



How does **Australia's livestock animal welfare system compare to the UK's Red Tractor scheme?**

The Red Tractor Program operates in the UK, with specific Beef & Lamb Standards covering production alongside relevant legislation.

This report compares Red Tractor's Beef & Lamb Standards with Australia's animal welfare framework for beef and lamb production, which includes the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) program and the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for cattle, sheep, and land transport of livestock.



Differences in Context

Australia’s vast landscapes and highly varied climate shape how livestock are managed. In the tropical north, production practices differ significantly from those in the temperate south – yet both aim to deliver equivalent welfare outcomes.

Production systems are matched to regional conditions. Sheep are predominantly raised in the south areas while cattle breeds vary according to climate; with tropical breeds more prevalent further north.

Australia’s animal welfare systems reflect this diversity, combining legislation, national standards, and on-farm quality assurance programs to safeguard animal wellbeing.

These environmental and operational factors also lead to some requirements in the UK system not applying in Australia.



Year-round grazing

Australia’s climate enables year-round grazing, so routine housing is unnecessary. Any stock rearing in housed environments (eg. Feedlots, dairies) is covered in the Animal Welfare Standards. Feedlots also require compliance with the National Feedlot Assurance Scheme (NFAS).



Flystrike

Flystrike presents a major welfare risk for sheep. Mulesing is a preventive husbandry procedure, with pain relief preferred and recommended in the Animal Welfare Standards, and mandatory in Victoria and Tasmania. Reliance on mulesing is declining as breeding programs and selective genetics reduce the need for the practice.



Land transport of livestock

The Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock are legislated in all states and territories

- 1 Producers are responsible for preparing, assembling, and loading livestock on-farm under legislation, the Land Transport Standards, and the LPA Program.
- 2 Once loaded, legal responsibility shifts to the transport operator, who must ensure animals are fit for loading and vehicles meet requirements. Police and State and Territory governments conduct compliance in relation to transport and are authorised to issue fines and penalties in relation to the transport of livestock.

HOW AUSTRALIA'S SYSTEM WORKS

Australia's animal welfare legislation and policy framework



AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL WELFARE GUIDELINES

National codes of practice outlined by the Federal Government set the blueprint for sheep and cattle producers.



Scan or [click here](#) for the Australian National Animal Welfare Guidelines



STATE & TERRITORY LEGISLATION

State and territory governments adapt and implement these guidelines through legislation relevant to local production systems, species, and breeds. They also conduct compliance activities and authorise agencies such as the RSPCA to enforce animal welfare laws.



Scan or [click here](#) for the Australian state and territory animal welfare legislation



LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION ASSURANCE (LPA)


The national on-farm assurance program underpinning food safety, biosecurity, and market access. LPA accreditation is mandatory for export suppliers and requires training in animal welfare, biosecurity, and food safety. The program is independently audited.



Scan or [click here](#) for more info about LPA

Comparison of UK and Australian Systems

Of the 65 in-scope Red Tractor Animal Standards requirements for Beef & Lamb: 56 have corresponding Australian requirements that deliver equivalent animal welfare outcomes 9 are not relevant due to regulatory, operational or environmental differences.

	 UK	 AUSTRALIA
ON FARM ASSURANCE PROGRAM	Red Tractor - Beef and Lamb	LPA Program: 1. Property Risks 2. Animal treatments 3. Stock feed and chemical use 4. Preparing livestock for transport 5. Livestock traceability and movements 6. Biosecurity 7. Animal Welfare
FOOD SAFETY	Red Tractor Beef and Lamb Standards	LPA Standards – Module 1, 2, 3 and 4. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Export Control Act & Rules State/Territory Food Legislation Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA)
ANIMAL TREATMENTS	Red Tractor Beef and Lamb Standards	LPA Standards – Module 2 Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Medicines Authority State/Territory Legislation
ANIMAL WELFARE	Red Tractor UK Animal Welfare Acts	LPA Standards – Module 7. Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines State and Territory legislation – prevention of cruelty to animals
ENVIRONMENTAL	Red Tractor UK Farming Rules for Water	Australian Environment and Biodiversity legislation State/Territory legislation Environmental Protection, Vegetation management Water. EUDR Geolocation Tool
LIVESTOCK TRACEABILITY	Red Tractor UK Cattle Tracing System	NLIS – Cattle and Sheep Standards State & Territory Biosecurity Legislation LPA Standards – Module 5
BIOSECURITY ON-FARM	Red Tractor	LPA Standards Module 6 State & Territory Biosecurity Legislation
LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT	Red Tractor UK Animal Transport Welfare Order	LPA Standards Module 4 Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines for the land transport of livestock State/Territory Legislation
AUDITS	Red Tractor third party audits	LPA third party audits – random and targeted. Mandatory learning Reaccreditation every two years.



Scan the QR code or [click here](#) for a full like-for-like comparison of Australian and UK animal welfare requirements.