



17th August 2017

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – July 2017

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Key points

The key results for **July 2017 compared to July 2016** are:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in July 2017 were 0.8% lower than July 2016 at 156,000 head. Beef and veal production was 71,000 tonnes, 1.9% lower than in July 2016.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were down 4.2% on July 2016 at 1055,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 23,000 tonnes, 4.2% lower than in July 2016.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 4.2% lower than in July 2016 at 828,000 head. Pigmeat production was 70,000 tonnes, 2.6% lower than in July 2016.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 14th September 2017. 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.

Table 1: United Kingdom monthly numbers of livestock slaughtered

	thousand head				
	July 2016 31 days	May 2017 31 days	June 2017 30 days	July 2017 31 days	yr on yr % change
Steers	78	90	83	80	2.0%
Heifers	54	62	56	54	1.6%
Young Bulls	25	20	22	22	-14%
Cows and Adult Bulls	52	48	48	49	-4.3%
Calves(1)	7	6	7	7	0.6%
Clean Sheep	1102	966	1041	1055	-4.2%
Ewes and Rams	136	132	128	133	-2.7%
Clean Pigs	864	882	846	828	-4.2%
Sows and Boars	19	19	22	18	-4.2%

(1) The definition of calves from May 2014 is "Bovines less than 1 year". Please see methodology 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			
	April 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017
Steers	371.0	370.0	368.8	368.1
Heifers	331.3	330.2	329.5	329.1
Young Bulls	321.3	331.3	345.9	346.9
Cows and Adult Bulls	314.0	317.2	314.8	316.8
Calves(1)	58.5	53.5	79.6	85.1
Clean Sheep	20.4	19.8	19.1	18.8
Ewes and Rams	26.7	27.5	28.2	26.5
Clean Pigs	82.9	82.4	81.8	81.9
Sows and Boars	146.3	146.1	146.7	144.8

(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.

Table 3: United Kingdom monthly volumes of meat production

	thousand tonnes				
	July 2016 31 days	May 2017 31 days	June 2017 30 days	July 2017 31 days	yr on yr % change
Beef	72	76	72	71	-1.9%
Mutton and Lamb	24	23	23	23	-4.2%
Pigmeat	72	75	72	70	-2.6%

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												
	2016						2017						
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul
Steers	18	18	20	20	21	19	19	20	21	20	20	19	18
Heifers	12	12	14	14	16	14	14	15	15	14	14	13	12
Young Bulls	6	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5
Cows and Adult Bulls	12	12	14	15	18	13	13	13	12	10	11	11	11
Calves(1)	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2
Clean Sheep	249	272	304	263	285	273	222	221	234	233	218	243	238
Ewes and Rams	31	35	43	33	32	31	28	30	29	28	30	30	30
Clean Pigs	195	203	212	197	222	193	193	198	204	182	199	197	187
Sows and Boars	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4

