

SE General  
HD **Rinehart steps up cattle spree Rinehart continues cattle station spree**  
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WC 462 words  
PD 26 November 2014  
SN The West Australian  
SC TWAU  
ED First  
PG 1  
LA English  
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Gina Rinehart is finalising the purchase of four cattle stations covering more than one **million** hectares of WA as she continues one of the biggest spending sprees in the history of the industry.

Australia's richest person is set to become the owner of Moola Bulla (394,236ha), Mt Amhurst (259,201ha), Beefwood Park (205,555ha) and Shamrock Station (178,141ha) in the Kimberley in a deal believed to be about \$65 **million**.

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It comes months after Mrs Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting paid more than \$70 **million** to grab a 50 per cent share in two stations covering 450,000ha in the heart of the Kimberley.

Her charge into agriculture appears far from over. Hancock Prospecting is already eyeing other properties in northern Australia for cattle production, just a week after revealing a \$500 **million** investment in the Queensland **dairy** industry aimed at supplying infant formula to **China**.

The purchases are part of a joint venture with WA's Milne AgriGroup and its owner Graham Laitt.

"This is a great investment for Australia, but there are still some significant conditions which must be met before the **sale** goes through," Hancock spokesman Jason Morrison said last night.

South African interests behind the SAWA Pastoral **Company** are selling the stations three years after Moola Bulla manager Nico Botha threatened to shoot thousands of cattle stranded by the ban on live exports to Indonesia.

Mr Botha's grim warning helped overturn the ban imposed by the then-Labor government in response to harrowing images of animal cruelty in Indonesia.

The **sale** hinges on the stations being compliant under State Government regulations on stocking density and land management.

The Hancock-Milne joint venture **company** Liveringa Station Beef controls Liveringa and Nerrima stations and the mothballed Waroona abattoir in the South West.

The Liveringa **business** plan is based on producing high volumes of prime beef for export, raising long-term hopes that the Waroona abattoir could be reopened. Mr Laitt has spent a decade crossing Angus and Brahman cattle to produce the Brangus breed and the Liveringa assets include irrigated farmland, an artificial insemination centre and a 12,000-head feedlot.

Liveringa and Nerrima have been producing up to 17,000 cattle a year, with 50 per cent of them trucked to farms in southern WA as weaners after the Kimberley wet season. They are fattened up for live export or processing but Mr Laitt has made no secret of his desire to build the **business** around an abattoir producing boxed beef for a range of markets.

Meat and Livestock Australia is predicting the free trade agreement with **China** will provide an \$11 **billion** boost for the industry over the next 15 years.

**CO** hkpros : Hancock Prospecting Pty. Ltd.

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**AN** Document TWAU000020141125eabq0003q