



14th February 2019

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – January 2019

Contents

Section 1	Monthly numbers of home killed livestock slaughtered	page 2
Section 2	Average dressed carcase weights	page 2
Section 3	Monthly volumes of home killed meat production	page 3
Section 4	Average weekly numbers of livestock slaughtered	page 3
Section 5	Monthly numbers of livestock slaughtered by country	page 5
Section 6	Methodology, notes and revisions policy	page 6

Key points

The key results for **January 2019 compared to January 2018** are:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in January 2019 were up 0.2% on January 2018 at 170,000 head. Beef and veal production was 80,000 tonnes, 1.2% lower than in January 2018.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were down 6.9% on January 2018 at 1035,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 24,000 tonnes, 2.7% lower than in January 2018.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 2.6% higher than in January 2018 at 936,000 head. Pigmeat production was 82,000 tonnes, 1.5% higher than in January 2018.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 14th March 2019. Additional time series which include weekly slaughter averages, production and trade data can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cattle-sheep-and-pig-slaughter>

Enquiries on this publication to: Julie Rumsey, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Room 201, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1 - 2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX.
Tel: ++ 44 (0)2080 266306, email: julie.rumsey@defra.gov.uk

A National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. For general enquiries about National Statistics, contact the National Statistics Public Enquiry Service: tel. 0845 601 3034 email info@statistics.gov.uk. You can also find National Statistics on the internet at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>.

Section 1: Monthly numbers of home killed livestock slaughtered

Table 1 shows monthly estimates of the number of home killed cattle, sheep and pigs, slaughtered as meat for human consumption in UK abattoirs.

Table 1: United Kingdom monthly numbers of livestock slaughtered

	thousand head				
	January 2018 31 days	November 2018 30 days	December 2018 31 days	January 2019 31 days	yr on yr % change
Steers	89	94	79	86	-2.8%
Heifers	67	73	62	70	4.2%
Young Bulls	14	15	12	14	0.4%
Cows and Adult Bulls	64	70	56	60	-6.7%
Calves(1)	7	13	9	9	24%
Clean Sheep	1112	1236	1198	1035	-6.9%
Ewes and Rams	131	138	140	142	9.0%
Clean Pigs	912	952	835	936	2.6%
Sows and Boars	21	22	17	25	14%

(1) The definition of calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year". Please see methodology for full details.

Section 2: Average dressed carcass weights

Table 2 shows the monthly average dressed carcass weight (DCW) of livestock slaughtered for meat for human consumption in the United Kingdom.

Table 2: United Kingdom average dressed carcass weights

	kilogramme			
	January 2018	November 2018	December 2018	January 2019
Steers	371.6	365.9	367.3	373.7
Heifers	333.6	329.2	331.5	336.0
Young Bulls	321.4	327.1	323.7	325.8
Cows and Adult Bulls	319.1	306.8	309.1	320.7
Calves(1)	103.1	54.5	66.7	68.2
Clean Sheep	19.3	19.2	19.1	19.8
Ewes and Rams	25.7	25.6	25.9	26.0
Clean Pigs	85.3	83.7	83.0	83.9
Sows and Boars	141.6	143.5	145.3	144.8

(1)The definition of calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year". Please see methodology for full details.

Section 3: Monthly volumes of home killed meat production

Table 3 shows the monthly volumes of meat produced in UK abattoirs.

Table 3: United Kingdom monthly volumes of meat production

	thousand tonnes				
	January 2018 31 days	November 2018 30 days	December 2018 31 days	January 2019 31 days	yr on yr % change
Beef	81	86	72	80	-1.2%
Mutton and Lamb	25	27	27	24	-2.7%
Pigmeat	81	83	72	82	1.5%

Section 4: Average weekly numbers of home killed livestock slaughtered

Table 4 shows the average weekly slaughter figures for the last thirteen months. The monthly slaughter figures in section one are affected by the number of days in the survey period. To get a clearer measure of trends weekly averages are calculated using the number of livestock slaughtered and the number of days in each period.

Longer term trends can be seen in Figures 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3, following this table.

