA | Local Government Area |
| ML | Million litres |
| MS | Milk solid |
| na | Not available |
| NSW | New South Wales |
| NT | Northern Territory |
| NZ | New Zealand |
| (p) | Provisional data |
| pp | percentage points |
| QDAS | Queensland Dairy Accounting Scheme |
| Qld | Queensland |
| (r) | Revised data |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SA | South Australia |
| SE | South-east |
| SMP | Skim milk powder |
| SNF | Solids non fat |
| Tas | Tasmania |
| U.A.E | United Arib Emirates |
| UHT | Milk subjected to ultra-high temperature treatment to extend shelf life |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| US$ | United States Dollar |
| Vic | Victoria |
| WA | Western Australia |
| WMP | Whole milk powder |
| WPC | Whey protein concentrate |

**Disclaimer**
The content of this publication is provided for general information only and has not been prepared to address your specific circumstances. We do not guarantee the completeness, accuracy or timeliness of the information.

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