



Intensive Cattle Feeding Protocols

Fact Sheet

Feedlot Preparation

- Weigh cattle and check them thoroughly for evidence of illness or infectious disease.
- Treat any specific illnesses as required.
- Implement a basic vaccination schedule including a viral respiratory vaccine and a clostridial vaccine.
(Please consult your veterinarian for more detailed advice on this.)

Feeding Management

- Introduction to feedlot rations must be done gradually over a 14 day period to minimise the risk of acidosis and other metabolic disorders. Any subsequent changes to the ration must also be made gradually and cattle should be closely observed at these times. It is very important that ration changes are not made concurrently with environmental changes, such as weather events, or cattle movement.
- Stale or spoiled feed must be removed from troughs. In wet weather more frequent feeding may have to be carried out to prevent spoilage. Feed troughs should not be allowed to be empty for more than 2-3 hours per day, if at all.
- Water must be clean, fresh and readily available with troughs cleaned regularly.
- The feed consumption of all pens of cattle should be monitored each day, as any variation can indicate health problems.
- Remove shy feeders from pens and place them in a lower stocked environment. Offer a higher percentage of roughage to these cattle and monitor their progress before attempting to re-introduce them to the feedlot ration and pen environment.

Space Requirements*

Feedlot measurements will vary widely according to the type, age, sex and weight of cattle, ration composition, soil type, climate and season at each feedlot and for each cattle group. However the following standard recommendations can be used as a guide:

Weaners	25-30cm/head
Yearlings	30-40cm/head
Adult Cattle	40-60cm/head
Self-Feeders	1m/6 head
Water Troughs	30cm/10 head (provided there is enough volume and pressure of water to keep the trough filled, around 10L/head/hour.)
Stocking Density	Min 9m ² /head (Please refer to the Australian Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cattle in Beef Feedlots (the Feedlot Code) for more specific information)

*Less trough space can be allowed if feed is kept in front of the cattle more than 90% of the time (Please refer to the Australian Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cattle in Beef Feedlots (the Feedlot Code) for more specific information).

General Management

- The handling yards are to provide for efficient, quiet handling of cattle with non-slippery surfaces, and no projections into the yards or races which may bruise or injure cattle.
- Cattle pens should be maintained such that they are well drained, provide a firm footing (not concrete) and have sufficient area for cattle to move around freely.
- Pens must be cleaned frequently enough to ensure cattle have sufficient area free of wet manure build-up for resting.