

annex f: agricultural trends in the corangamite region

This annex describes trends in the Region's agriculture sector. It has been abstracted from "Demographics and characteristics of the Corangamite people", prepared for the CCMA by URS and AgInsight.

meat cattle

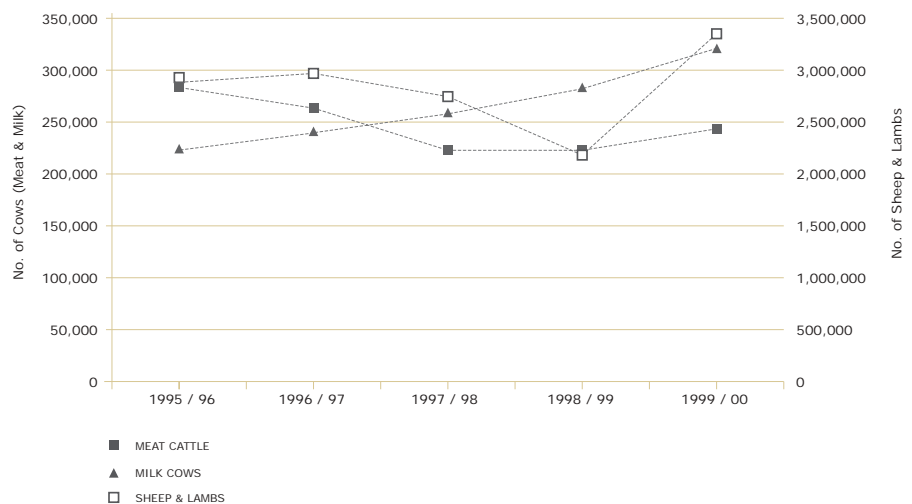
In 1998/99 the beef and veal industry constituted 15 per cent of Corangamite's total Value of Agricultural Commodity Production (VACP). In dollar terms the beef and veal industry was worth \$114 million in 1998/99, an increase of approximately \$34 million since 1996/97. The increase in value of the beef and veal industry has occurred even though the total number of meat cattle in the Region has declined from approximately 280,000 in 1995/96 to 248,000 in 1999/00. The meat industry is concentrated in the north of the shires of Corangamite and Colac Otway and also on the Bellarine Peninsula.

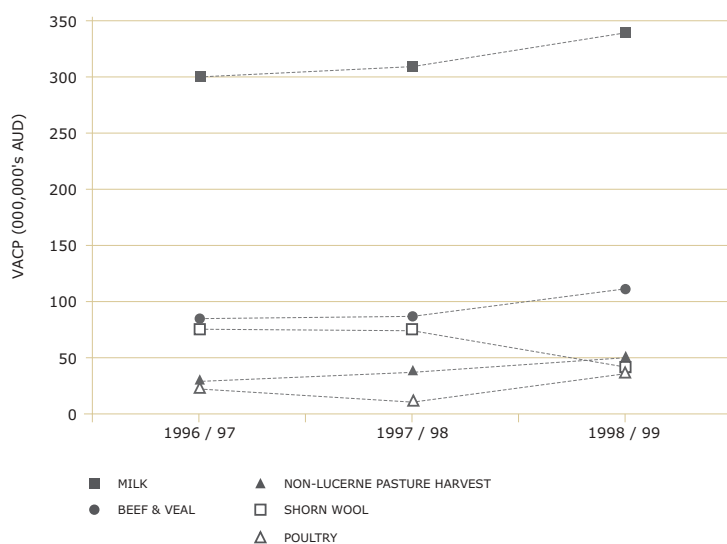
dairy

The number of milking cows in the Corangamite Region has been increasing steadily from approximately 225,000 in 1995/96 to 320,000 in 1999/00, a 42 per cent increase. Dairy has been a dominant source of VACP in the Corangamite catchment, accounting for 44 per cent of total VACP - a trend that is expected to continue. The majority of the dairy industry is concentrated in the south of the Colac Otway and Corangamite shires, however, milk cows are found across most of the Region.



