



14th December 2017

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – November 2017

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

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

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in November 2017 were down 5.3% on November 2016 at 167,000 head. Beef and veal production was 78,000 tonnes, 8.8% lower than in November 2016.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were down 7.3% on November 2016 at 1131,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 25,000 tonnes, 7.1% lower than in November 2016.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 1.5% higher than in November 2016 at 964,000 head. Pigmeat production was 84,000 tonnes, 2.7% higher than in November 2016.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 18th January 2018. 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				
	November 2016 30 days	September 2017 30 days	October 2017 31 days	November 2017 30 days	yr on yr % change
Steers	92	82	88	90	-2.5%
Heifers	67	53	58	62	-7%
Young Bulls	17	16	14	15	-14%
Cows and Adult Bulls	78	51	61	65	-17%
Calves(1)	11	10	10	10	-2.4%
Clean Sheep	1220	1039	1098	1131	-7.3%
Ewes and Rams	138	132	127	124	-10%
Clean Pigs	950	855	907	964	1.5%
Sows and Boars	23	20	17	20	-11%

(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			
	August 2017	September 2017	October 2017	November 2017
Steers	365.4	364.1	362.9	354.8
Heifers	327.5	327.1	327.7	328.0
Young Bulls	327.3	324.1	322.5	321.2
Cows and Adult Bulls	312.9	309.2	307.0	308.5
Calves(1)	64.6	54.2	71.1	87.9
Clean Sheep	19.0	19.0	19.2	19.4
Ewes and Rams	27.8	26.1	25.2	25.9
Clean Pigs	82.7	84.5	85.1	84.2
Sows and Boars	143.6	146.1	141.8	146.1

(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				
November 2016 30 days	September 2017 30 days	October 2017 31 days	November 2017 30 days	yr on yr % change
85	69	75	78	-8.8%
27	23	24	25	-7.1%
82	75	80	84	2.7%

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										
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Steers	21	19	19	20	21	19	21	20	18	18	19	20	21
Heifers	16	14	15	15	15	13	14	13	13	12	12	13	15
Young Bulls	4	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	3	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	18	13	13	13	12	10	11	11	11	11	12	14	15
Calves(1)	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
Clean Sheep	285	273	224	221	236	230	221	244	240	243	242	248	264
Ewes and Rams	32	31	28	30	30	28	30	30	31	31	31	29	29
Clean Pigs	222	193	194	198	204	181	200	198	188	201	199	205	225
Sows and Boars	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	5

