



06 March 2014

Farming Statistics - Livestock Populations at 1 December 2013, England

This release shows livestock numbers on agricultural holdings in England. These results are from the December Pigs Survey as at 1 December 2013, along with data from the administrative sources of the Cattle Tracing System (CTS) and the Annual Sheep and Goat (SAG) Inventory. Full details of these sources are provided in the methodological notes on page 6.

Key points:

Cattle ([Table 1](#))

Between December 2012 and December 2013, the total number of cattle and calves in England increased by 0.3% to 5.3 million.

Pigs ([Table 2](#))

The total number of pigs in England has increased by 5.5% since December 2012 to 3.6 million. Fattening pigs rose by 7.0% which was partly offset by a fall of 4.2% in breeding pigs.

Sheep ([Table 3](#))

The total number of sheep and lambs in England rose by 1.6% between December 2012 and December 2013 to 10.9 million. The female breeding flock increased by 6.3% from 6.5 million in 2012 to 6.9 million in 2013.

Figures for livestock populations in England are presented separately from those for the UK, which will be published on the 19th of March this year.

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Detailed results

Cattle

The total number of cattle and calves in England increased by 0.3% to 5.3 million between December 2012 and December 2013, continuing the slight upward trend in numbers for a second year. England's dairy herd increased by 1.5% to 1.1 million while the beef herd continued to fall, down by 2.6% to 699 thousand during 2013.

Table 1: Cattle and calves on agricultural holdings on 1 December ^(a)

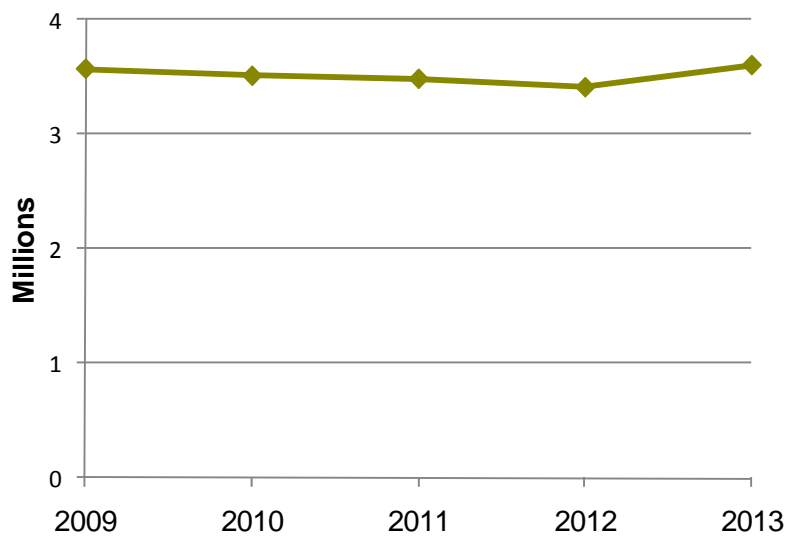
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	% change 2013 / 2012
	thousands					
Total cattle and calves	5 465	5 434	5 275	5 308	5 323	0.3
All female cattle	3 955	3 946	3 849	3 843	3 843	0.0
Aged 2 years or more	2 390	2 380	2 276	2 254	2 269	0.7
Total breeding herd	1 911	1 909	1 851	1 841	1 838	-0.1
Beef herd	731	745	730	718	699	-2.6
Dairy herd	1 181	1 164	1 122	1 123	1 139	1.5
Other female cattle	478	471	425	413	430	4.2
Beef	215	206	169	171	188	10.1
Dairy	263	265	256	242	242	0.0
Aged between 1 and 2 years	760	741	742	761	764	0.4
Beef	456	422	419	434	436	0.6
Dairy	303	318	323	328	328	0.1
Less than 1 year	805	825	830	828	810	-2.1
Beef	478	491	494	488	472	-3.3
Dairy	328	335	337	339	338	-0.4
All male cattle	1 510	1 488	1 427	1 466	1 480	1.0
Aged 2 years or more	215	202	175	176	202	14.5
Aged between 1 and 2 years	564	550	532	544	562	3.3
Less than 1 year	731	737	720	746	717	-3.8

(a) These figures have been sourced from the Cattle Tracing System (CTS). The data include returns from all holdings with cattle so are not subject to survey error.

Pigs

The total number of pigs in England increased by 5.5% since December 2012 to just over 3.6 million, and reverses the decline seen over the last few years. The rise was driven by a 7.0% increase in the number of fattening pigs to just under 3.2 million. This was partially offset by a fall in the number of breeding pigs by 4.2% to 411 thousand animals in December 2013.

Figure 1: Total pig numbers on commercial holdings, December 2009 – 2013



Data for pigs are provided for only those holdings considered to have a commercial level of agricultural activity. This allows data to be directly comparable to data from the June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture. The following document provides further detail on why data is provided for commercial holdings only (see section 3.3 on thresholds):

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182206/defra-stats-foodfarm-landuselivestock-june-junemethodology-20120126.pdf

The switch to providing pig numbers for only commercial holdings had minimal impact on the data.

