



17th December 2015

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – November 2015

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Key points

This release shows the latest monthly information on the slaughtering of cattle, sheep and pigs. It also includes dressed carcase weight and meat production information. The key results for **November 2015** are given below:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in November 2015 were 1.1% lower than November 2014 at 161 thousand head. Beef and veal production was 77 thousand tonnes, 3.2% higher than in November 2014.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 5.9% lower than in November 2014 at 1.1 million head. Mutton and lamb production was 24 thousand tonnes, 5.4% lower than in November 2014.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 2.0% higher than in November 2014 at 886 thousand head. Pigmeat production was 75 thousand tonnes, 1.3% higher than in November 2014.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 14th January 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. 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

	November 2014 4 weeks	September 2015 4 weeks	October 2015 5 weeks	November 2015 4 weeks	yr on yr % change
Steers	87	75	103	87	1.0%
Heifers	62	50	69	59	-4.2%
Young Bulls	15	17	19	14	-0.6%
Cows and Adult Bulls	58	49	70	61	6.1%
Calves ⁽¹⁾	9	10	12	8	-10%
Clean Sheep	1149	1294	1376	1081	-5.9%
Ewes and Rams	130	171	169	125	-3.9%
Clean Pigs	868	828	1086	886	2.0%
Sows and Boars	19	20	25	20	5.5%

(1)The definition of Calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year old". Pre-May 2014, the definition was "Bovines weighing less than 165kg". Please see Methodology page for full details.

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

	September 2015	October 2015	November 2015
Steers	372.7	372.7	372.5
Heifers	330.9	331.9	331.6
Young Bulls	340.9	329.3	330.2
Cows and Adult Bulls	309.6	310.1	311.8
Calves ⁽¹⁾	59.0	56.7	62.1
Clean Sheep	19.0	19.5	19.6
Ewes and Rams	26.5	25.4	25.3
Clean Pigs	81.0	81.8	81.7
Sows and Boars	146.5	147.6	146.5

(1)The definition of Calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year old". Pre-May 2014, the definition was "Bovines weighing less than 165kg". Please see Methodology page for full details.

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

	September 2015 4 weeks	October 2015 5 weeks	November 2015 4 weeks
Beef	66	90	77
Mutton and Lamb	29	31	24
Pigmeat	70	93	75

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

	2014		2015										
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Steers	22	18	19	20	20	19	19	18	19	18	19	21	22
Heifers	15	14	15	16	15	14	13	12	12	12	12	14	15
Young Bulls	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	5	4	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	14	12	13	13	11	10	9	10	11	12	12	14	15
Calves ⁽¹⁾	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Clean Sheep	287	277	226	219	234	217	208	245	258	282	324	275	270
Ewes and Rams	33	31	27	29	27	28	26	30	30	33	43	34	31
Clean Pigs	217	199	191	204	203	194	197	203	201	205	207	217	221
Sows and Boars	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5

(1)The definition of Calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year old". Pre-May 2014, the definition was "Bovines weighing less than 165kg". Please see Methodology page for full details.

