



19th November 2015

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – October 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 **October 2015** are given below:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in October 2015 were 6.0% lower than October 2014 at 189 thousand head. Beef and veal production was 89 thousand tonnes, 2.5% lower than in October 2014.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 8.3% lower than in October 2014 at 1.4 million head. Mutton and lamb production was 32 thousand tonnes, 8.3% lower than in October 2014.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 5.4% higher than in October 2014 at 1.09 million head. Pigmeat production was 92 thousand tonnes, 5.0% higher than in October 2014.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 17th December 2015. 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

	October 2014 5 weeks	August 2015 4 weeks	September 2015 4 weeks	October 2015 5 weeks	yr on yr % change
Steers	109	70	75	102	-6.7%
Heifers	71	49	50	68	-4.7%
Young Bulls	21	21	17	19	-6.9%
Cows and Adult Bulls	68	48	49	69	1.7%
Calves ⁽¹⁾	14	7	10	11	-18%
Clean Sheep	1555	1128	1294	1427	-8.3%
Ewes and Rams	200	134	171	175	-13%
Clean Pigs	1030	822	828	1085	5.4%
Sows and Boars	24	18	20	25	5.6%

(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 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

	August 2015	September 2015	October 2015
Steers	375.3	372.7	372.6
Heifers	330.0	330.9	331.8
Young Bulls	352.4	340.9	329.1
Cows and Adult Bulls	309.8	309.6	310.1
Calves ⁽¹⁾	86.1	59.0	57.6
Clean Sheep	19.5	19.0	19.5
Ewes and Rams	26.4	26.5	25.4
Clean Pigs	80.2	81.0	81.8
Sows and Boars	139.3	146.5	147.6

(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

	August 2015 4 weeks	September 2015 4 weeks	October 2015 5 weeks
Beef	65	66	89
Mutton and Lamb	26	29	32
Pigmeat	68	70	92

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									
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Steers	22	22	18	19	20	20	19	19	18	19	18	19	20
Heifers	14	15	14	15	16	15	14	13	12	12	12	12	14
Young Bulls	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	5	5	5	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	14	14	12	13	13	11	10	9	10	11	12	12	14
Calves ⁽¹⁾	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	2
Clean Sheep	311	287	277	226	219	234	217	208	245	258	282	324	285
Ewes and Rams	40	33	31	27	29	27	28	26	30	30	33	43	35
Clean Pigs	206	217	199	191	204	203	194	197	203	201	205	207	217
Sows and Boars	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	4	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