(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

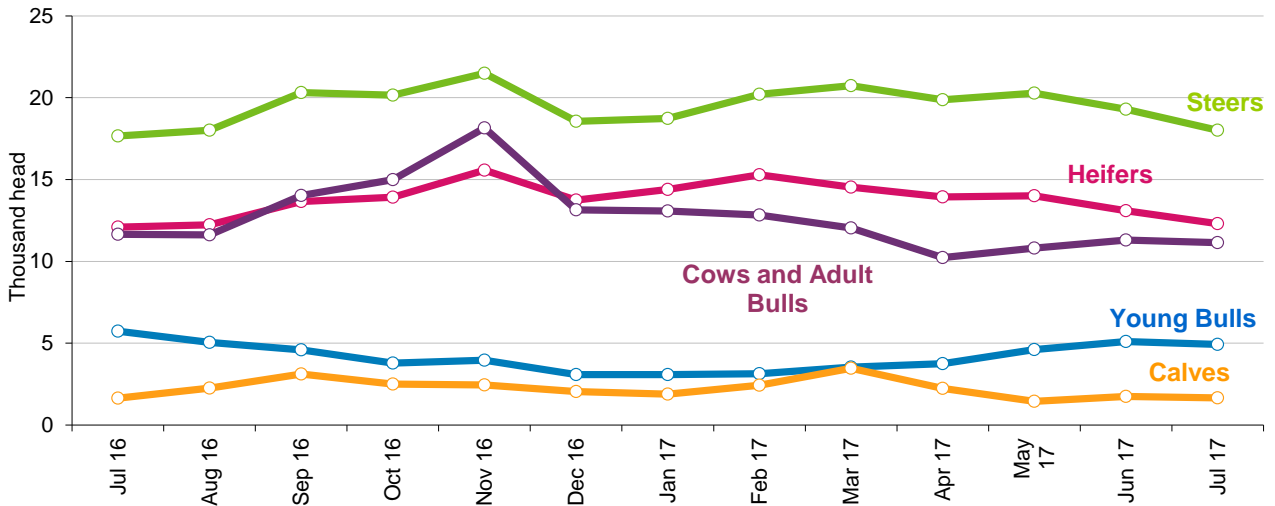


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

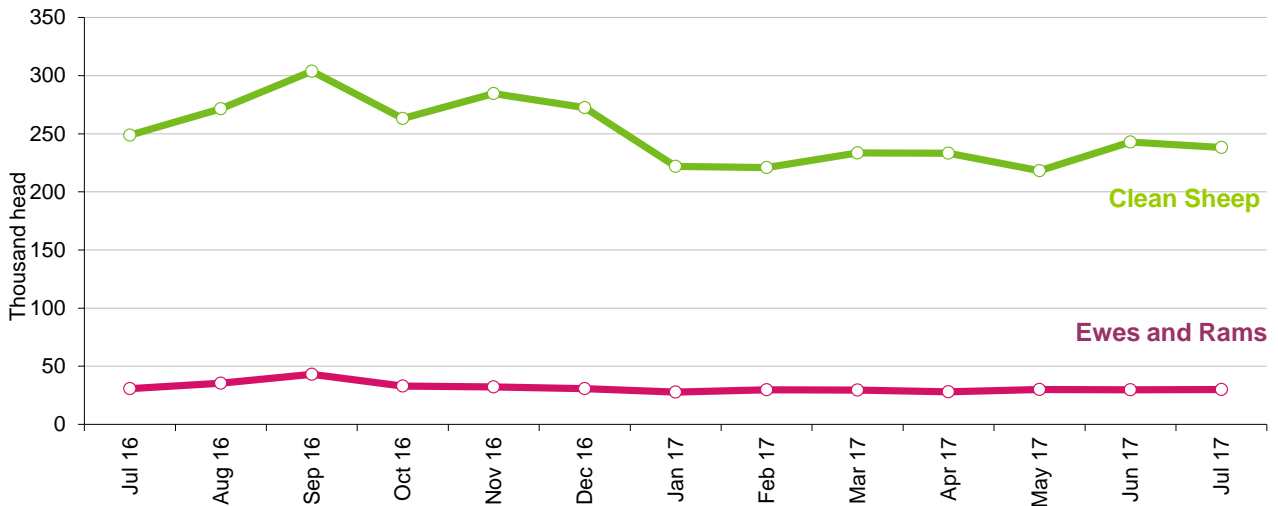
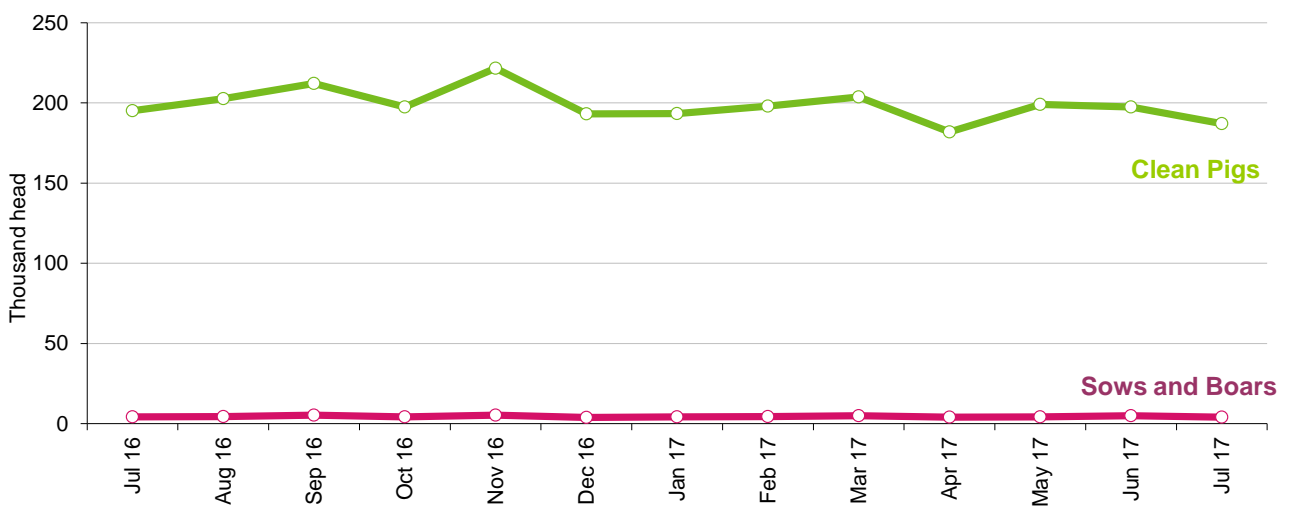


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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			
	April 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017
	30 days	31 days	30 days	31 days
England & Wales				
Steers	52	59	55	54
Heifers	36	40	37	36
Young Bulls	11	14	14	13
Cows and Adult Bulls	32	35	36	36
Calves	9	6	7	7
Clean Sheep	877	887	942	931
Ewes and Rams	116	129	124	129
Clean Pigs	623	726	694	674
Sows and Boars	17	18	20	16
Scotland				
Steers	20	17	16	16
Heifers	14	11	10	11
Young Bulls	2	3	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	5	4	5
Calves	0	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	100	53	60	84
Ewes and Rams	2	1	1	2
Clean Pigs	27	23	22	22
Sows and Boars	0	1	2	2
Great Britain				
Steers	72	75	70	69
Heifers	49	51	47	46
Young Bulls	13	17	17	18
Cows and Adult Bulls	37	40	40	42
Calves	9	6	7	7
Clean Sheep	977	940	1002	1015
Ewes and Rams	118	130	125	130
Clean Pigs	650	748	717	696
Sows and Boars	17	19	22	18
Northern Ireland				
Steers	13	14	12	10
Heifers	10	11	9	8
Young Bulls	3	4	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	7	8	8	8
Calves	0	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	23	26	39	40
Ewes and Rams	2	2	2	2
Clean Pigs	129	133	129	133
Sows and Boars	0	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 91) 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 DAERA 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 <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/slaughtering-cattle-and-sheep> and <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/slaughtering-pigs-2003>
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 from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) 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 1st 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.