



17 April 2014

## United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – March 2014

### Contents

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

### Key points

This release shows the latest monthly information on the slaughtering of cattle, sheep and pigs. It also includes dressed carcass weight and meat production information. The key results for **March 2014** are given below:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings were 4.1% higher than in March 2013 at 154 thousand head. Beef and veal production was 69 thousand tonnes, 8.1% higher than in March 2013, as a result of the increase in slaughterings and strong carcass weights.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 6.2% lower than in March 2013 at 840 thousand head. Mutton and lamb production was 21 thousand tonnes, 1.8% lower than in March 2013, with continued heavier weights helping offset the reduction in sheep and lambs available for slaughter.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 1.4% higher than in March 2013 at 778 thousand head. Pigmeat production was 66 thousand tonnes, 3.4% higher than in March 2013, driven by increasing carcass weights.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 22 May 2014. Additional time series which include weekly slaughter averages, production and trade data can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cattle-sheep-and-pig-slaughter>

---

**Enquiries on this publication to:** Sarah Thompson, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Room 201, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1 - 2 Peasholme Green, York YO1 7PX.  
Tel: ++ 44 (0)1904 455097, email:sarah.thompson@defra.gsi.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](mailto: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. The survey is run according to statistical, rather than calendar months, the number of weeks in the statistical month is specified below.

**Table 1: United Kingdom monthly numbers of livestock slaughtered** thousand head

	<b>January 2014</b> 5 weeks	<b>February 2014</b> 4 weeks	<b>March 2014</b> 4 weeks
Steers	86	75	75
Heifers	73	62	61
Young Bulls	23	18	18
Cows and Adult Bulls	60	49	45
Calves	8	9	11
Clean Sheep	1054	801	840
Ewes and Rams	182	145	134
Clean Pigs	941	783	778
Sows and Boars	25	19	20

## Section 2: Average dressed carcass weights

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

**Table 2: United Kingdom average dressed carcass weights** kilogramme

	<b>January 2014</b>	<b>February 2014</b>	<b>March 2014</b>
Steers	364.6	367.6	372.5
Heifers	323.7	322.2	328.0
Young Bulls	336.8	339.4	341.0
Cows and Adult Bulls	319.2	321.8	322.2
Calves	55.1	49.3	42.9
Clean Sheep	19.3	19.6	20.2
Ewes and Rams	28.5	26.9	27.5
Clean Pigs	81.2	81.2	81.0
Sows and Boars	148.3	142.6	142.1

### Section 3: Monthly volumes of home killed meat production

Table 3 shows the monthly volumes of meat produced in UK abattoirs. Data is shown according to statistical, rather than calendar months, number of weeks in statistical month as specified.

**Table 3: United Kingdom monthly volumes of meat production** thousand tonnes

	January 2014 5 weeks	February 2014 4 weeks	March 2014 4 weeks
Beef	82	70	69
Mutton and Lamb	26	20	21
Pigmeat	80	66	66

### Section 4: Average weekly numbers of home killed livestock slaughtered

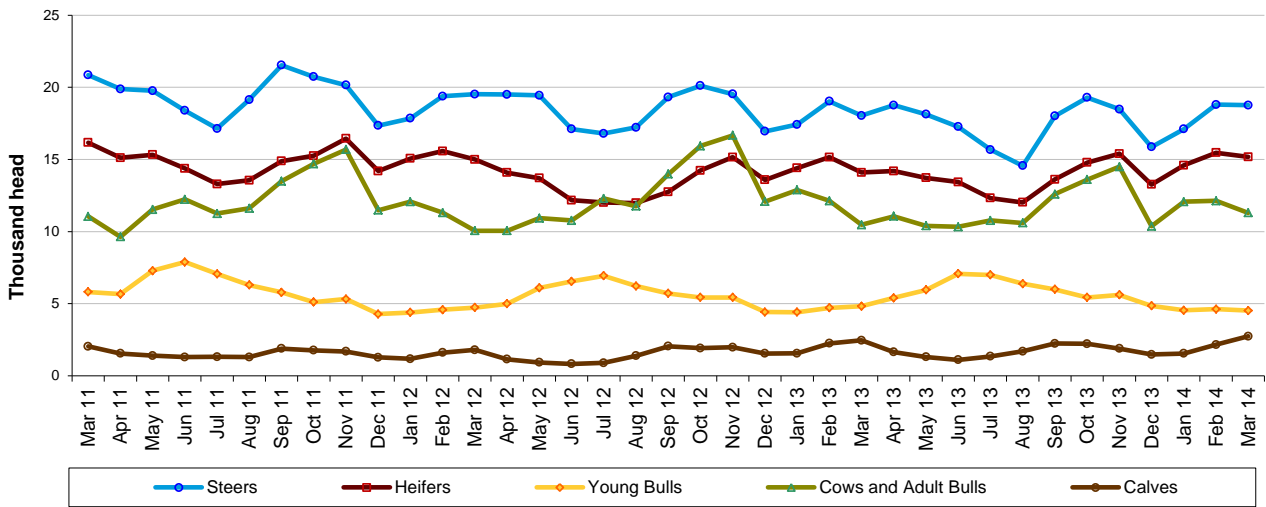
Table 4 shows the average weekly slaughter figures for the last thirteen months. The monthly slaughter figures in section one are affected by the number of weeks in the statistical month. To get a clearer measure of trends weekly averages are calculated by dividing the number of livestock slaughtered each month by the number of weeks in the statistical month.

