



13th September 2018

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – August 2018

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 notice replaces the one published at 9.30 am on 13th September 2018 due to the previous omission of some pig slaughter data.

The key results for **August 2018 compared to August 2017** are:

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in August 2018 were down 3.5% on August 2017 at 160,000 head. Beef and veal production was 73,000 tonnes, 2.3% lower than in August 2017.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were up 2.1% on August 2017 at 1254,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 28,000 tonnes, 3.5% higher than in August 2017.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 4.1% higher than in August 2017 at 947,000 head. Pigmeat production was 82,000 tonnes, 4.5% higher than in August 2017.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 11th October 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>

Enquiries on this publication to: Julie Rumsey, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Room 201, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1 - 2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX.
Tel: ++ 44 (0)2080 266306, email: julie.rumsey@defra.gsi.gov.uk

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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

	August 2017 31 days	June 2018 30 days	July 2018 31 days	August 2018 31 days	yr on yr % change
Steers	86	80	81	78	-8.6%
Heifers	58	58	59	60	2.9%
Young Bulls	21	22	23	21	-0.2%
Cows and Adult Bulls	54	49	60	55	1.6%
Calves(1)	8	6	7	12	38%
Clean Sheep	1228	873	1032	1254	2.1%
Ewes and Rams	146	119	131	165	13%
Clean Pigs	910	832	884	947	4.1%
Sows and Boars	21	21	21	24	9.8%

(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 (DCW) of livestock slaughtered for meat for human consumption in the United Kingdom.

Table 2: United Kingdom average dressed carcass weights

kilogramme

	August 2017	June 2018	July 2018	August 2018
Steers	365.4	370.0	366.6	365.1
Heifers	327.5	328.9	327.6	328.8
Young Bulls	326.7	349.7	343.7	343.4
Cows and Adult Bulls	312.2	316.4	307.5	302.0
Calves(1)	63.8	89.8	87.6	72.1
Clean Sheep	19.0	19.2	19.1	19.1
Ewes and Rams	27.8	25.6	24.9	26.7
Clean Pigs	82.7	82.6	82.2	82.8
Sows and Boars	143.6	146.8	143.0	142.7

(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				
	August 2017 31 days	June 2018 30 days	July 2018 31 days	August 2018 31 days	yr on yr % change
Beef	75	73	76	73	-2.3%
Mutton and Lamb	27	20	23	28	3.5%
Pigmeat	78	72	76	82	4.5%

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												
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug
Steers	19	20	21	22	18	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	18
Heifers	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	15	15	15	14	13	14
Young Bulls	5	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5
Cows and Adult Bulls	12	13	15	17	13	14	13	12	12	11	11	14	12
Calves	2	2	3	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3
Clean Sheep	277	286	288	303	289	251	243	240	187	199	204	233	283
Ewes and Rams	33	33	31	30	30	29	31	28	27	28	28	30	37
Clean Pigs	205	203	209	229	188	206	217	195	205	203	194	200	214
Sows and Boars	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	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

