



18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

## United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – January 2016

### 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

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 **January 2016** are given below:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in January 2016 were 5.7% lower than January 2015 at 172 thousand head. Beef and veal production was 79 thousand tonnes, 5.7% lower than in January 2015.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 6.0% lower than in January 2015 at 1.1 million head. Mutton and lamb production was 24 thousand tonnes, 5.4% lower than in January 2015.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 2.4% higher than in January 2015 at 979 thousand head. Pigmeat production was 86 thousand tonnes, 4.1% higher than in January 2015.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 17<sup>th</sup> March 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

	January 2015 5 weeks	November 2015 4 weeks	December 2015 4 weeks	January 2016 5 weeks	yr on yr % change
Steers	93	88	78	90	-2.7%
Heifers	74	59	55	66	-11%
Young Bulls	16	14	14	16	-0.04%
Cows and Adult Bulls	63	62	48	57	-9.1%
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	9	8	9	15%
Clean Sheep	1129	1098	1065	1061	-6.0%
Ewes and Rams	137	126	120	146	6.6%
Clean Pigs	956	888	823	979	2.4%
Sows and Boars	22	20	17	25	14%

(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

	November 2015	December 2015	January 2016
Steers	372.4	360.3	376.3
Heifers	331.8	321.8	333.3
Young Bulls	330.2	307.4	314.3
Cows and Adult Bulls	311.5	307.7	312.4
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	58.9	58.5	61.0
Clean Sheep	19.6	18.8	19.4
Ewes and Rams	25.3	26.5	25.8
Clean Pigs	81.7	81.0	83.8
Sows and Boars	146.5	147.3	146.6

(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

	November 2015 4 weeks	December 2015 4 weeks	January 2016 5 weeks
Beef	77	65	79
Mutton and Lamb	25	23	24
Pigmeat	75	69	86

### 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.

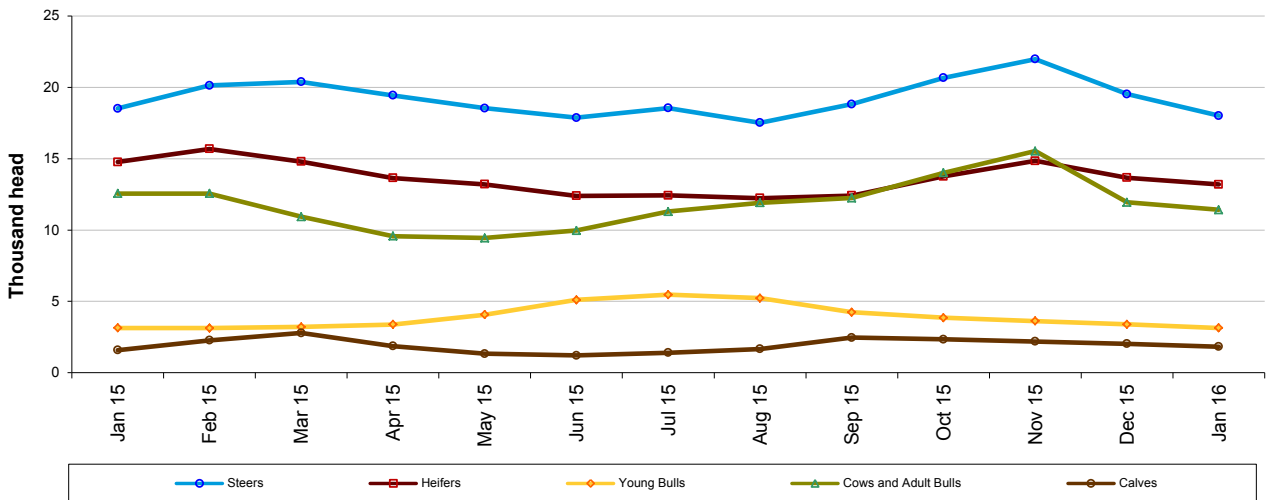
Longer term trends can be seen in Figures 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3, following this table.