Table 4: United Kingdom average weekly numbers of livestock slaughtered

	thousand head												
	2018												2019
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Steers	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	18	19	22	22	18	19
Heifers	15	16	15	15	15	14	13	14	14	16	17	14	16
Young Bulls	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	14	13	12	12	11	11	14	12	14	16	16	13	14
Calves	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	2
Clean Sheep	251	243	240	187	199	204	233	285	259	288	288	270	234
Ewes and Rams	29	31	28	27	28	28	30	37	30	35	32	32	32
Clean Pigs	206	217	195	205	203	194	199	213	198	218	222	189	211
Sows and Boars	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	6

(1)The definition of calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year". Please see methodology for full details.

Figure 4:1 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of cattle slaughtered

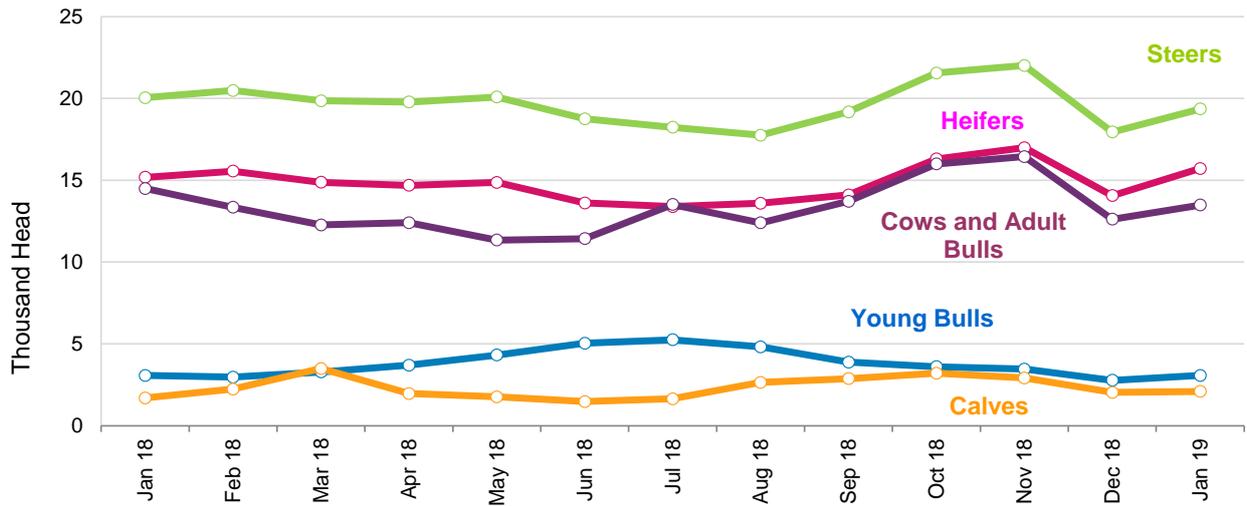


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

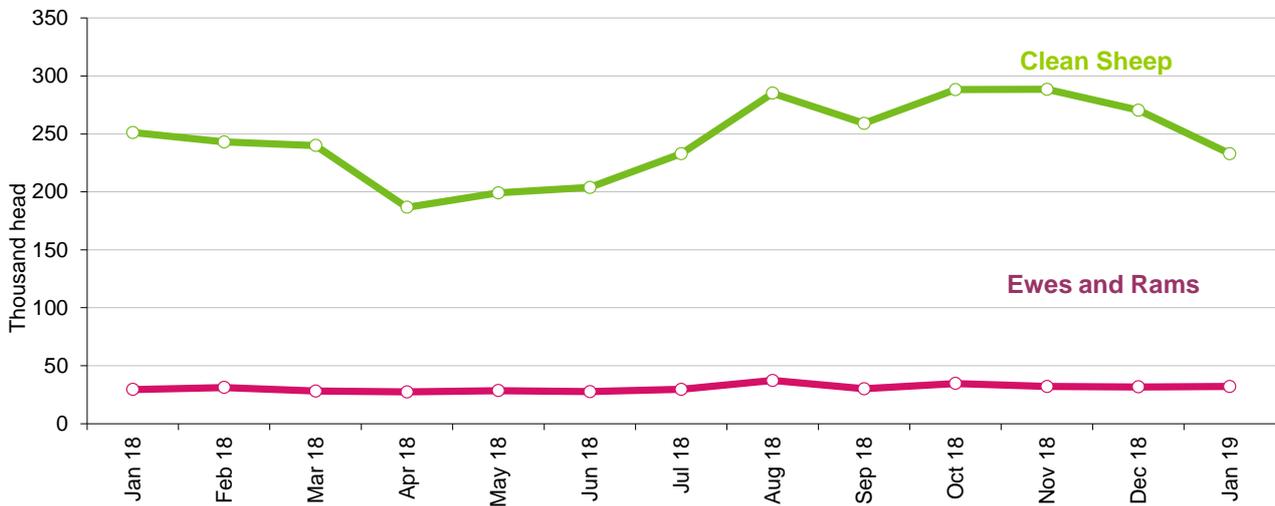
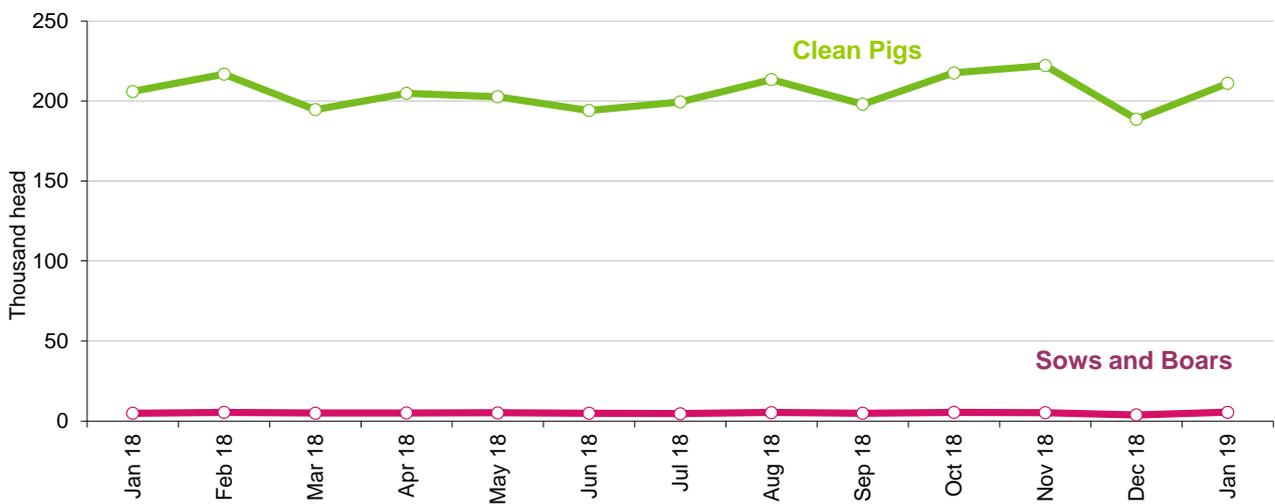


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



Section 5: Monthly numbers of home killed livestock slaughtered by country

