



19<sup>th</sup> February 2015

## United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – January 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 carcass weight and meat production information. The key results for **January 2015** are given below:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings were 0.7% higher than in January 2014 at 182 thousand head. Beef and veal production was 84 thousand tonnes, 2.3% higher than in January 2014.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were 8.4% higher than in January 2014 at 1142 thousand head. Mutton and lamb production was 26 thousand tonnes, 3.1% higher than in January 2014.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 3.0% lower than in January 2014 at 912 thousand head. Pigmeat production was 79 thousand tonnes, 1.6% lower than in January 2014.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015. 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>

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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 2014 5 weeks	November 2014 4 weeks	December 2014 4weeks	January 2015 5weeks	yr on yr % change
Steers	86	87	72	94	9.5%
Heifers	73	62	55	73	0.1%
Young Bulls	23	15	12	16	-31%
Cows and Adult Bulls	60	58	47	62	3.3%
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	9	7	8	4.6%
Clean Sheep	1054	1149	1109	1142	8.4%
Ewes and Rams	182	130	125	139	-24%
Clean Pigs	941	868	798	912	-3.0%
Sows and Boars	25	19	16	23	-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 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

	November 2014	December 2014	January 2015
Steers	360.6	364.1	369.5
Heifers	320.4	324.5	328.4
Young Bulls	342.6	325.1	340.4
Cows and Adult Bulls	308.2	306.7	316.2
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	44.2	40.1	46.3
Clean Sheep	19.4	18.8	19.7
Ewes and Rams	26.7	27.1	27.5
Clean Pigs	82.4	80.6	82.4
Sows and Boars	152.0	145.8	154.6

(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 2014 4 weeks	December 2014 4 weeks	January 2015 5 weeks
Beef	74	63	84
Mutton and Lamb	26	24	26
Pigmeat	74	67	79

### 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.

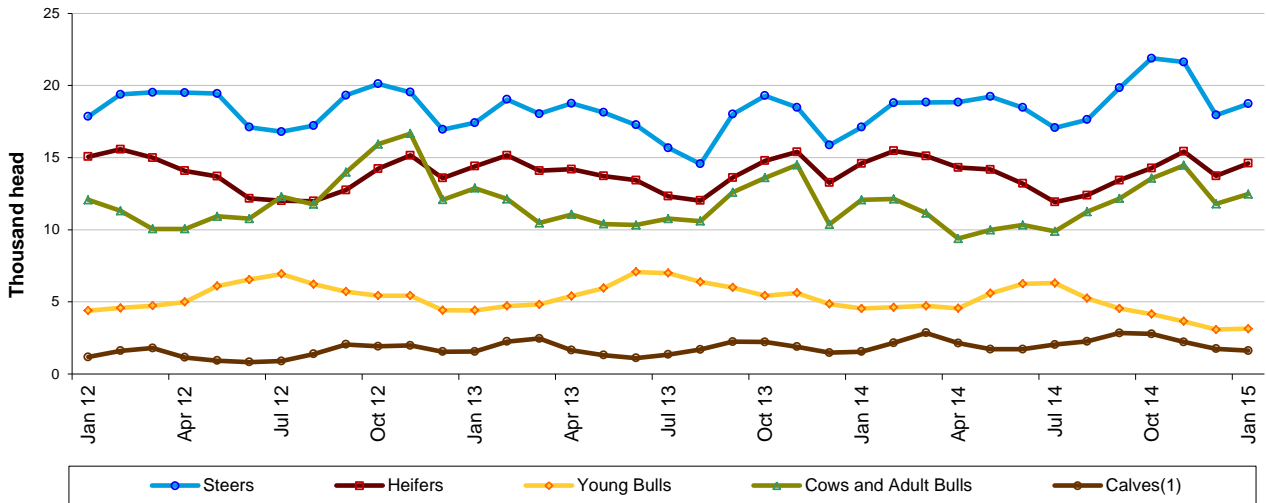
Longer term trends can be seen in Figures 4:1, 4:2 and 4:3, following this table.