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

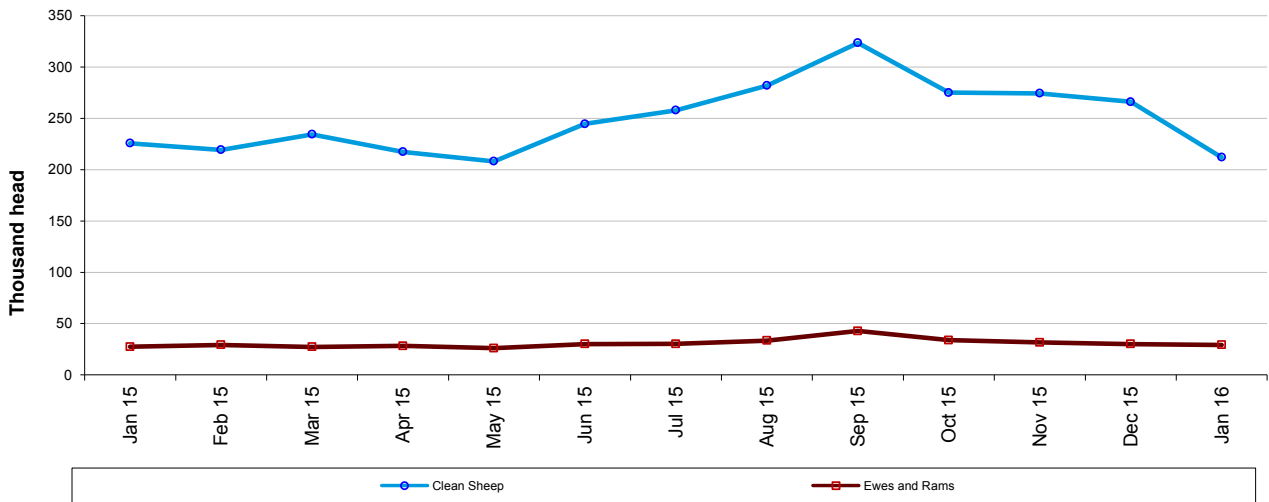
	2015												2016
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Steers	19	20	20	19	19	18	19	18	19	21	22	20	18
Heifers	15	16	15	14	13	12	12	12	12	14	15	14	13
Young Bulls	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	13	13	11	10	9	10	11	12	12	14	16	12	11
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Clean Sheep	226	219	234	217	208	245	258	282	324	275	274	266	212
Ewes and Rams	27	29	27	28	26	30	30	33	43	34	32	30	29
Clean Pigs	191	204	203	194	197	203	201	205	207	217	222	206	196
Sows and Boars	4	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	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.

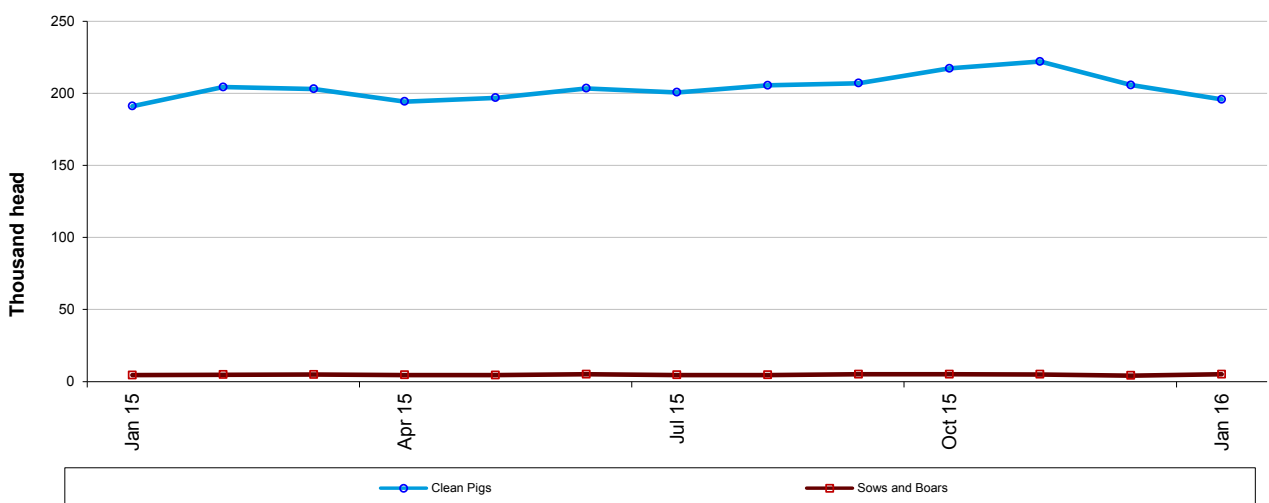
**Figure 4:1 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of cattle slaughtered**



**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		
	November 2015	December 2015	January 2016
	4 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>			
Steers	55	48	57
Heifers	37	32	39
Young Bulls	11	9	10
Cows and Adult Bulls	46	35	42
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	8	8
Clean Sheep	950	929	915
Ewes and Rams	122	116	141
Clean Pigs	730	677	803
Sows and Boars	20	17	25
<b>Scotland</b>			
Steers	17	16	18
Heifers	13	13	15
Young Bulls	2	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	6	5	6
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	106	103	114
Ewes and Rams	2	1	1
Clean Pigs	24	24	18
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
<b>Great Britain</b>			
Steers	72	64	76
Heifers	50	45	55
Young Bulls	13	11	12
Cows and Adult Bulls	52	40	48
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	8	8
Clean Sheep	1056	1032	1030
Ewes and Rams	123	118	142
Clean Pigs	753	700	821
Sows and Boars	20	17	25
<b>Northern Ireland</b>			
Steers	16	14	14
Heifers	10	9	11
Young Bulls	2	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	10	8	9
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	41	33	31
Ewes and Rams	3	2	4
Clean Pigs	135	123	158
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 will be 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 will be 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. **Due to the increased number of estimates included in the December data, this month there have been revisions to previously published November and December 2015 data. For example December beef production has increased from 65.1 to 69.7 thousand tonnes (7.1%). This is due to actual survey data replacing estimates.**