



15th November 2018

United Kingdom Slaughter Statistics – October 2018

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Key points

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

- **Cattle:** UK prime cattle (steers, heifers and young bulls) slaughterings in October 2018 were up 6.1% on October 2017 at 183,000 head. Beef and veal production was 86,000 tonnes, 5.6% higher than in October 2017.
- **Sheep:** UK clean sheep slaughterings were down 0.5% on October 2017 at 1269,000 head. Mutton and lamb production was 28,000 tonnes, 2.2% higher than in October 2017.
- **Pigs:** UK clean pig slaughterings were 4.0% higher than in October 2017 at 963,000 head. Pigmeat production was 84,000 tonnes, 2.7% higher than in October 2017.

This notice will be updated at 09:30 on 13th December 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

	October 2017 31 days	August 2018 31 days	September 2018 30 days	October 2018 31 days	yr on yr % change
Steers	93	79	82	95	2.2%
Heifers	64	60	60	72	12%
Young Bulls	15	21	17	16	5.6%
Cows and Adult Bulls	67	55	59	70	4.1%
Calves(1)	12	12	12	14	21%
Clean Sheep	1275	1263	1110	1269	-0.5%
Ewes and Rams	136	165	129	153	13%
Clean Pigs	926	945	849	963	4.0%
Sows and Boars	20	24	21	24	19%

(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

	October 2017	August 2018	September 2018	October 2018
Steers	362.9	365.3	366.5	365.1
Heifers	327.9	329.0	328.4	327.0
Young Bulls	322.0	343.5	334.5	327.6
Cows and Adult Bulls	306.2	302.0	301.7	305.1
Calves(1)	69.2	72.1	59.9	59.3
Clean Sheep	19.2	19.1	19.3	19.4
Ewes and Rams	25.1	26.7	25.8	25.0
Clean Pigs	85.1	82.8	82.9	83.6
Sows and Boars	147.5	142.7	143.0	144.3

(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				
	October 2017 31 days	August 2018 31 days	September 2018 30 days	October 2018 31 days	yr on yr % change
Beef	81	73	74	86	5.6%
Mutton and Lamb	28	29	25	28	2.2%
Pigmeat	82	82	73	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												
	2017			2018									
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Steers	21	22	18	20	20	20	20	20	19	18	18	19	22
Heifers	15	16	14	15	16	15	15	15	14	13	14	14	16
Young Bulls	3	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	5	4	4
Cows and Adult Bulls	15	17	13	14	13	12	12	11	11	14	12	14	16
Calves	3	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	3
Clean Sheep	288	303	289	251	243	240	187	199	204	233	285	259	287
Ewes and Rams	31	30	30	29	31	28	27	28	28	30	37	30	35
Clean Pigs	209	229	188	206	217	195	205	203	194	199	213	198	217
Sows and Boars	5	5	4	5	5	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

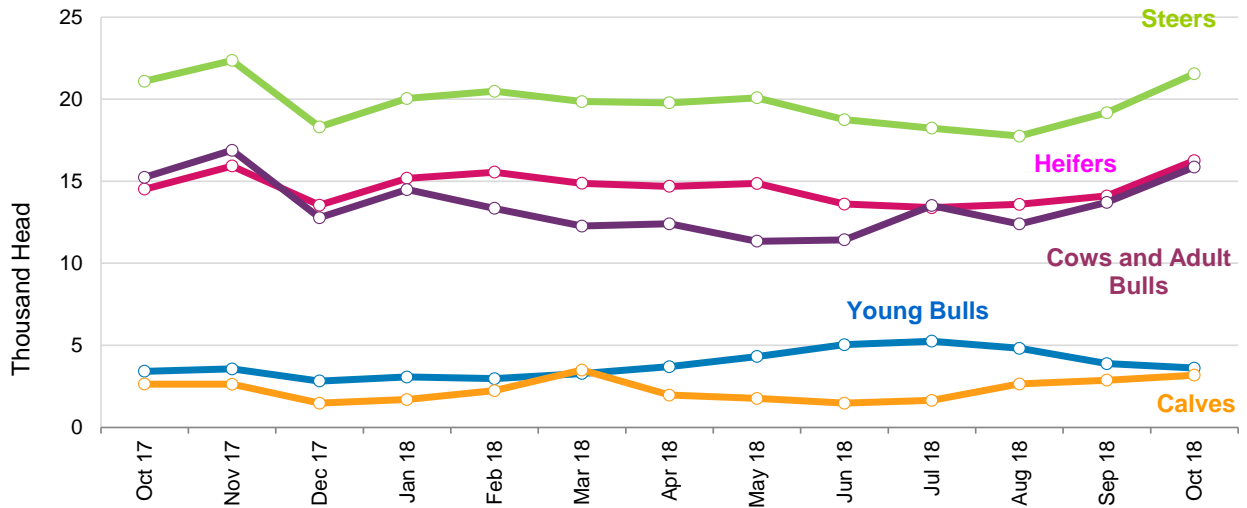


Figure 4:2 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of sheep slaughtered