(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

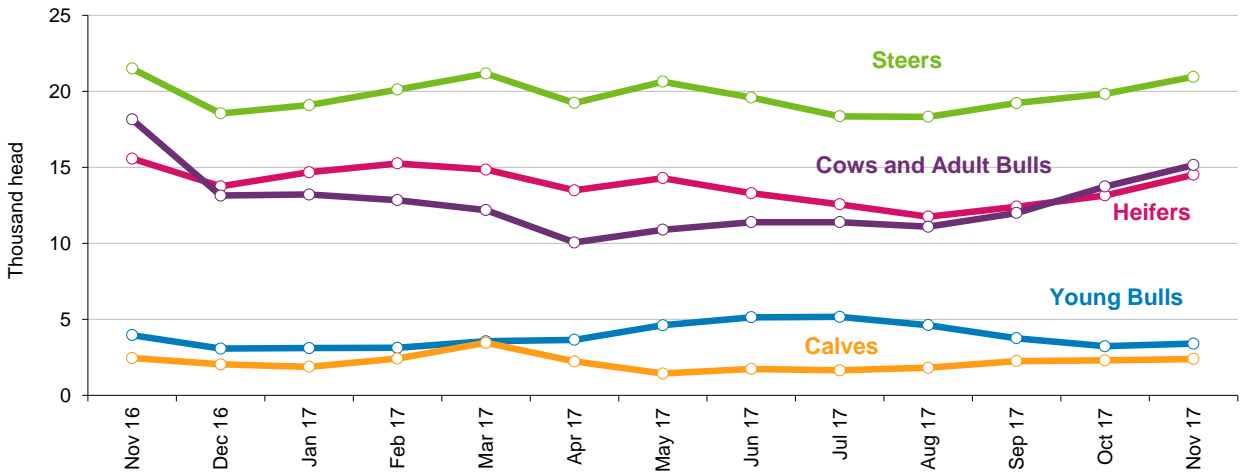


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

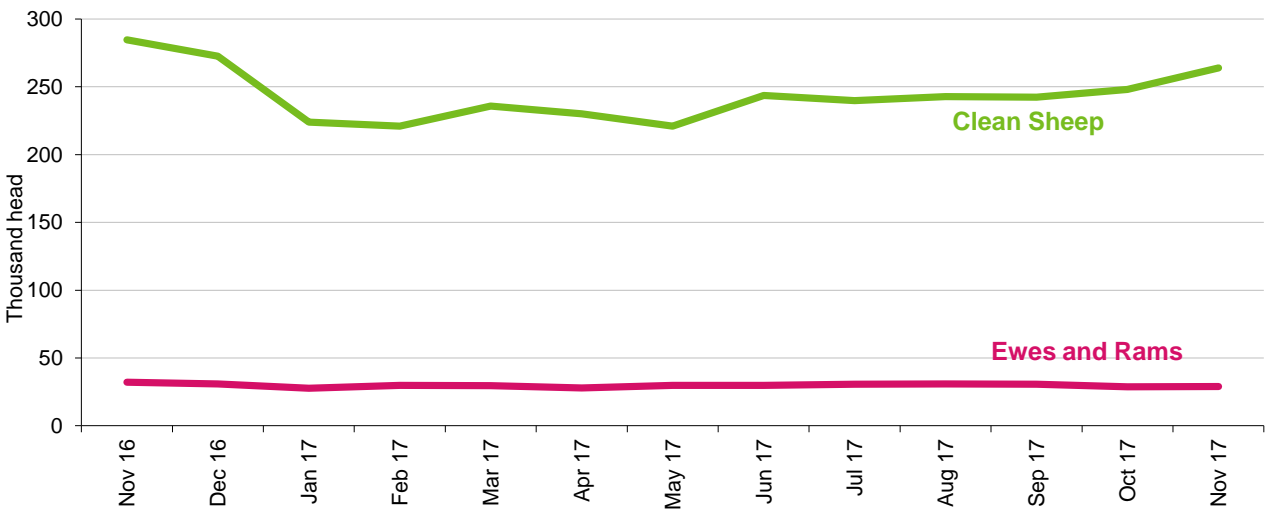
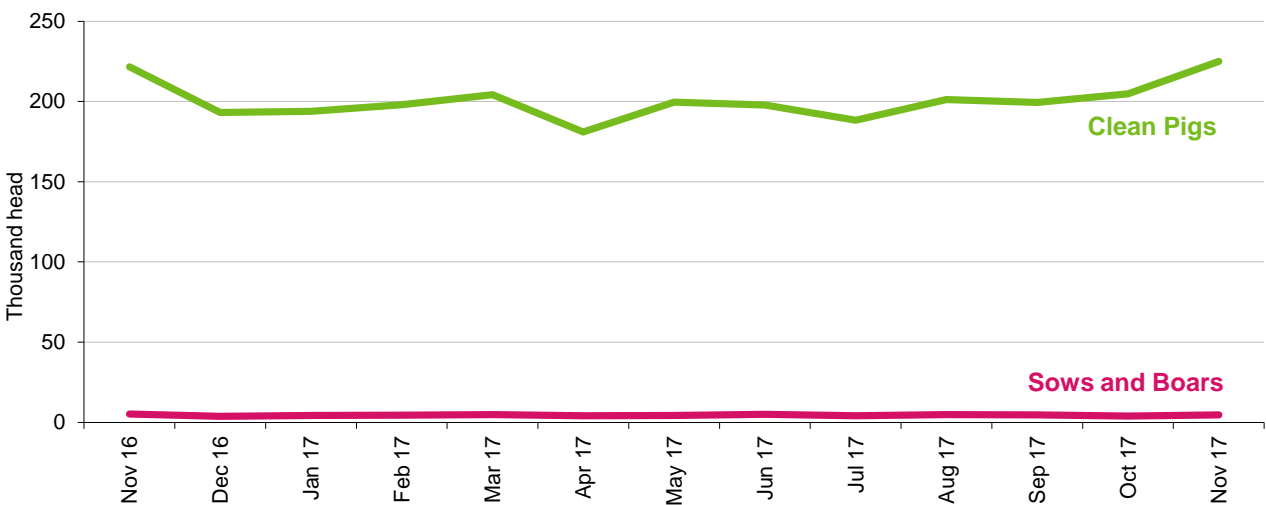


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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		
	September 2017	October 2017	November 2017
	30 days	31 days	30 days
England & Wales			
Steers	50	53	55
Heifers	32	34	36
Young Bulls	11	10	10
Cows and Adult Bulls	34	41	46
Calves	9	10	10
Clean Sheep	887	938	990
Ewes and Rams	126	122	119
Clean Pigs	704	741	790
Sows and Boars	20	17	20
Scotland			
Steers	17	18	18
Heifers	12	13	14
Young Bulls	2	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	7	8	7
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	107	115	105
Ewes and Rams	2	2	3
Clean Pigs	7	7	21
Sows and Boars	0	0	0
Great Britain			
Steers	67	71	73
Heifers	44	47	50
Young Bulls	13	12	12
Cows and Adult Bulls	42	49	53
Calves	9	10	10
Clean Sheep	994	1053	1095
Ewes and Rams	128	124	121
Clean Pigs	711	749	810
Sows and Boars	20	17	20
Northern Ireland			
Steers	15	17	16
Heifers	10	11	12
Young Bulls	3	3	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	10	12	12
Calves	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	45	45	36
Ewes and Rams	4	3	3
Clean Pigs	144	159	154
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 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.