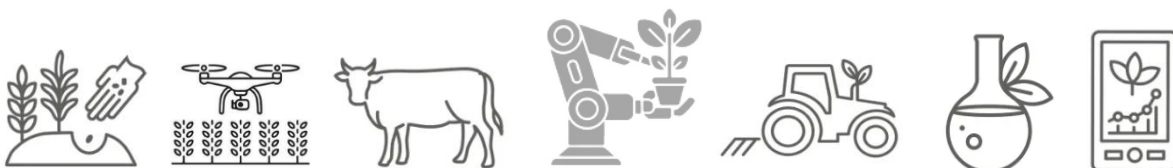




14th, 15th & 16th May 2026

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

Primary School Information Pack.



‘Theme – From Paddock to Pavilion – Journey of the sheep’

KEY FACTS ABOUT SHEEP FARMING IN QUEENSLAND

Flock Size Contribution

Queensland holds around 3% of Australia's total sheep flock, which was estimated at 78.8 million head nationally in 2023.

Industry Value

The combined sheep, wool, and goat industries in Queensland contributed significantly to agriculture, with on-farm production valued at over \$7.8 billion in 2019–20.

Types of Sheep Farming

- Meat sheep (for lamb and mutton)
- Wool sheep (Merinos are common, producing fine wool)
- Crossbreeds for dual-purpose production.

Geographic Distribution

Sheep farming is concentrated in western Queensland, particularly in regions like Longreach, Roma and the Darling Downs. These areas are better suited to grazing compared to coastal zones.

Trends in Numbers

Queensland's sheep flock has declined sharply since the 1990s, reflecting broader national trends but with a greater proportional fall in Queensland.

Challenges

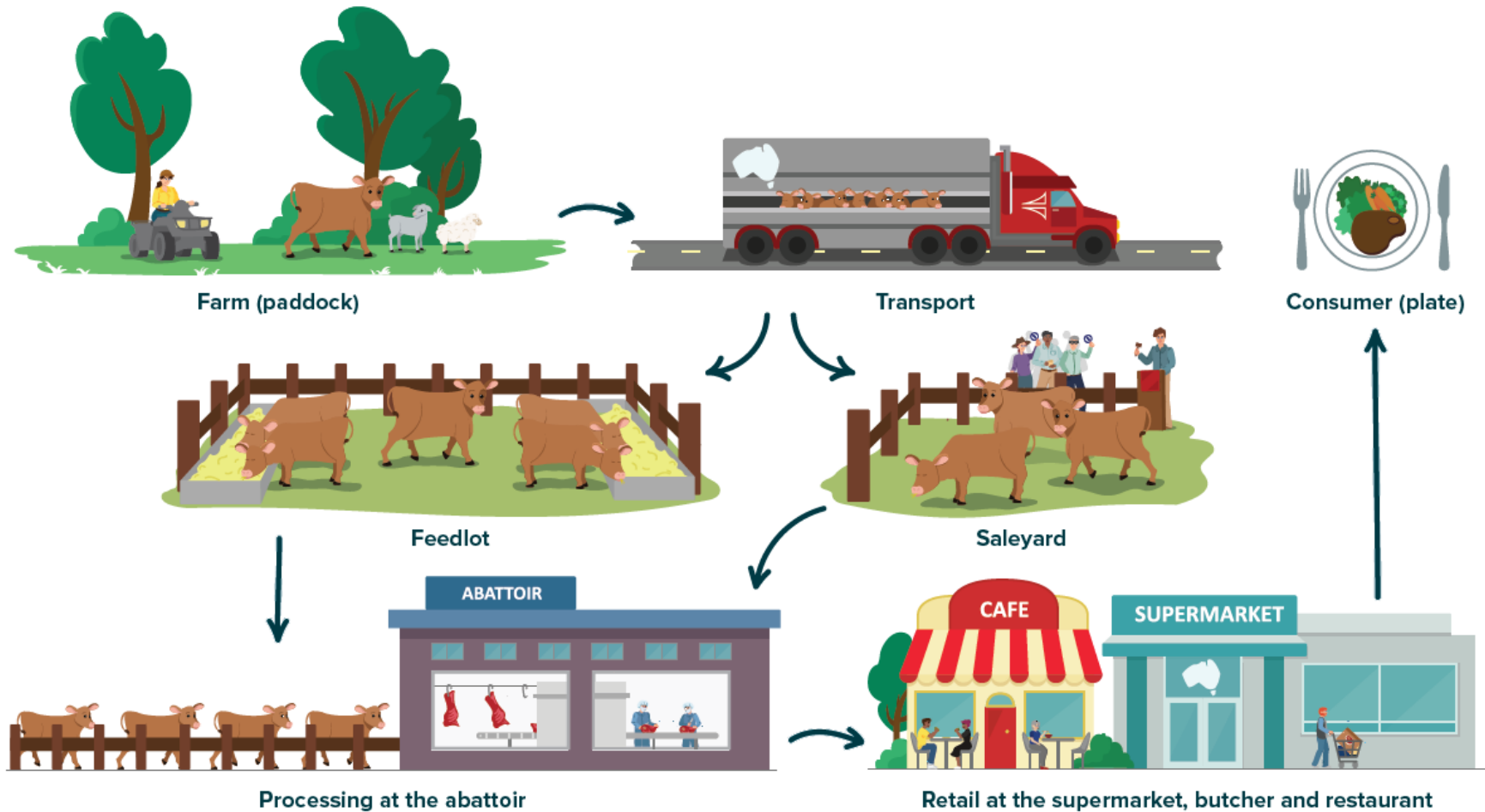
- Climate variability (droughts and floods affect grazing capacity)
- Predation and pests (wild dogs are a major issue for sheep farmers)
- Competition with cattle grazing, which dominates Queensland's pastoral industry.

