

Australian Red Meat Showcases Premium Strength at Gulfood 2026 as MENA Exports Hit Record High

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Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), through its global brand Aussie Beef, Lamb & Goat, has concluded a strong showing at Gulfood 2026, reinforcing Australia's position as a leading supplier of premium, Halal-certified red meat to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The event followed a record-breaking year for Australian red meat and livestock exports to MENA, which reached A\$2.2 billion in 2025, highlighting sustained demand for high-quality Australian beef and lamb. A total of 37 Australian exporters exhibited across the Dubai World Trade Centre and Expo City Dubai, engaging with buyers from across the region.

The UAE continued to emerge as a key premium market, with chilled beef accounting for 84 per cent of Australian beef exports to the country. In 2025, Australian beef exports to the UAE reached A\$316 million, while sheepmeat exports totalled A\$394 million.

According to MLA's Regional Manager for Europe, Middle East & Africa, Darren Watson, Gulfood remains one of the most important global platforms for the Australian red meat industry. He noted that demand across MENA is becoming increasingly premium-led, with buyers prioritising Halal assurance, consistent quality and supply reliability—areas where Australian producers remain strongly positioned. Australia's competitiveness has also been strengthened by the Australia-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which removed tariffs on Australian red meat.

MLA's 720-square-metre Aussie Beef, Lamb & Goat pavilion served as a commercial and innovation hub, featuring dedicated zones for grassfed and grainfed beef, lamb, mutton and goat, alongside live cooking demonstrations. A key highlight was MLA's inaugural Gulfood Innovation Challenge, showcasing solutions in sustainable packaging, ambient storage and nutrient-dense products.

The pavilion also welcomed Australian Minister for Trade and Tourism, Don Farrell, while MLA and LiveCorp's Livestock Export Program (LEP) supported regional engagement, including discussions on both boxed meat and live animal exports across key MENA markets.