TRENDS IN NUMBERS OF MEAT CATTLE, MILK COWS AND SHEEP AND LAMBS, 1995-96 TO 1998-99





VACP FOR SELECTED COMMODITIES

Source: Agricultural Censuses and Surveys, ABS

perennial horticulture

The area of land allocated to perennial horticulture, mainly fruits, has declined and less than 3,000 ha is currently under this form of agriculture. Horticultural activities that have been included in this analysis are apricots, peaches, nectarines, cherries, pears, apples and nuts.

viticulture

The total area within the Corangamite Region planted to grapes is small (201 ha in 1997), but growing. Golden Plains southeast and Greater Geelong have shown the largest increase in areas planted to grapes with a 327 and 203 per cent increase respectively.

cereals, legumes, oil seeds and potatoes

Cereal crops consist of wheat, oats, barley, triticale, maize and sorghum; legumes include lupins, field peas and faba beans; and oil seeds include canola and sunflower. A significant increase in area planted to crops between 1991 and 1997 was evident in Corangamite North (22%), Greater Geelong North (15%) and Moorabool West (15%). Overall there was a six per cent increase in the area planted to cereal, legume and oil seed crops and potatoes. Potato yields are the highest in the south of the Colac Otway Shire and to the east of Ballarat, yielding between 25.1 and 35 tonnes per hectare. The area of land allocated to wheat for grain has risen sharply over the recent years, increasing from 5,000 ha in 1995/96 to 32,500 ha in 1999/00, a 550 per cent increase⁷¹.

vegetables

There has been a significant increase in the area of vegetable planted in the Region, increasing from 207 ha in 1991 to 1,764 ha in 1997. Vegetables included in this analysis are carrots, celery, lettuce, brown and white onions, green peas, cabbages, broccoli, zucchini, mushrooms, pumpkins and brussel sprouts.

⁷¹ SEE/ Agricultural Production across the Corangamite Region, NRE 2001.

pasture

Pasture includes lucerne, sown grasses, native or naturalised pasture, mixed perennials, mixed annuals, sown pastures, pasture cut for hay and pasture legumes. Between 1991 and 1997 there was a 20 per cent increase in the total area of land allocated to pasture, with Corangamite north, Greater Geelong and Moorabool recording the most significant increases of 50, 45 and 30 per cent respectively, presumably due to intensification in land management.

Non-lucerne pastures cut for hay yielded between 4.01 and 5 tonnes per hectare in the north of Corangamite and north west of Golden Plains shires, and the majority of the remaining land allocated to non-lucerne pastures yielded between 3.01 to 4 tonnes per hectare.

pigs

Pig production in the Corangamite Region has grown from a total of 12,235 in 1991 to 16,087 in 1997, a 31 per cent increase. The largest percentage increases have occurred in Greater Geelong/ Bellarine Peninsula, Moorabool Shire and Golden Plains southeast.

eggs

Egg production in the Corangamite Region increased by 21 per cent between 1992 and 1997 with Greater Geelong/ Bellarine Peninsula and Golden Plains south east recording the greatest percentage increases of 51 per cent and 85 per cent respectively. The 8.3 million dozen eggs produced in the Region in 1997 accounted for approximately five per cent of the total number of eggs produced in Australia. In recent years there has been a trend in poultry farmers moving west to ensure closer proximity to the grain that is used for feed, hence reducing overheads. Ballarat south and Greater Geelong City both registered large decreases in egg production as a result of industry being displaced with growth of residential areas.

meat chickens

The number of meat chickens produced annually in the Corangamite Region has remained relatively constant at about 660,000 with significant decreases occurring in Greater Geelong. Urbanisation is a possible explanation for this local decline, and could also explain a large increase in the numbers in Golden Plains southeast, as the broiler industry is displaced by growth of residential areas, hence forcing industry further out.

Poultry contributed 5.1 per cent (\$39 million) to regional VACP in 1998, and the dollar value of poultry increased by approximately 300 per cent from \$9 million to \$37 million between 1997/98 and 1998/99. Poultry are principally raised in the central part of the Corangamite Region, that is, in the north of Colac Otway Shire and the majority of Golden Plains Shire.

sheep and lambs

Between 1991 and 1997, there was an overall decrease of 19 per cent in breeding ewes one year and over, lambs and hoggets under one and other sheep and lambs, with decreases occurring across all main producing districts. The number of sheep and lambs declined from approximately 2.9 million in 1995/96 to 2.3 million in 1998/99 and then experienced a 46 per cent increase in numbers to 3.3 million in 1999/00. The sheep and lambs for meat contributed 4.7 per cent (or \$256 million) towards regional VACP in 1998/99.

wool

Wool made up 5.7 per cent of regional VACP, or \$43 million, in 1998/99. The absolute contribution of shorn wool to regional VACP has declined by approximately \$27 million between 1997/98 and 1998/99. Wool is produced across the north-central parts of the Corangamite Region, but sheep are grown for wool right across the Region.