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

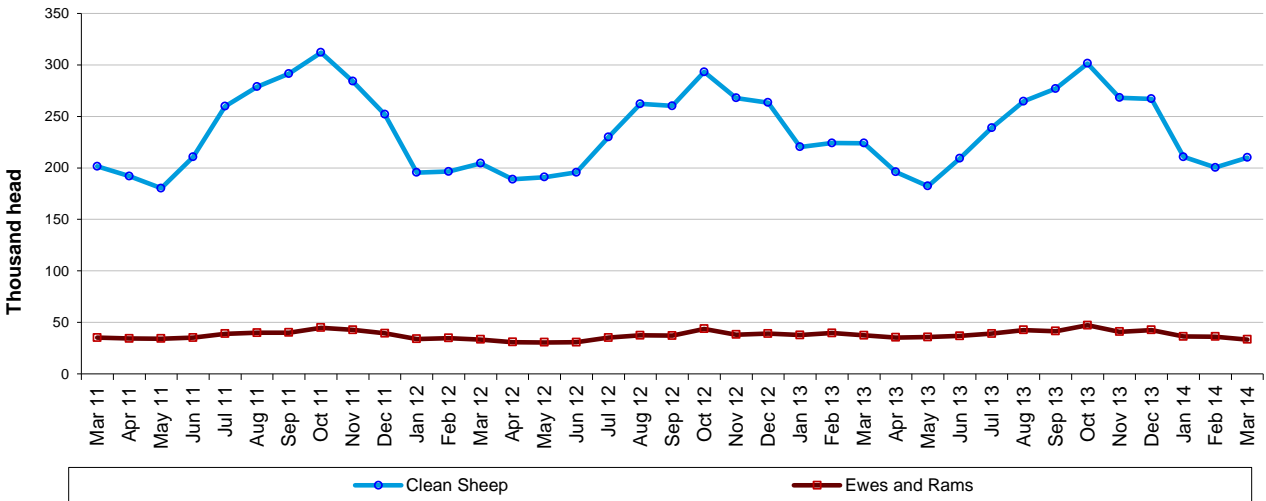
**Table 4: United Kingdom average weekly numbers of livestock slaughtered**

	thousand head												
	2013						2014						
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Steers	18	19	18	17	16	15	18	19	18	16	17	19	19
Heifers	14	14	14	13	12	12	14	15	15	13	15	15	15
Young Bulls	5	5	6	7	7	6	6	5	6	5	5	5	5
Cows and Adult Bulls	10	11	10	10	11	11	13	14	14	10	12	12	11
Calves	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	3
Clean Sheep	224	196	182	209	239	265	277	301	268	267	211	200	210
Ewes and Rams	37	35	36	37	39	43	42	47	41	43	36	36	33
Clean Pigs	192	189	183	186	193	192	198	202	207	190	188	196	194
Sows and Boars	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5

