

CONFIDENTIAL: To be treated as strictly confidential until released for publication as follows:

MORNING PAPERS : FRIDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1954.
EVENING PAPERS : FRIDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1954.
BROADCASTING STATIONS : MIDNIGHT, THURSDAY, 19TH AUGUST, 1954.

LIVESTOCK STATISTICS - AUSTRALIA

31st March, 1954.

Preliminary estimates of the numbers of principal livestock in Australia as at 31st March, 1954 are shown below. These estimates are based on preliminary data obtained by the Government Statisticians of each State from the Annual Census of Agricultural, Pastoral and Dairying activities taken in March of this year, and will be revised when the complete results of the census are available. Final particulars of livestock numbers classified according to age and sex, etc. will be released later in the year.

The main features of the movement in livestock numbers to March, 1954 were as follows:-

Sheep: Continuing an upward trend in sheep numbers after the trough of 95.7 million recorded at 31st March, 1947, Australian sheep at 31st March, 1954, are estimated at 127.2 million, which represents an increase of 4.1 million or 3.4 per cent on the number at March, 1953. The estimated number of sheep at March, 1954 was 2.0 million (1.0 per cent) more than the previous highest number (125.2 million) recorded at March, 1942. Losses of sheep and marked lambs on farms during 1953-54 were 7.0 million compared with 5.2 million in 1952-53.

Dairy cattle. The estimated number of dairy cattle in March, 1954, viz. 4,859,000 was 113,000 or 2.4 per cent more than in March 1953 but was 139,000 less than in 1943 when total dairy cattle numbers were first recorded separately.

Beef cattle: Beef cattle numbers increased to 10,727,000 in March, 1954, compared with 10,591,000 in March, 1953. This increase was a continuation of the general upward trend recorded since March, 1947 (except for a slight reversal in 1952) when beef cattle numbers were 8,835,000.

Pigs: Pig numbers in March, 1954 are estimated at 1,186,000, an increase of 193,000 (19.4 per cent) from March, 1953 when numbers were the lowest since 1929.

Totals of each class of livestock are shown in the table below.

NUMBERS OF PRINCIPAL LIVESTOCK : AUSTRALIA ('000)

Classification	Beginning of 1939	at 31st March -					Percentage increase (+) or decrease (-), 1954 on -	
		1950	1951	1952	1953	1954 (a)	1939	1953
Sheep	111,358	112,891	115,596	117,646	123,072	127,249	(+) 14.6	(+) 3.4
Cattle - Dairy	12,862	4,890	4,802	4,566	4,746	4,859	(+) 2.4	(+) 2.4
Beef		9,750	10,426	10,327	10,501	10,727	(+) 2.2	(+) 2.2
Pigs	1,126	1,123	1,134	1,022	993	1,186	(+) 2.6	(+) 19.4

(a) Preliminary estimates.

S. R. CARMER
ACTING COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN

COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS

CANBERRA. A.C.T. 18TH AUGUST, 1954.