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

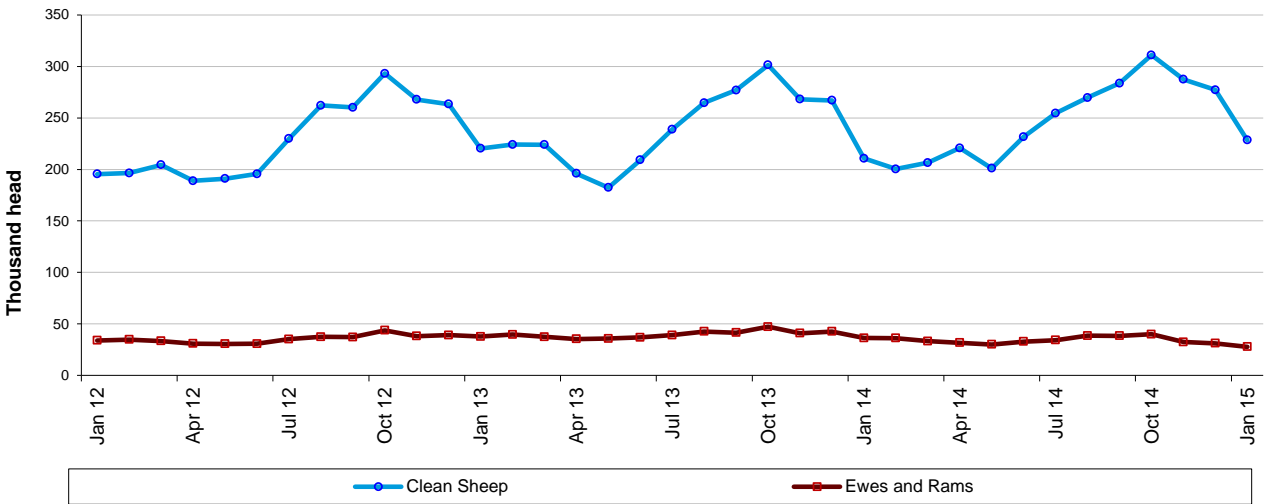
	2014												2015
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Steers	17	19	19	19	19	18	17	18	20	22	22	18	19
Heifers	15	15	15	14	14	13	12	12	13	14	15	14	15
Young Bulls	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	12	12	11	9	10	10	10	11	12	14	14	12	12
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2
Clean Sheep	211	200	207	221	201	232	255	270	284	311	287	277	228
Ewes and Rams	36	36	33	32	30	33	34	39	38	40	33	31	28
Clean Pigs	188	196	195	187	188	193	194	194	205	206	217	199	182
Sows and Boars	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	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.

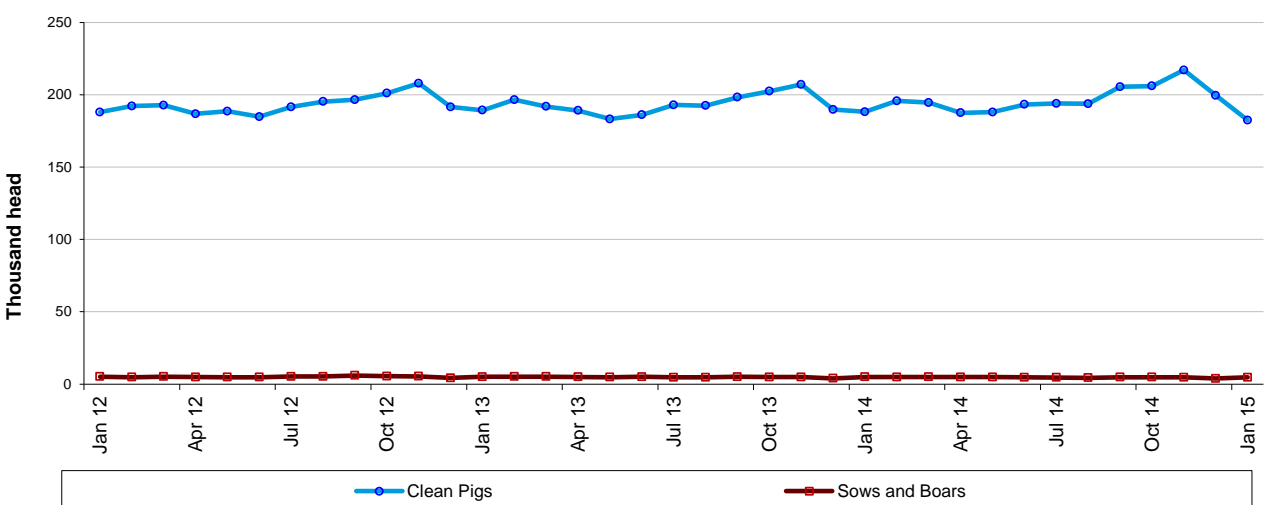
**Figure 4:1 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of cattle slaughtered**