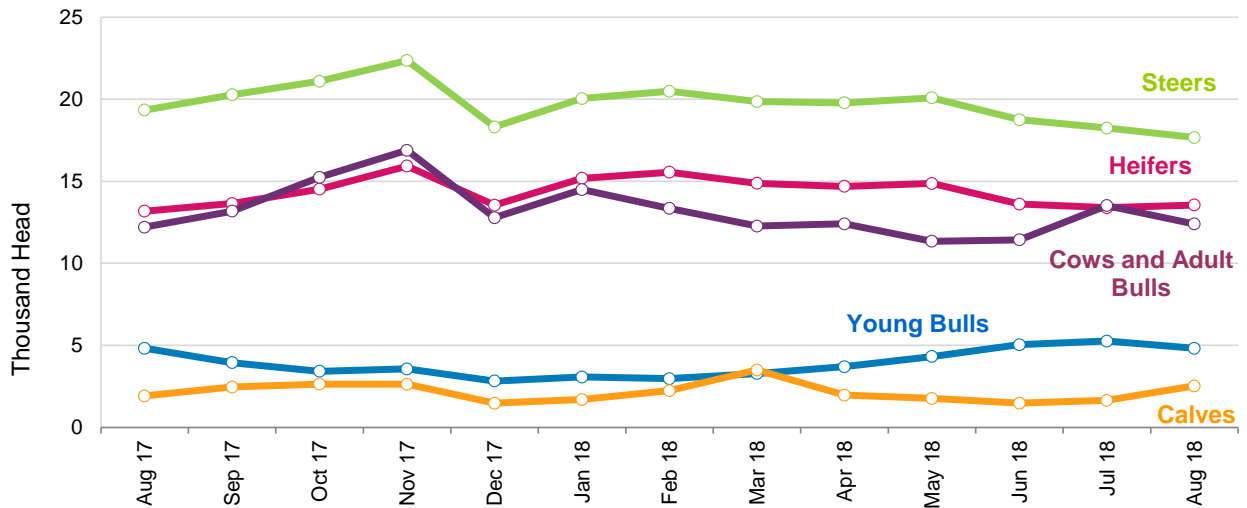


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

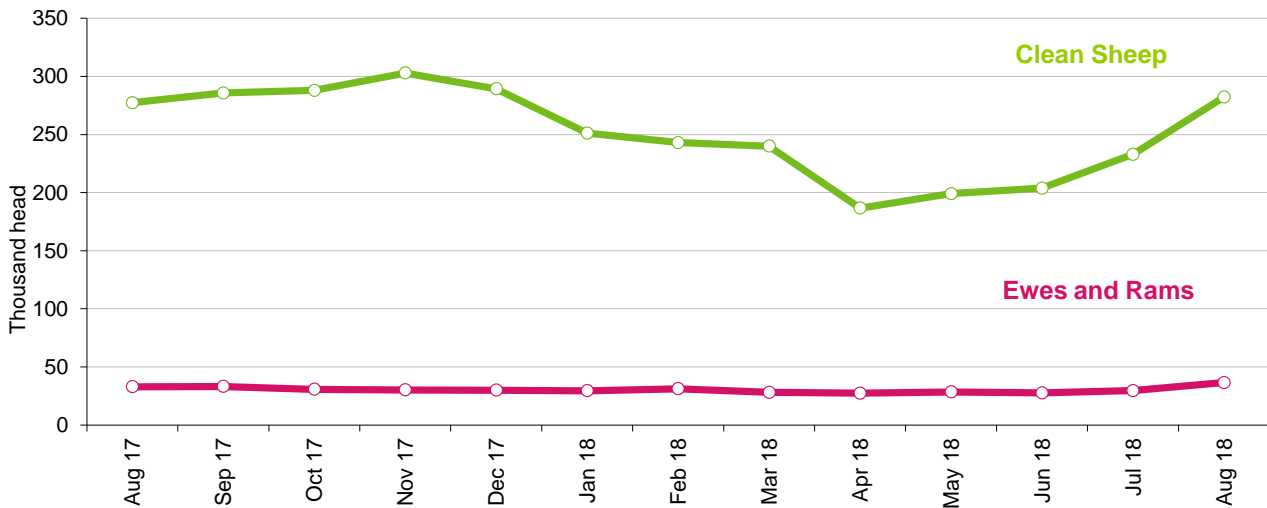
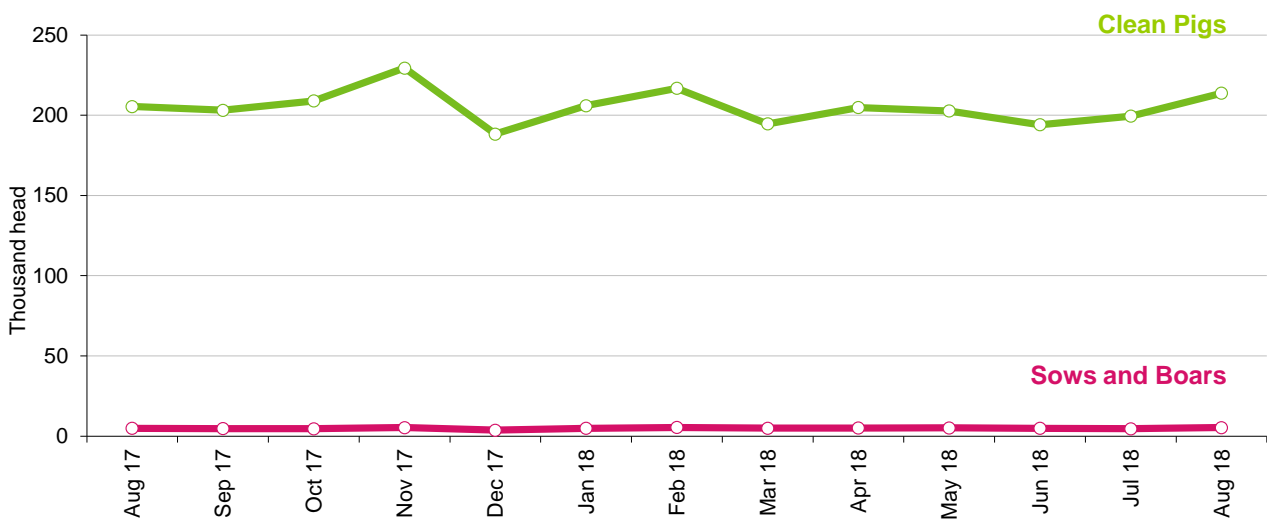


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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		
	June 2018	July 2018	August 2018
	30 days	31 days	31 days
England & Wales			
Steers	53	53	52
Heifers	38	39	40
Young Bulls	13	13	12
Cows and Adult Bulls	37	44	40
Calves	6	7	11
Clean Sheep	781	908	1113
Ewes and Rams	115	127	161
Clean Pigs	673	722	772
Sows and Boars	20	20	22
Scotland			
Steers	17	17	16
Heifers	12	12	11
Young Bulls	4	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	5	6	6
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	62	87	94
Ewes and Rams	2	2	2
Clean Pigs	26	24	28
Sows and Boars	1	0	1
Great Britain			
Steers	70	70	67
Heifers	49	50	51
Young Bulls	17	18	16
Cows and Adult Bulls	42	51	46
Calves	6	7	11
Clean Sheep	843	995	1207
Ewes and Rams	117	129	163
Clean Pigs	700	746	799
Sows and Boars	21	21	24
Northern Ireland			
Steers	11	11	11
Heifers	9	9	9
Young Bulls	5	6	5
Cows and Adult Bulls	7	9	9
Calves	0	0	1
Clean Sheep	31	36	47
Ewes and Rams	2	2	2
Clean Pigs	132	138	148
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.