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Queensland Cattle Prices Soar to 440c/kg Amid Strong Demand

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Queensland cattle producers are reaping profits as cow prices hit 440 cents per kilogram in some saleyards, driven by a “calf or carcass” policy and robust demand from southern processors.

Queensland cattle producers are capitalizing on a booming market, with cow prices reaching 440 cents per kilogram (c/kg) carcass weight in select saleyards, fueled by a strategic “calf or carcass” policy at weaning’s end, according to a July 2025 report from Elders. This approach allows producers to sell non-pregnant cows for slaughter or retain calves for further growth, maximizing returns. Strong demand from southern processors, facing a shortage of heavy cattle, has driven prices upward, with one processor in southern Queensland offering \$7.40/kg dressed weight for bullocks, including 40c/kg

freight costs, as noted in the same Elders report. The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) projects a 1.1% increase in milk production for 2025, but cattle supply remains tight, boosting prices.

The policy's success hinges on Queensland's favorable seasonal conditions, enabling producers to hold feeder steers for grassfed export markets later in 2025, per Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) data from October 2024. This has narrowed the price gap between feeder and heavy steers, with heavy steer prices at 265c/kg live weight, translating to \$1,458 per head for a 550kg steer, according to AuctionsPlus on September 12, 2023. Posts on X, like one from @QldCattleMan on July 30, 2025, highlight producers' optimism, though some criticize the Australian Labor Government for neglecting rising input costs, which squeeze margins despite high prices. Southern processors are actively sourcing heavy cows, pushing prices higher to secure supply through October, as Elders reported.

The market shift has seen northern producers, from St George to Longreach, dominate restocker purchases earlier in 2025, capitalizing on cheaper southern cattle during autumn turnoff, per Elders. However, restocker demand has softened with winter frosts, shifting focus to slaughter cattle. MLA's 2025 Cattle Projections indicate export beef prices and processing margins will sustain high bullock prices into spring. Queensland's strong buying, securing 4,146 head in a single week, underscores its market dominance, per AuctionsPlus on July 25, 2025. As producers navigate high replacement costs, the "calf or carcass" strategy offers flexibility and profitability in a tight market.