Table 2: Pigs on commercial agricultural holdings on 1 December

	thousands					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	% change 2013 / 2012
Total pigs	3 575	3 514	3 489	3 417	3 607	5.5
Breeding pigs	415	415	415	429	411	-4.2
Female breeding herd	346	342	337	332	326	-2.0
Sows in pig	241	223	218	227	226	-0.5
Gilts in pig	50	57	56	57	50	-13.3
Other sows	55	63	63	48	50	4.4
Other breeding pigs	69	72	78	97	86	-11.9
Boars being used for service	14	14	13	13	13	-3.3
Gilts intended for first time breeding	55	59	65	84	73	-13.3
Fattening pigs (incl. barren sows)	3 160	3 100	3 074	2 988	3 195	7.0

Sheep

The total number of sheep and lambs in England increased by 1.6% during 2013 to 10.9 million. England's female breeding flock increased by 6.3% to just over 6.9 million over that period. A decrease was seen in the 'other sheep and lambs' category, where the population fell by 5.7% to 4.0 million against the overall upward trend in sheep numbers.

Figure 2: Total sheep and lambs, December 2009 – 2013

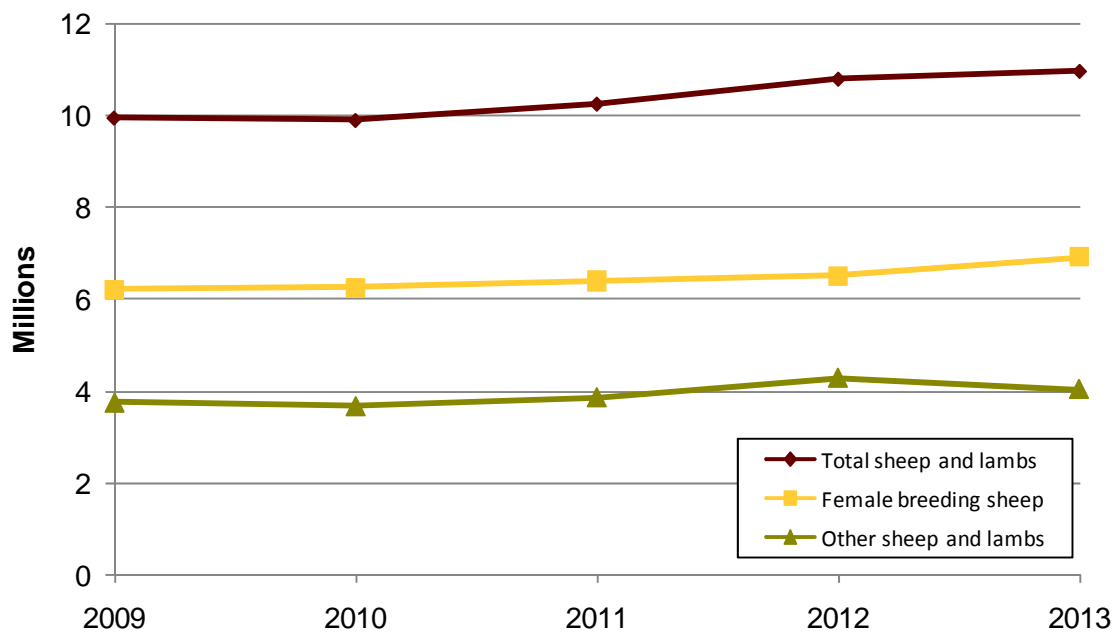


Table 3: Sheep and lambs on agricultural holdings on 1 December

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	thousands % change 2013 / 2012
Total sheep and lambs	9 944	9 892	10 242	10 777	10 944	1.6
Female breeding sheep	6 203	6 227	6 384	6 493	6 905	6.3
Other sheep and lambs	3 741	3 665	3 858	4 283	4 039	-5.7

Methodological notes

All percentage changes in this release's tables are based on unrounded figures. Therefore, totals may not necessarily agree with the sum of their components due to rounding.

Livestock

Data for this 2013 December livestock publication comes from a number of different sources. Cattle data came from the Cattle Tracing System (an administrative system primarily set up for animal health monitoring purposes). Sheep data came from the annual Sheep and Goat Inventory (an annual exercise requiring all sheep and goat keepers to record animals under their keepership at 1 December). Pig data were gathered using 300 paper forms, achieving a response rate of 81%, so the results for pigs are subject to a degree of sampling error.

In CTS, the breed of the cattle is used to identify a breed purpose. Around 2% of all female cattle do not have an assigned breed purpose or are of dual breed. In all above cattle results, these cattle have been allocated to either dairy or beef at holding level based on the other cattle on the holding. Where there are no other cattle on the holding, they are allocated on the basis of the national split between dairy and beef in that age band.

Crops

Up until 2011, December crop area data for England was collected via an annual survey run by Defra. Following consultation, it was decided that the annual planting survey run each December by the Home Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA) would be a suitable alternative source of data. The removal of the Defra survey reduced duplication of effort and also excessive survey burden on the farmer. The England crop areas gathered by the HGCA are published on their website at:

<http://www.hgca.com/markets/survey-results.aspx>

The HGCA is a division of the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB). The AHDB is a statutory levy board who aim to make agriculture and horticulture industries more competitive and sustainable through factual, evidence-based advice.