

Climate and Carbon



April Monthly Update



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Key Watchpoints

- The Australian beef industry continues to support sustainability and has made significant progress.
- This month we also explore what the livestock industry outside of the beef sector is doing from a sustainable practices perspective.

How the Australian beef industry is managing the ever-changing world of sustainability and climate....

The Australian beef industry is no stranger to sustainability. Plenty of sustainability measures and goals have been set by the industry at various times to make sure Aussie beef producers are doing their part.

In 2017, the Australian red meat and livestock industry set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030, this was known as the CN30 initiative. The endgame of this project is to see Australian beef, lamb and goat production along with processing to have a no net release of greenhouse gases emissions. The industry appears to be on track to achieving this. Industry body Meat and Livestock Australia has contributed strongly to this project, investing over \$152 million into research and funding. Looking at sustainability from a longer-term perspective, Australian red meat greenhouse gas emissions have reduced by 78 per cent since 2005 to 31Mt CO₂ equivalent. The red meat industry's contribution to national emissions has also fallen from 22 per cent in 2005 to 10 per cent, indicating that the project is working and is making a difference.



What else is the Australian livestock sector doing to tackle sustainability

Australia's livestock industry has been exploring a range of alternatives and innovations to not just be more sustainable but become more profitable.

☐ **Reducing Methane Emissions**

- **Improvement in animal genetics:** The industry has been exploring selecting for heat tolerant cattle and crosses.
- **How manure is managed:** Using the waste streams to capture biogas and use that as an alternative for electricity.
- **Useful interventions/research:** The development and study of lower methane pasture options, along with new genetic indexes and supplements.
- **Land and grazing utilisation and management:** Research and implementation of newly discovered practices that improve pasture health and carbon sequestration.

☐ **Conservation and management of land**

- We described above how Australia's livestock industry has been progressing well with reducing net emissions since 2005; in addition to this native vegetation regrowth has improved. Plenty of Australian cattle properties now have land set aside for conservation purposes. Natural resource management areas are also recording improved ground cover thresholds, along with higher quality and healthier soils.

☐ **Development and researching sustainable techniques and measures**

- Industry body Meat and Livestock Australia has invested \$152 million into extension, development and research into supporting the red meat supply chain. Key projects include understanding the impacts of climate change on animal production, life expectancies and welfare, improved grazing management and developing functional options to soften GHG from the perspective of a livestock producer.

- ☐ **Summary:** Australia's climate is an ever-changing beast, with seasonal conditions across all states cattle or not having a major impact on all aspects of a farmer's life, whether its the financial or health of the land. Australia's livestock industry is taking steps towards improving sustainability, along with other nations like the US, EU and Canada who are leading the way in this space.



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