



2026 EXECUTIVE

COMPENSATION GUIDE

What C-Suite and Senior Executives in
Animal Health, Veterinary, Agriculture
and Aquaculture Are Really Earning –
and How to Benchmark Your Worth

INTRODUCTION

Welcome! I'm glad you're here.

The animal health sector is changing fast. Demand for pet care is booming, livestock markets are evolving, and new tech and pharmaceuticals are reshaping the way businesses operate.

With that growth comes a sharper focus on how executives are paid. But even at the top, it's not always clear whether your package truly reflects your impact. Public companies disclose pay, but private and PE-backed businesses? Not so much.

That's why we put this guide together – to help senior leaders see what's really happening across the market and understand where they stand.

At s8, we've spent over a decade placing and advising senior executives across the animal health industry.

We see what drives compensation conversations behind closed doors – and what separates those who negotiate well from those who settle.

As you read, ask yourself:

Are you being rewarded for the value you create?

And, are you positioned for what's next?

When you're ready to chat about it (confidentially) we're here.

Talk soon,
Shannon Wood

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WHAT DRIVES EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION?

1. **Company Size & Revenue:** bigger balance sheets mean bigger base pay.
2. **Location:** metro hubs generally pay more, but relocation packages are common for the right person.
3. **Performance:** bonuses and equity are increasingly tied to clear KPIs.
4. **Experience & Track Record:** proven impact commands a premium.



EMERGING TRENDS

A few shifts we're seeing for executives across the sector:

- **More equity:** companies are using shares and incentives to align leaders with owners.
- **Stronger performance links:** bonuses tied to specific, measurable KPIs.
- **Globalisation of talent:** more cross-border hires, longer notice periods, and relocation support.
- **Tech-ready leaders are winning:** those fluent in technology and digital transformation are negotiating stronger packages.
- **Soft skills are becoming more important:** leadership skills and emotional intelligence are essential for senior leaders in the industry.

WHAT TOP-PERFORMING LEADERS ARE DOING TO COMMAND STRONGER OFFERS?

The executives securing the best outcomes don't wait for boards to decide what they're worth – **they shape the conversation.**

Here's how:

1. **They lead with impact.** They can point to specific results, such as revenue growth, and they invest in building their soft skills.
2. **They negotiate the whole package.** Base, bonuses, LTIs, equity – not just salary.
3. **They stay visible.** They're quietly present in networks, they're active on LinkedIn, and they're known to headhunters.
4. **They align with shareholder success.** They connect their results with business outcomes.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The leaders with the strongest packages treat compensation as a strategic lever, not an afterthought.

A SIMPLE FRAMEWORK TO CHECK YOUR CURRENT PACKAGE

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| 01 | Base Salary | Is it competitive with your peers? |
| 02 | Bonuses / Short-Term Incentives | Are your targets clear, fair and achievable? |
| 03 | Long-Term Incentives (Equity, Stock, RSUs) | Does your package create meaningful wealth over 3 to 5 years? |
| 04 | Benefits & Perks | Are you maximising non-cash benefits (super, flexibility, wellbeing)? |
| 05 | Alignment with Impact | Does your pay reflect what you've delivered? |
| 06 | Cultural Fit | Are you aligned with the team and leadership style? |
| 07 | Location & Travel | Are you happy with your current location and commute? |

PRO TIP

Executives who revisit these questions annually are always better prepared when new opportunities arise.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

The real question isn't just "what are executives earning?" but "what should you be earning?"



- Are you being compensated in line with peers at your level?
- Do you know how your package stacks up in today's market?
- And, are you prepared to negotiate from a position of strength?

If you're unsure where you stand, we can help you benchmark quietly and accurately.

Many of the best roles in animal health never appear on job boards. They're filled through networks, referrals, and confidential searches.

That's where we come in. At S8, we partner with leading animal health companies to find their next CEOs, COOs, Directors, and other senior executives. These positions can require a confidential search, meaning they're never advertised publicly.

Additionally, any senior roles can take months to fill, given the detailed recruitment process and notice periods. So we encourage you to reach out for a chat, even if you're not actively looking for a role right now.

Ready for a confidential conversation about your career trajectory?

Give me a call on +61 400 850 040 or email me at shannon@s8ers.com.au

CEO

COMPENSATION

CEOs command the highest packages - and for good reason.

- **Public Companies**
 - Packages from \$450k base, with up to 60% tied to incentives.
 - Recent example: Ridley (Animal Nutrition) – Total \$2.4m; 61% performance-based
- **Private Companies**
 - **Base salary:** Typically \$350k+, though this can be much higher in larger organisations
 - **Bonuses:** Bonuses can range from 20-50% of base salary

CFO

COMPENSATION

- **Public Companies**
 - \$380k-\$1.0m total package, depending on company scale.

RECENT EXAMPLE

- **Apiam Animal Health (Veterinary):** Total package \$382k, of which 90% is fixed remuneration and 10% is performance-linked compensation
 - **Ridley (Animal Nutrition):** Total package \$1.018m, of which 40% is performance-related
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- **Private companies:**
 - **Base salary:** \$200-500k
 - **Bonuses:** 10-20%

COO

COMPENSATION

- **Public Companies**
 - \$270k-650k total packages.

RECENT EXAMPLE

- **Apiam Animal Health (Veterinary):** Total compensation of \$269k, of which 94% is fixed remuneration and 6% is performance-related
- **Ridley (Animal Nutrition):** Total compensation of \$517k - \$628k, of which 21 - 29% is performance-related

- **Private companies:**
 - **Base salary:** \$200-500k
 - **Bonuses:** On average, 20% - though this will vary from sector to sector, and country to country

RECENT EXAMPLE

- We placed a candidate in a COO role with base salary of \$350k NZD + performance incentives

Data is useful – but it's only half the story.

The real differentiator is how you position yourself, how you negotiate, and the kind of roles you choose to pursue.

At s8, we work with a select number of senior leaders each year – helping them understand their value, stay visible to the right boards, and secure roles that match both their impact and their vision.

If you'd like to quietly explore what's possible next, we'd love to talk. Reach out to book a confidential call

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Or use the QR Code
to go to our website
www.s8ers.com.au