Future Prospects

Reports suggest opportunities for growth in meat sheep production, especially with rising demand for lamb and mutton exports. Wool remains important but faces global market fluctuations.

Meat sheep production is better suited to coastal Queensland and areas like Gympie. It requires less infrastructure to shear and process wool and can be undertaken on smaller land sizes.

Red Meat – Paddock to Plate



Scan the QR code or visit goodmeat.com.au/education-resources to discover Foundation – Year 12 lessons and resources.

Australian Curriculum Content: AC9TDE6K03, AC9TDE6P01.

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PRIMARY



FROM SHEEP TO WOOL: THE JOURNEY OF WOOL IN AUSTRALIA

Wool is one of Australia's most important farm products, and it all begins with sheep! Wool is a natural, renewable fibre, and Australian farmers play an important role in caring for their sheep and producing high-quality wool for everyone to enjoy.

Here's how wool goes from the paddock to something you can wear.

1. Caring for the Sheep

Australian farmers look after their sheep by providing clean water, plenty of grass, and safe paddocks. Healthy, happy sheep grow the best wool.

Meet a Woolgrower (8 mins)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKmf_HbOxUs

2. Growing the Wool

Sheep naturally grow a thick coat called fleece. This fleece keeps them warm in winter. As it grows, the wool becomes longer and ready for shearing.

3. Shearing

Once a year, usually in spring, sheep are carefully shorn by trained shearers. Shearing doesn't hurt the sheep — it's like giving them a big haircut! The fleece comes off in one large piece.

Learning about Wool – Shearing

https://www.learnaboutwool.com/globalassets/law/resources/factsheets/primary/gd3262-primary-fact-sheets_p.pdf

4. Skirting and Sorting

After shearing, the fleece is taken to a wool table. Here, workers remove the dirty or rough bits (called skirting) and sort the wool based on quality, length, and softness.

5. Cleaning the Wool

The wool is washed in warm, soapy water to remove grease and dirt. This process is called scouring. Once clean, the wool becomes soft and fluffy.

6. Spinning the Wool

Clean wool is then combed and stretched into long strands. These strands are twisted together to make yarn. Yarn is what can be knitted or woven.

Merino Wool processing (3mins)

<https://youtu.be/YwRbyTCgQQY>

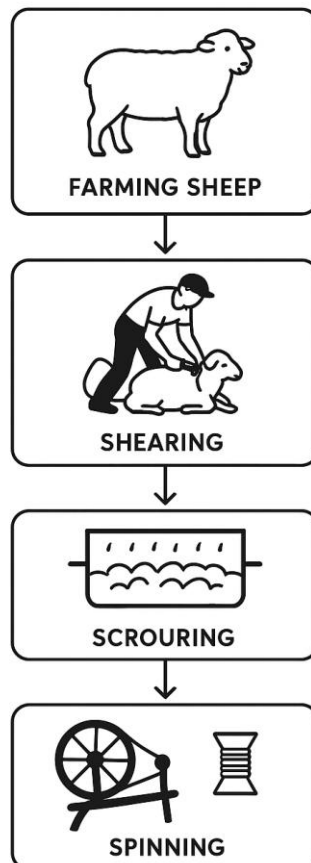
7. Knitting and Weaving

The yarn is used to make lots of different products — like blankets, jumpers, socks, and even school uniforms! Machines or skilled workers knit or weave the yarn into fabric.

8. Finished Products

The final wool products are packed, shipped, and arrive in shops all over Australia and around the world.

PROCESS OF PRODUCING WOOL IN AUSTRALIA



SOME AMAZING FACTS ABOUT SHEARING

Here are some interesting and fun facts about sheep shearing:

1. Shearing is usually done once a year

Most sheep in Australia are shorn annually, typically in spring. This helps keep them cool for summer and prevents health issues like flystrike.

2. Shearers are some of the fittest workers around

Professional shearers can shear 200+ sheep a day, depending on the sheep type and conditions. It's physically demanding work—like doing heavy squats and deadlifts all day.

3. The world record is mind-blowing

The current world records include shearers taking off over 700 sheep in 8 hours! That's about one sheep every 40 seconds.

4. Shearing doesn't hurt the sheep

It's like giving them a haircut. Skilled shearers make only minimal contact with the skin, and the process actually prevents discomfort and overheating.

5. Australia is one of the biggest wool producers in the world

Australia produces around 25% of the world's wool, and Merinos are the most commonly shorn sheep.

6. Shearers listen to music to keep rhythm

Many shearers work to a steady beat—music helps them maintain timing, efficiency, and a smooth flow.

7. There's a special shearing "dance"

The shearing technique, known as the Tally-Hi method, is a set of precise movements that reduces effort and ensures the fleece comes off in one piece.

8. One fleece can make some amazing products

A single Merino fleece can be turned into over 4 kilometres of fine yarn!

9. Shearing competitions are a big deal

Events like the Golden Shears bring together the best shearers from around the world to compete for speed and quality.

10. It's done in all kinds of weather

Shearers often travel huge distances and work in remote sheds that can be hot, dusty, and noisy—but the culture and camaraderie are strong.