



## Sheep CRC Conference Proceedings

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<b>Document ID:</b>	SheepCRC_22A_26
<b>Title:</b>	Feedlot Calculator
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<b>Key words:</b>	sheep; feedlot; cost; calculator

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This paper was presented at the Sheep CRC Conference 'Wool Meets Meat' held in Orange, NSW in 2006. The paper should be cited as:

Duddy, G.; Stanley, D.; Semple, S. (2006) *Feedlot Calculator* in 'Wool Meets Meat' (Editors P. Cronje, D. Maxwell) Sheep CRC p 261

## Feedlot Calculator

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Profit margins for feedlotting can be low and it is important that producers accurately estimate the profitability of such ventures prior to committing resources to this labour intensive activity. With Australian Sheep Industry CRC funding a cost:benefit spreadsheet designed by the principal author has been further developed and refined and is now available for general use within the sheep industry. The web based gross margin feedlot calculator enables the user to enter different real time production, economic and feeding scenarios to estimate likely profit for a lamb feedlotting enterprise. Users are required to provide basic information such as:

- Lamb details - breed, entry and selling values, carcass dressing %, growth rate, feed intake and assumptions on deaths, shy feeders and selling rates.
- Production inputs - animal variable costs such as shearing, crutching, health treatments, selling costs plus returns from wool sales.
- Feeding costs - feedout and storage costs and losses for concentrates and forage including a labour cost for running a feedlot.
- Fixed capital costs - an estimate of depreciation rate and contribution to the feedlot activity.
- Ration details - up to three rations (starter, intermediate and finisher) can be entered, consisting of several individual feeds (concentrates and forage) and additives. A 'new' feeds option allows for the inclusion of specific mixes or pellets. Default feed values for energy, protein and minerals are provided however it is recommended that components or rations be tested by recognised testing organisations prior to the beginning of a feedlot program.

Outputs are dynamic and are displayed when a change to any input is made. Hence it is possible to test various options and when satisfied print one or several reports. The main reports are:

- Summary - shows production, ration and profit summary plus graphs of various costs and the effects on profit by changing feed, purchase costs or carcass selling price.
- Production inputs - assumptions made on production system, animal, feed and fixed costs.
- Ration - ration(s) components, costs, energy and protein levels and quantities required.
- Profit and loss statement - breakdown of costs and returns.
- Feed values - default values and comparative costs of components used in the ration.

Interactive comments discussing aspects of many decision making processes and likely outcomes are shown. In addition there are links to further "help" and to nutrition information such as the NSW DPI Agnote "Feedlotting Lambs".

We wish to thank the Australian Sheep Industry CRC for providing funds for this project, NSW DPI for providing staff and other resources and to those who have tested and provided comments on this calculator.