



16<sup>th</sup> June 2016

## United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – May 2016

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### Key points

From February 2016 onwards data collection moved from a statistical month to a calendar month basis. Year on year comparisons are therefore calculated using the daily average for throughput and production to account for the varied number of days in each period.

The key results for **May 2016 compared to May 2015** are:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in May 2016 were 0.5% higher than May 2015 at 159,000 head. Beef and veal production was 72,000 tonnes, 2.8% higher than in May 2015.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 4.5% lower than in May 2015 at 880,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 21,000 tonnes, 3.7% lower than in May 2015.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 1.0% lower than in May 2015 at 863,000 head. Pigmeat production was 73,000 tonnes, 0.8% lower than in May 2015.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016. 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>

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## 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. From February 2016 onwards, the survey is run according to calendar rather than statistical months. To allow a direct comparison with 2015 data which was based on a statistical month, the number of days in each period is specified below and comparisons are based on average daily throughput in the month.

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

	May 2015 28 days	March 2016 31 days	April 2016 30 days	May 2016 31 days	yr on yr % change *
Steers	74	88	92	81	-1.2%
Heifers	53	63	63	57	-2.9%
Young Bulls	16	15	19	22	19%
Cows and Adult Bulls	38	52	54	47	12%
Calves(1)	5	17	11	10	65%
Clean Sheep	833	1004	864	880	-4.5%
Ewes and Rams	104	143	129	138	19%
Clean Pigs	787	920	894	863	-1.0%
Sows and Boars	18	23	22	21	3.8%

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

\*Calculated using average daily throughput in each month.

## Section 2: Average dressed carcase weights

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

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

	May 2015	March 2016	April 2016	May 2016
Steers	375.6	376.5	366.4	377.1
Heifers	331.2	316.6	321.7	333.5
Young Bulls	356.3	312.1	303.6	337.1
Cows and Adult Bulls	316.5	311.0	308.0	317.4
Calves(1)	55.7	40.4	54.4	60.0
Clean Sheep	20.2	19.4	20.1	19.6
Ewes and Rams	28.1	26.0	27.0	27.4
Clean Pigs	81.2	82.9	82.3	81.3
Sows and Boars	146.8	143.6	144.7	144.2

(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. From February 2016 onwards, the survey is run according to calendar rather than statistical months. To allow a direct comparison with 2015 data which was based on a statistical month, the number of days in each period is specified below.

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

	May 2015 28 days	March 2016 31 days	April 2016 30 days	May 2016 31 days	yr on yr % change
Beef	63	75	77	72	2.8%
Mutton and Lamb	20	23	21	21	-3.7%
Pigmeat	67	80	77	73	-0.8%

### 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.

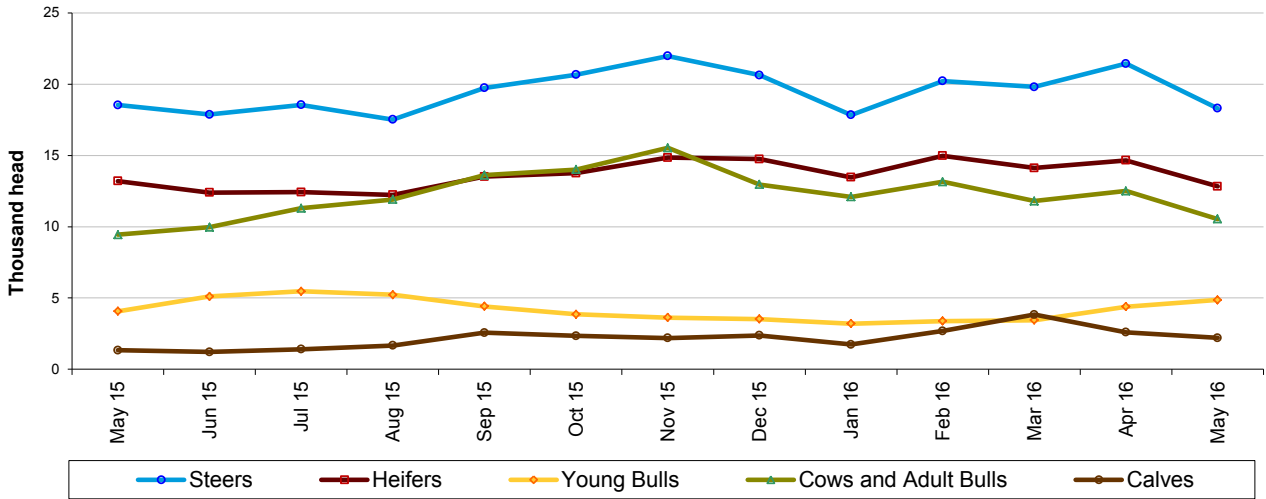
Longer term trends can be seen in Figures 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3, following this table.