**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 2014	December 2014	January 2015
	4weeks	4weeks	5weeks
<b>England &amp; Wales</b>			
Steers	54	45	58
Heifers	38	33	44
Young Bulls	11	9	11
Cows and Adult Bulls	43	36	48
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	7	7
Clean Sheep	994	972	977
Ewes and Rams	124	120	133
Clean Pigs	713	666	775
Sows and Boars	18	15	23
<b>Scotland</b>			
Steers	17	15	19
Heifers	14	13	17
Young Bulls	2	1	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	4	6
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	121	110	134
Ewes and Rams	2	2	2
Clean Pigs	24	22	27
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
<b>Great Britain</b>			
Steers	71	59	77
Heifers	51	45	60
Young Bulls	13	10	13
Cows and Adult Bulls	49	40	54
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	8	7	7
Clean Sheep	1115	1082	1110
Ewes and Rams	126	122	134
Clean Pigs	737	688	802
Sows and Boars	19	16	23
<b>Northern Ireland</b>			
Steers	15	12	17
Heifers	11	9	13
Young Bulls	2	2	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	9	7	8
Calves <sup>(1)</sup>	1	0	1
Clean Sheep	34	27	32
Ewes and Rams	4	3	5
Clean Pigs	131	110	110
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 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 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.

## Definitions

9. To align with EU regulatory requirements, the definition of calves has been changed in this survey from May 2014 onwards to refer to age of animals, rather than weight. The new definition of calves is "bovines aged 12 months or under", whereas previous data (pre-May 2014) referred to "bovines weighing less than 165kg". This change in definition has had negligible impact to both the numbers of slaughterings and the volumes of production as the levels of UK calf slaughterings are so small. Veal production only contributes around 0.7% (470 tonnes) to the total 68 thousand tonnes of beef and veal produced in May 2014. This compares to 0.4% (280 tonnes) in May 2013.

The main difference can be seen in the calf weights as they have jumped up from an average 52kg in April 2014 to 67kg in May 2014. This is due to extra (heavier) animals which are less than a year old so which now fall into the calf category.

10. 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" but this has been amended in line with EU Regulation 1165/2008 definitions. See "Revisions" section for details of the impact of this change.

## Revisions policy

11. 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.

12. The change in Calves definition in May 2014 (from <165kg to 1 year old or younger) has had negligible impact to both the numbers of slaughterings and the volumes of production as the levels of UK calf slaughterings are so small. Veal production only contributes around 0.7% (470 tonnes) to the total 68 thousand tonnes of beef and veal produced in May 2014. This compares to 0.4% (280 tonnes) in May 2013. The main difference can be seen in the calf weights as they have jumped up from an average 52kg in April 2014 to 67kg in May 2014. This is due to extra (heavier) animals which are less than a year old so which now fall into the calf category.

**13. This month minor revisions have been made to October, November and December 2014 data. This is due to actual survey data replacing estimates. The scale of revision is small, for example December 2014 UK Pigmear production has been revised by around 188 tonnes (- 0.3%).**