Table 5 shows monthly estimates of the number of cattle, sheep and pigs slaughtered for meat in England and Wales, Scotland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Table 5: United Kingdom monthly numbers of livestock slaughtered by country

	thousand head		
	November 2018	December 2018	January 2019
	30 days	31 days	31 days
England & Wales			
Steers	60	50	55
Heifers	46	37	43
Young Bulls	10	8	9
Cows and Adult Bulls	54	44	46
Calves	12	9	9
Clean Sheep	1087	1059	898
Ewes and Rams	133	136	138
Clean Pigs	767	664	755
Sows and Boars	21	16	23
Scotland			
Steers	19	16	17
Heifers	14	13	14
Young Bulls	2	2	1
Cows and Adult Bulls	6	4	5
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	112	108	109
Ewes and Rams	2	2	1
Clean Pigs	31	27	28
Sows and Boars	1	1	1
Great Britain			
Steers	79	66	72
Heifers	60	51	57
Young Bulls	12	9	10
Cows and Adult Bulls	60	48	51
Calves	12	9	9
Clean Sheep	1199	1167	1008
Ewes and Rams	135	138	140
Clean Pigs	797	691	783
Sows and Boars	22	17	25
Northern Ireland			
Steers	16	14	14
Heifers	13	12	13
Young Bulls	3	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	10	8	9
Calves	1	0	0
Clean Sheep	37	30	27
Ewes and Rams	3	2	3
Clean Pigs	155	144	153
Sows and Boars	0	0	0