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

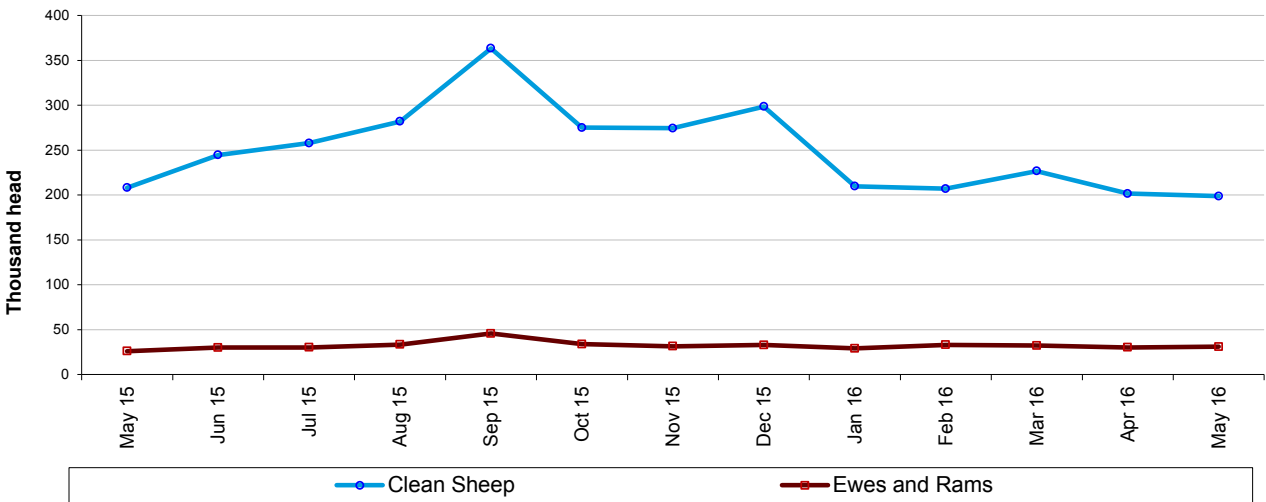
	2015					2016							
	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Steers	19	18	19	18	20	21	22	21	18	20	20	21	18
Heifers	13	12	12	12	14	14	15	15	13	15	14	15	13
Young Bulls	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	4	5
Cows and Adult Bulls	9	10	11	12	14	14	16	13	12	13	12	13	11
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	4	3	2
Clean Sheep	208	245	258	282	363	275	274	299	210	207	227	202	199
Ewes and Rams	26	30	30	33	46	34	32	33	29	33	32	30	31
Clean Pigs	197	203	201	205	212	217	222	211	194	211	208	209	195
Sows and Boars	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5

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

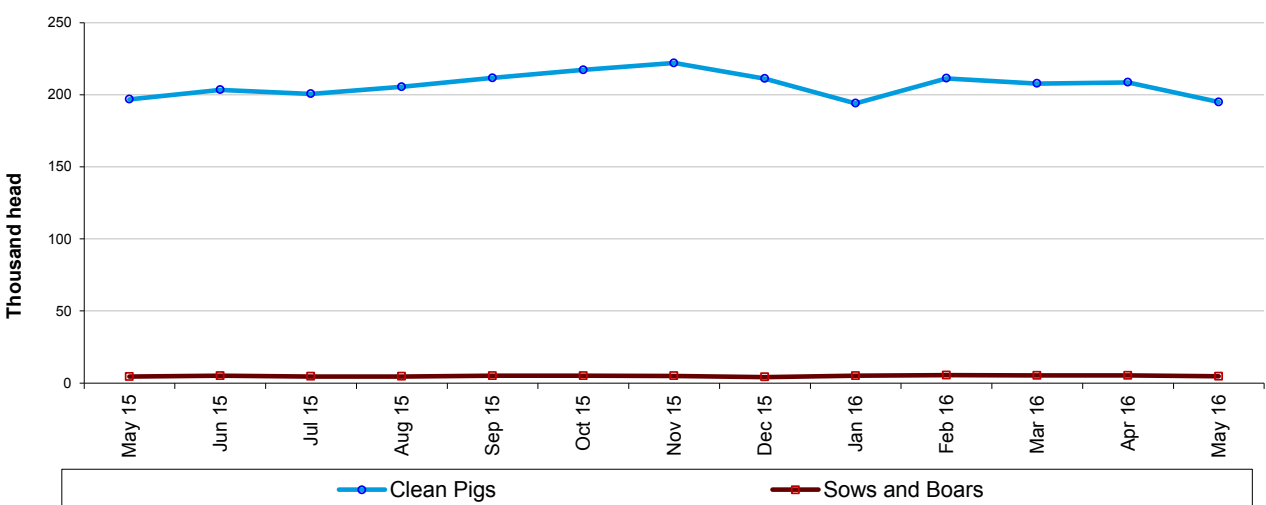
**Figure 4:1 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of cattle slaughtered**



**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		
	March 2016	April 2016	May 2016
	31 days	30 days	31 days
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>			
Steers	56	56	52
Heifers	39	39	37
Young Bulls	11	13	15
Cows and Adult Bulls	40	41	36
Calves	16	10	9
Clean Sheep	882	735	797
Ewes and Rams	140	127	135
Clean Pigs	767	728	709
Sows and Boars	23	22	21
<b>Scotland</b>			
Steers	17	22	17
Heifers	13	15	11
Young Bulls	1	2	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	6	5
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	100	112	59
Ewes and Rams	1	1	1
Clean Pigs	23	31	24
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
<b>Great Britain</b>			
Steers	73	78	69
Heifers	52	53	48
Young Bulls	12	15	18
Cows and Adult Bulls	45	46	40
Calves	16	10	9
Clean Sheep	981	846	856
Ewes and Rams	141	128	136
Clean Pigs	791	759	733
Sows and Boars	23	22	21
<b>Northern Ireland</b>			
Steers	14	14	12
Heifers	10	10	9
Young Bulls	3	3	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	7	7	7
Calves	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	22	18	25
Ewes and Rams	2	1	1
Clean Pigs	130	135	131
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](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 97) 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.
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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

**13. This month there have been no revisions.**