



What is MLA?

Australia is one of the world's leading producers of cattle and sheep. The red meat industry chain begins in the paddock and ends on the plate. It comprises many industry associations and private companies that plan and market livestock and meat products. One of these organisations is Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd. Meat & Livestock Australia (or MLA as it is known), first and foremost provides services to its owners – Australia's livestock producers - and offers support to the cattle, sheep and goat industries in strategic planning. The company also provides services to other industry sectors, such as meat processors and live animal exporters.

Producers fund MLA through levies collected when livestock is sold. This is supplemented by cooperative contributions from individual processors, wholesalers, food service operators and retailers. Processors and live animal exporters pay levies under contract to MLA. The Commonwealth Government provides funds specifically for research and development.

Funds collected are split almost equally between marketing and research. In many cases a research activity is rendered deficient without marketing, and vice versa. The total funding available is around \$103 million each year.

MLA has active roles in red meat marketing and market intelligence, as well as in Research and Development.

Research and Development

The research arm of MLA supports the marketing effort using processes that seek to continually improve the product. Research and development (R&D) projects are the key to innovation in livestock production and in processing and product development.

On Farm R&D

MLA invest into research covering meat standards, development of a consumer-oriented grading system, quality assurance in farms and animal identification

throughout the red meat chain. MLA encourages producers to listen to what consumers want, and raise livestock to meet this need. Modern business practice and the use of information technology skills on the farm are now accepted practice among progressive producers.

Processing and product innovation has the same aim of satisfying the consumer. MLA's R&D program is wide ranging. It covers environment, equipment development, product development, process redesign, health and safety, education and training.

It is also concerned with technology development and commercialisation, food safety and microbiological research, and co-product innovations such as leather, sheepskin and bone.

MLA Investment in Animal Genetics and Genomics:

MLA is involved in a broad and active portfolio of R&D activity in animal genetics and genomics, through both On-farm R&D and through Partners-in-Innovation:

- BREEDPLAN™, LAMBPLAN®, Merino Genetic Services® and KIDPLAN® - the world's best quantitative genetics delivery systems for livestock producers
- Total Genetic Resource Management (TGRM™) - A computer-based breeding program design tool to help maximise genetic gain for profit whilst maintaining scope for continued progress.
- GeneStar® Marbling - The world's first gene markers for a high-value beef carcass.
- Identifying genes that regulate production and disease in sheep and cattle - genomics R&D to help understand the pathways of development and regulation for difficult-to-measure traits
- Focussed inputs to breeding programs - through Young Sire Programs in several meat sheep breeds, and partnerships in advanced progeny testing in several beef cattle breeds, MLA is actively working with breeders to promote world's-best rates of genetic improvement for profit.

MLA is proud to be a sponsor of AAABG, and seeks to fund Research, Development and Implementation activities that will advance the competitiveness and viability of Australian red meat enterprises.

Further details can be obtained from our website www.mla.com.au, or by contacting us on 02 9463 9303.