Section 6: Data users, methodology, Definitions and revisions policy

Data users

1. Users of the data include the EU Commission where these slaughtering statistics are required monthly under Regulation no. EC.1165/2008. Detailed information on this legislation is available by selecting “Animal Production” at <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/agriculture/legislation>. European level statistics on meat products (which includes data tables showing results at EU Member State level) are available at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Agricultural_products#Meat_and_milk
2. The livestock industry is also a major user of the data, including divisions of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB). AHDB Pork (formally known as BPEX, representing the English pig industry) and AHDB Beef and Lamb (formerly EBLEX, representing the English beef and sheep industry). Industry users rely heavily on the numbers of slaughterings and meat production to assess the current state of the industry and predict the available supplies of meat for the coming year. This, in turn, can affect meat prices and trade decisions on levels of imports and exports to maintain supply. Users have always been very keen for the slaughtering statistics to be produced as quickly as possible so that the data is still relevant. For this reason, we collect and publish these statistics to a very tight timetable, publishing within three weeks of the survey date. The “Market Intelligence” and “Market Outlook” Reports on the AHDB Beef and Lamb website refer consistently to our statistics at <http://beefandlamb.ahdb.org.uk/markets/> The AHDB Pork site provides more in-depth analysis of pigmeat production statistics at <http://pork.ahdb.org.uk/prices-stats/>
3. Contact details are available on the front page of this notice, for you to send feedback or ask questions about the information provided.

Methodology

4. Defra runs a monthly survey of registered England and Wales slaughterhouses. It is a statutory survey (approximately 91) that collects information on livestock slaughter numbers and weight of meat produced. All major slaughterhouses participate in the survey and the response rate is typically 100%. Similar surveys are run by RERAD in Scotland and by DAERA in Northern Ireland. Scottish statistics on livestock slaughterings are available in the Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Agriculture-Fisheries/PubEconomicReport> (Tables A5 and A6). This website also contains contact details and more information. Northern Ireland results are available at <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/slaughtering-cattle-and-sheep> and <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/slaughtering-pigs-2003>
5. The England and Wales slaughter survey accounts for around 90% of the E&W slaughterhouse throughput for each livestock type. These data are supplemented by administrative data from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for smaller slaughterhouses to give complete monthly coverage of livestock slaughterings.

6. Information on the weight of meat produced from a sample of animals weighed at slaughterhouses is obtained from survey respondents, around 55 slaughterhouse respondents. From the information provided average dressed carcass weights for each animal type are primarily calculated by adding up the total weight of the meat produced and dividing by the number of animals weighed. Cold dressed carcass weights are recorded.
7. The volume of meat production is estimated from the number of all livestock slaughtered and average dressed carcass weight information collected. This total 'Home killed' production includes livestock imported into the United Kingdom for slaughter.
8. The data are subject to a variety of validation checks which identify inconsistencies in the data. All data are cleaned prior to publication in discussion with the survey respondents.
9. With effect from February 2016 the statistics published in this notice are based on calendar rather than statistical months. This change simplifies our survey processes and brings our slaughter survey in line with our milk surveys which are already run on a calendar month basis; it also removes the need for the 53 week year (which would have to be 2016). Since the end of weekly slaughter survey several years ago, there is no legislative requirement for weekly data, so since then we have derived the average weekly throughput from the monthly survey data.
10. The January 2016 data will include the last week of December 2015 and therefore be classed as a 5 week month. From 1st February 2016 onwards the statistics are based on calendar months.

Definitions

11. Steers (or Bullocks): Castrated males over 1 year old, raised for beef.

Heifers: Female animals that have not calved. Over 1 year old, raised for beef.

Young bulls: Non-castrated young males, raised for beef, generally slaughtered around 13 months old.

Prime cattle: All those raised specifically for beef production. Total of Steers + Heifers + Young Bulls.

Breeding bulls: Older cull males, previously used for breeding

Cows: Older cull females, previously used for breeding

Calves: All bovine animals aged 1 year old or younger. Prior to May 2014, the definition was "animals weighing less than 165kg".

Revisions policy

12. Figures in this notice are provisional and subject to revision. We will provide information about any revisions we make to previously published information in this statistics notice and the associated datasets. Revisions could occur for various reasons, including:

- a. if we have not received survey data from respondents we make an estimate based on their previous returns. These estimates will be replaced with actual survey data when it is received.
- b. survey respondents occasionally supply amended figures for previous periods.
- c. if we have not received administrative data for the smaller slaughterhouses we make an estimate based on previous data received. These estimates will be replaced with actual data when it is received.