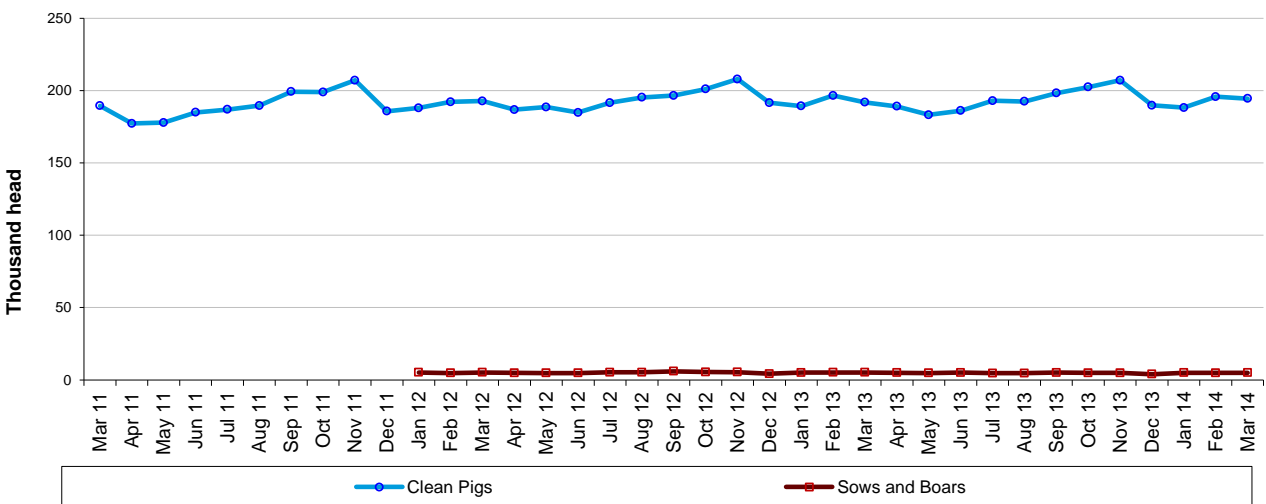
**Figure 4:1 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of cattle slaughtered**



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



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



Data for Oct 10 – Dec 11 is confidential

## 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. Data are shown in statistical months, rather than calendar months. The totals for the countries may not add up to the Great Britain totals or the United Kingdom totals in section one, due to rounding.

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

	January 2014	February 2014	March 2014
	5 weeks	4 weeks	4 weeks
thousand head			
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>			
Steers	56	47	47
Heifers	44	37	37
Young Bulls	15	12	12
Cows and Adult Bulls	47	36	34
Calves	7	8	10
Clean Sheep	880	669	722
Ewes and Rams	174	139	128
Clean Pigs	757	636	633
Sows and Boars	24	19	20
<b>Scotland</b>			
Steers	18	17	18
Heifers	17	14	14
Young Bulls	2	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	6	5	5
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	138	107	98
Ewes and Rams	3	3	2
Clean Pigs	27	23	24
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
<b>Great Britain</b>			
Steers	74	64	64
Heifers	60	51	51
Young Bulls	17	14	14
Cows and Adult Bulls	52	41	38
Calves	7	8	10
Clean Sheep	1018	776	820
Ewes and Rams	177	141	131
Clean Pigs	783	660	656
Sows and Boars	25	19	20
<b>Northern Ireland</b>			
Steers	12	11	11
Heifers	12	11	10
Young Bulls	6	5	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	8	8	7
Calves	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	36	25	20
Ewes and Rams	5	4	3
Clean Pigs	157	123	122
Sows and Boars	0	0	0

## Section 6: Data users, methodology 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](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Agricultural_products#Meat_and_milk)
2. The livestock industry are also major users of the data, including divisions of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) known as BPEX (representing the English pig industry) and 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 EBLEX website refer consistently to our statistics at <http://markets.eblex.org.uk/markets/market-intelligence-publications.aspx>. The BPEX site provides more in-depth analysis of pigmeat production statistics at <http://www.bpex.org.uk/prices-facts-figures/production/UKpigmeatsuppliesforecasts.aspx>
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 105) 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 DARD 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 <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/statistics/agricultural-inputs-and-outputs.htm>
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 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.

### **Revisions policy**

9. 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.
10. **This month minor revisions have been made to the data for February 2014 as administrative data has now been received for this month, so has replaced previous estimates. The scale of revision is small, for example the February 2014 UK Mutton and Lamb production has only been revised by around 193 tonnes (1%).**