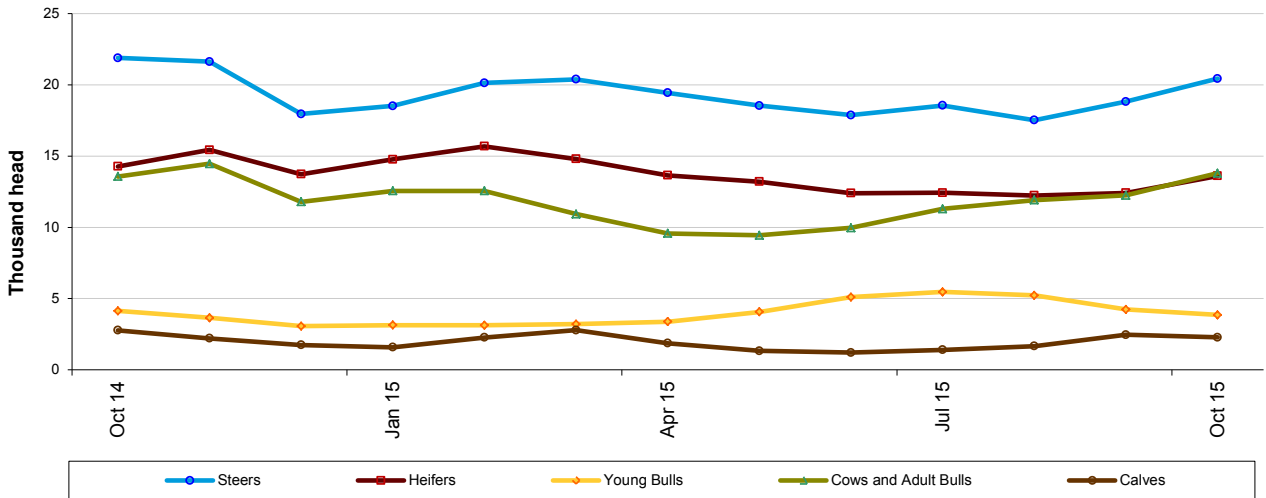


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

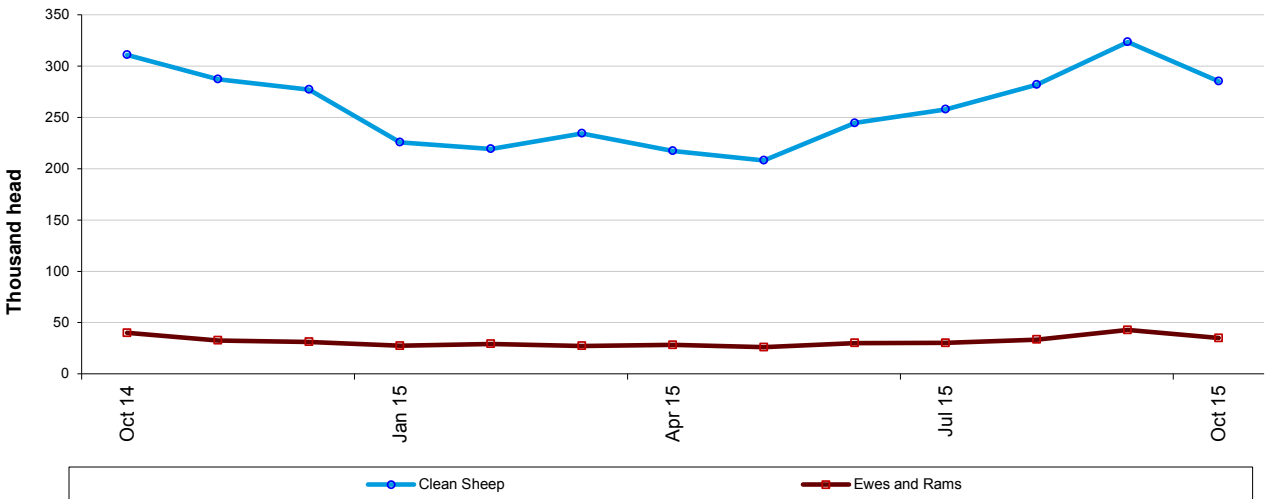
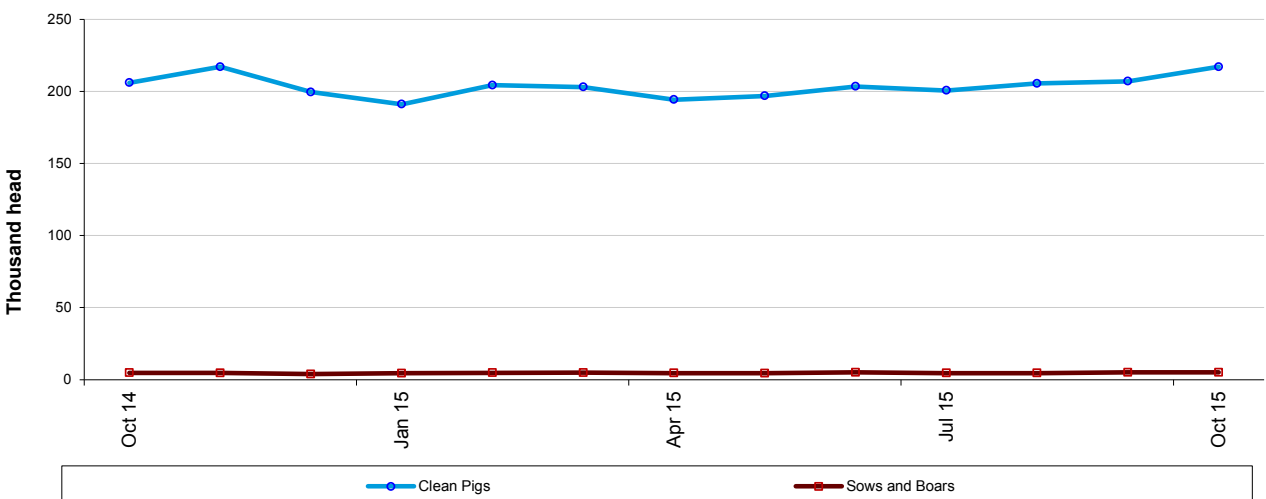