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

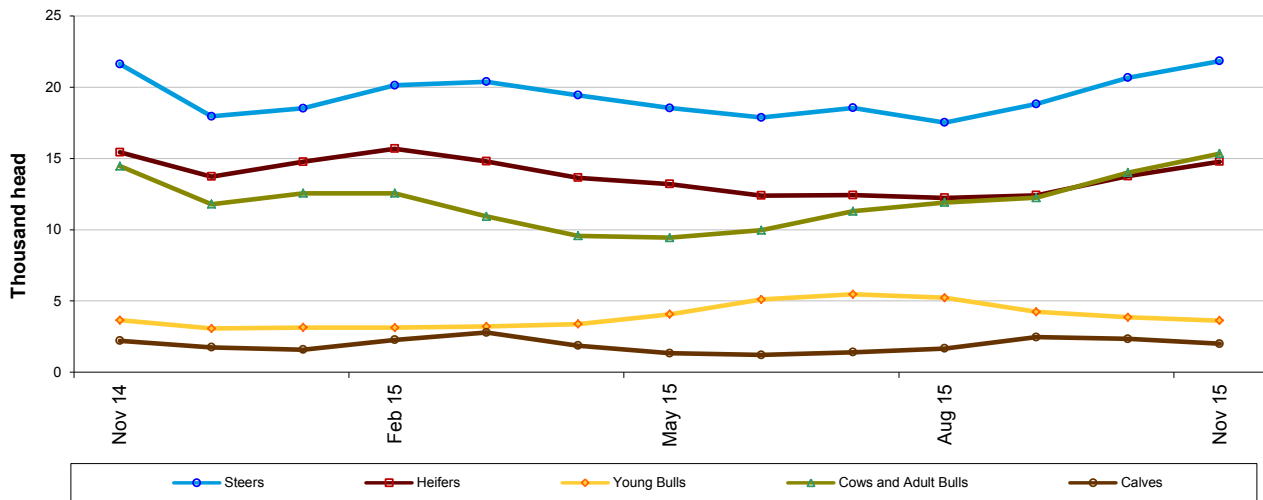


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

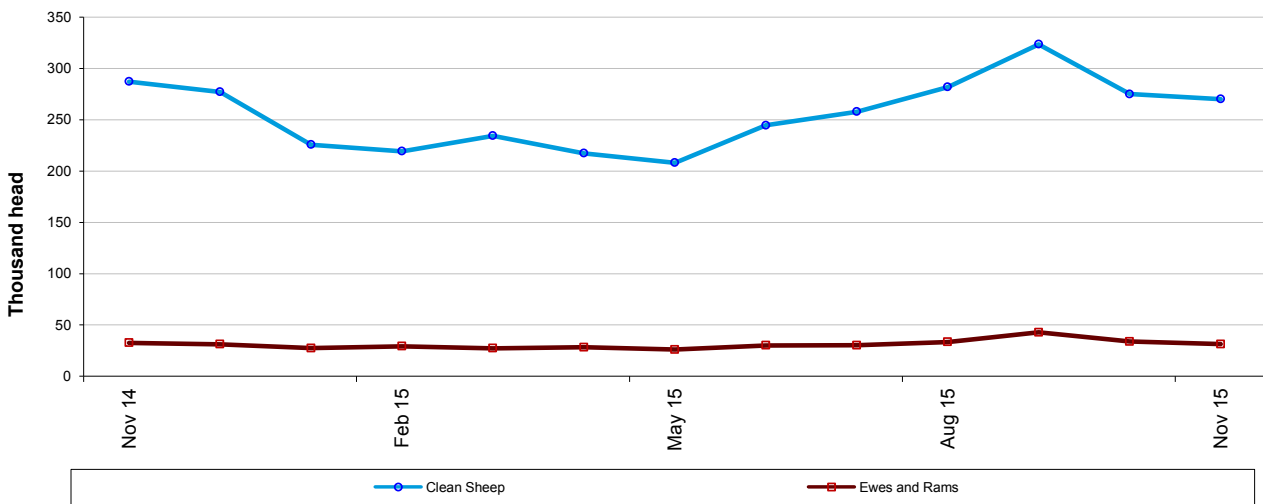
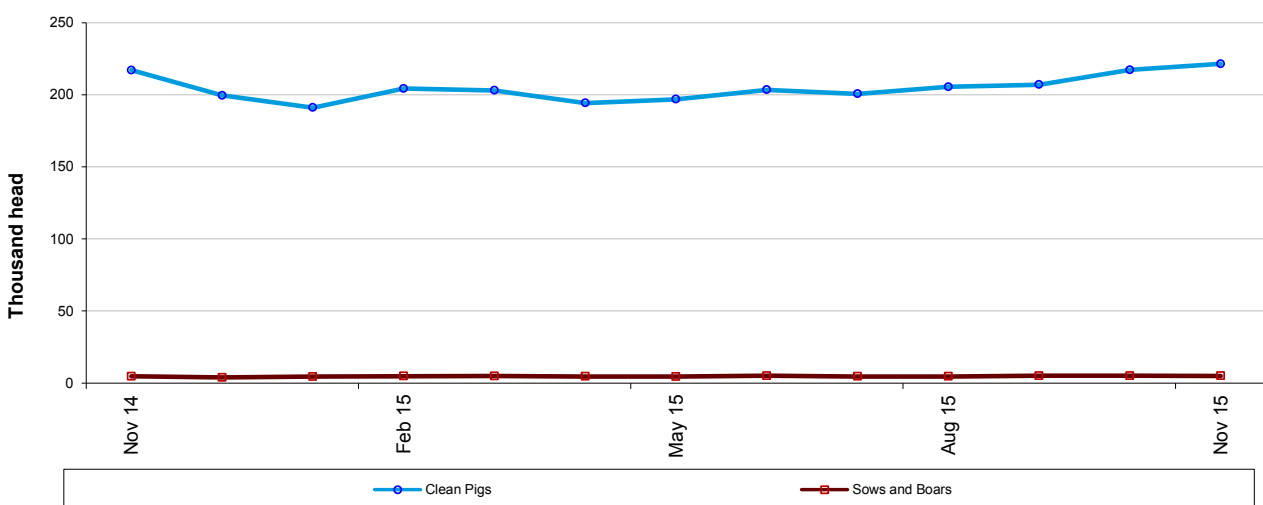


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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		
	September 2015	October 2015	November 2015
	4 weeks	5 weeks	4 weeks
England & Wales			
Steers	47	65	54
Heifers	31	42	37
Young Bulls	12	14	11
Cows and Adult Bulls	36	52	46
Calves ⁽¹⁾	9	11	7
Clean Sheep	1118	1174	933
Ewes and Rams	167	164	121
Clean Pigs	675	891	728
Sows and Boars	20	25	20
Scotland			
Steers	16	20	17
Heifers	10	15	13
Young Bulls	3	3	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	7	6
Calves ⁽¹⁾	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	124	141	106
Ewes and Rams	1	2	2
Clean Pigs	23	30	24
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
Great Britain			
Steers	63	85	72
Heifers	42	58	50
Young Bulls	15	17	13
Cows and Adult Bulls	41	59	51
Calves ⁽¹⁾	9	11	7
Clean Sheep	1242	1315	1040
Ewes and Rams	168	166	122
Clean Pigs	698	920	751
Sows and Boars	20	25	20
Northern Ireland			
Steers	13	19	16
Heifers	8	11	10
Young Bulls	2	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	7	11	10
Calves ⁽¹⁾	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	52	61	41
Ewes and Rams	3	4	3
Clean Pigs	130	166	135
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 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 carcase weights are recorded.

7. The volume of meat production is estimated from the number of all livestock slaughtered and average dressed carcase 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.

Definitions

9. 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

10. 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.
11. **This month there have been minor revisions to previously published October 2015 data. The revisions are small for example mutton & lamb production has decreased by 1.1 thousand tonnes (3.5%). This is due to actual survey data replacing estimates and revised Scottish data.**