Integrity Systems
red meat customer assurance

About Livestock Data Link (LDL)

Livestock Data Link (LDL) is an online program that enables the timely sharing of carcase information between processors and their producers with the aim of optimising supply chain performance.

LIVESTOCK DATA LINK

Key points

» LDL allows the timely sharing of carcase information between processors and their producers.

» LDL aims to optimise supply chain performance.

» LDL currently has four modules: carcase compliance, animal disease and defects, breeder information (beef) and Lean Meat Yield.

» As a centralised information depository, LDL enables performance benchmarking at an enterprise, regional, state or national level.

» LDL can also inform tailored research, development and extension activities for supply chains and geographic areas.

Why is LDL important?

Through LDL, beef and sheepmeat producers can receive, analyse and compare feedback on how their consignment complied to carcase grids and obtain prompt notification of any animal health conditions detected during processing.

Being able to see all of their feedback in one place – grid compliance, animal disease and defect information and Meat Standards Australia (MSA) performance, where available – can assist producers in making on-farm management decisions that will improve their compliance, and ultimately their bottom lines.

LDL's modules

Currently there are four modules in LDL:

1 Carcase compliance

Producers can see how the carcases they consigned comply with their target grid. Where carcase performance is not in line with the grid — for example a carcase is too fat, too heavy or too light — producers access a 'Solutions to Feedback' library to understand what on-farm management practices could be considered to improve the performance of future consignments.

2 Animal disease and defects

Beef and sheepmeat producers can access disease and defect feedback and reports via LDL. These reports show conditions recorded at post-mortem inspections. Data is available thanks to industry projects such as the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project (NSHMP) and Enhanced Abattoir Surveillance (EAS) program.

3 Breeder information (beef)

Beef cattle breeders can access carcase information for animals they have bred but not directly consigned to a processor. The original breeder is identified using the PIC of origin on the animal's NLIS tag. The Breeder Summary report includes kill date; number of head; average, minimum and maximum carcase weight; P8 fat; and if MSA graded, all grading attributes including the MSA index and Lean Meat Yield percentage.

The processor or consignor will not be identified, only the state in which the animals are processed is shown.

Releasing feedback to the original livestock breeder will enable the rate of genetic gain in industry to be increased as carcase performance and pedigree records can be linked.

4 Lean Meat Yield

LDL has a predictive algorithm that describes the Lean Meat Yield percentage (LMY%) for sheep and MSA-graded beef carcases. LMY% is the proportion of a carcase that is lean meat (muscle), expressed as a percentage. The LMY% of a carcase is a standard way to assess the composition of a carcase and does not change depending on the cutting specifications used to market the carcase.

What are LDL's benefits to producers?

LDL helps producers increase carcase compliance through analytics and reporting, thereby improving the bottom line for both themselves and red meat processors.

How can producers use LDL on farm?

Producers can use LDL to understand why their consignment did or did not comply with market requirements, including carcase compliance and animal health issues.

Processors have customised grids based on individual market requirements, so producers can easily see if a carcase was downgraded (i.e. discounted) and the reason why. Producers can access a 'Solutions to Feedback' library to understand what on-farm management practices could be considered to improve the performance of future consignments.

Producers can also compare their own carcase performance figures to industry benchmarks within their region, state or the whole country, to identify further areas of improvement.

What are the benefits of LDL to the broader industry?

Non-compliance with market specifications costs up to $163 million a year across the beef industry. This is caused largely by downgrades (i.e. discounts) for out-of-specification carcases, carcase condemnation, and loss of meat and offal due to animal health conditions and/or disease. The potential cost to the Australian lamb industry of non-compliance to market specifications is in excess of $8.4 million per year.

Additional benefits include:

- Enhanced flow of information about carcase performance and animal health post-slaughter to improve value chain efficiency and performance.
- A centralised information depository enables performance benchmarking at an enterprise, regional, state or national level
- Tailored research, development and extension activities for supply chains and geographic areas facing particular carcase performance or animal disease and defect issues.

How can producers access LDL?

- Producers can register to use LDL, and subsequently log in, at ldl.mla.com.au
- Registration requires your NLIS user ID and password. If you don't have an NLIS account, visit nlis.com.au and follow the on-screen prompts.
- Once logged into LDL, producers are taken directly to the dashboard containing information from their recent consignments.

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