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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		
	August 2015	September 2015	October 2015
	4 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks
England & Wales			
Steers	44	47	64
Heifers	31	31	42
Young Bulls	14	12	14
Cows and Adult Bulls	34	36	51
Calves ⁽¹⁾	6	9	11
Clean Sheep	970	1118	1226
Ewes and Rams	130	167	169
Clean Pigs	670	675	890
Sows and Boars	18	20	25
Scotland			
Steers	15	16	19
Heifers	10	10	15
Young Bulls	5	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	5	7
Calves ⁽¹⁾	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	109	124	140
Ewes and Rams	2	1	2
Clean Pigs	23	23	30
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
Great Britain			
Steers	59	63	83
Heifers	41	42	57
Young Bulls	18	15	17
Cows and Adult Bulls	39	41	58
Calves ⁽¹⁾	6	9	11
Clean Sheep	1079	1242	1366
Ewes and Rams	131	168	171
Clean Pigs	694	698	920
Sows and Boars	18	20	25
Northern Ireland			
Steers	11	13	19
Heifers	8	8	11
Young Bulls	3	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	8	7	11
Calves ⁽¹⁾	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	49	52	61
Ewes and Rams	2	3	4
Clean Pigs	128	130	166
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 revisions have been made to previously published data from 2014 onwards.**
 - **In 2014 inconsistencies across different databases have been identified and removed. This does not affect the number of animals slaughtered, but has a minor impact on average dressed carcase weights and meat production.**

- The methodology used to arrive at UK dressed carcass weights has been revised from January 2015 onwards. The previous methodology calculated average dressed carcass weights by region, and this was used to derive the average for England and Wales. In regions where few animals of a certain type were slaughtered this could lead to unusual trends in the average dressed carcass weights. The new methodology calculates a dressed carcass weight for England and Wales as a whole. This change in methodology does not affect 2015 figures for the number of animals slaughtered, but has a small impact on the estimates of home killed meat production as well as the average dressed carcass weights.
- Slaughter numbers have been revised for August and September 2015 due to the receipt of new data from the Food Standards Agency.
- The impacts of the revisions to 2014 and 2015 are summarised in the tables below:

UK home killed average dressed carcass weight (kg per head)

	2014			2015 (Jan-Sep)		
	Published	Revised	Change	Published	Revised	Change
Prime cattle	348.7	348.7	0.0%	354.3	355.7	0.4%
Adult cattle	316.0	315.9	0.0%	315.1	315.6	0.2%
Calves	47.4	47.9	0.9%	54.4	55.1	1.3%
Sheep & Lambs	19.4	19.4	0.0%	19.9	19.8	-0.5%
Ewes & Rams	27.3	27.3	0.0%	27.7	27.1	-2.1%
Clean pigs	80.9	80.9	0.0%	81.2	81.3	0.1%
Sows & Boars	145.2	145.6	0.3%	153.9	146.1	-5.1%

UK home killed meat production (thousand tonnes)

	2014			2015 (Jan-Sep)		
	Published	Revised	Change	Published	Revised	Change
Beef & Veal	877.4	877.3	0.0%	644.8	646.7	0.3%
Mutton & Lamb	297.5	297.5	0.0%	221.7	220.4	-0.6%
Pigmeat	862.8	862.9	0.0%	662.5	661.6	-0.1%