

# Press Release

## For immediate release

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South African Institute of Race Relations

*The power of ideas*

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### **Non-commercial cattle account for two-fifths of total herd**

According to the July edition of *Fast Facts* published by the IRR this month (August) the non-commercial herd of cattle accounted for just over 40% of the total cattle herd in 2015. The non-commercial herd is that located in former homelands and is largely owned by small-scale producers.

Other interesting facts about non-commercial cattle herd include:

- The non-commercial herd grew from 4.55 to 5.58 million, or by 23%, between 1981 and 2015. During that period the commercial herd shrunk from 8.35 to 8.12 million, or by 3%.
- Non-commercial cattle grew from 35% of the total herd in 1981 to 41% of the total herd in 2015.

IRR analyst Kerwin Lebone said the small-scale and informal cattle rearing sector should be primed to play a more prominent role in the beef industry. The informal cattle rearing sector has the potential to become an important empowerment story success in agriculture but more must be done to support small scale producers. Most important is access to markets, capital, and secure title to the land that small producers farm on.

Lebone said that the presence of the informal cattle sector showed the extent to which agriculture policy makers often overlooked the empowerment potential in the midst of the broader agricultural economy.

*The IRR is a think tank that promotes political and economic freedom. Follow the IRR on Twitter at [IRR SouthAfrica](#).*

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