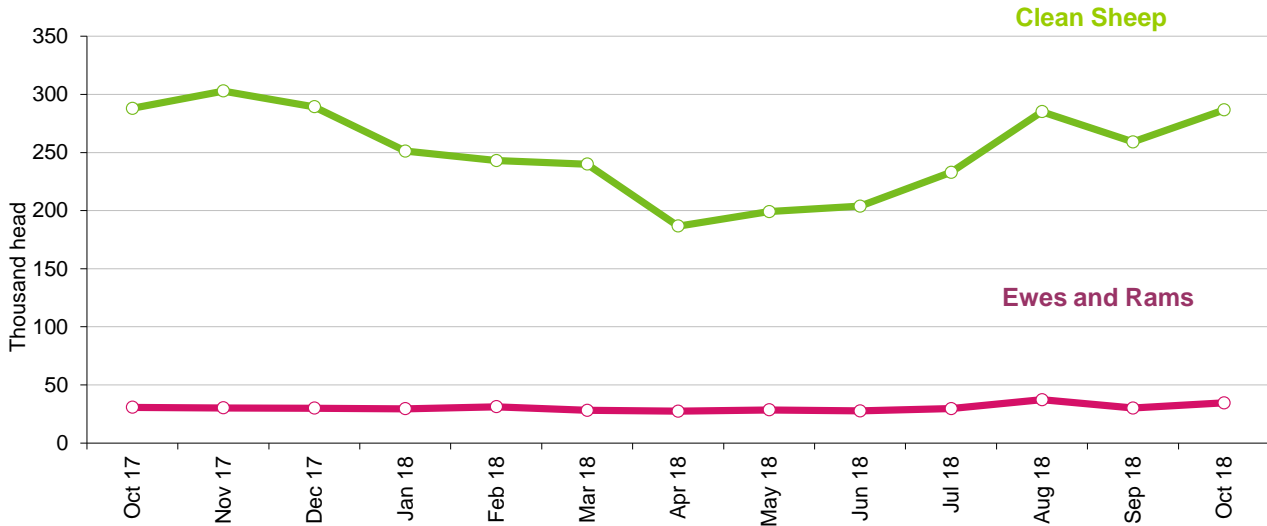
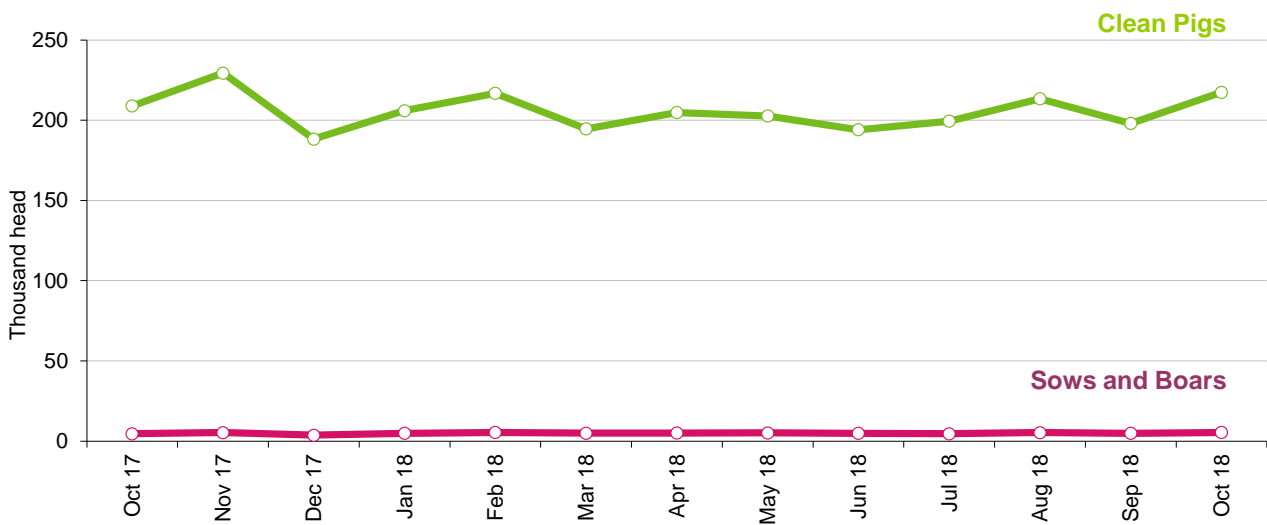


Figure 4:3 United Kingdom average weekly numbers of pigs slaughtered



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		
	August 2018	September 2018	October 2018
	31 days	30 days	31 days
England & Wales			
Steers	52	51	60
Heifers	40	38	46
Young Bulls	12	10	11
Cows and Adult Bulls	40	43	53
Calves	11	12	14
Clean Sheep	1113	961	1118
Ewes and Rams	161	124	148
Clean Pigs	772	681	775
Sows and Boars	22	20	23
Scotland			
Steers	16	17	18
Heifers	11	12	14
Young Bulls	4	2	2
Cows and Adult Bulls	6	6	6
Calves	0	0	0
Clean Sheep	103	105	110
Ewes and Rams	2	2	2
Clean Pigs	28	30	31
Sows and Boars	1	1	1
Great Britain			
Steers	68	68	78
Heifers	51	50	60
Young Bulls	16	13	13
Cows and Adult Bulls	46	49	60
Calves	11	12	14
Clean Sheep	1216	1065	1228
Ewes and Rams	163	126	150
Clean Pigs	799	711	806
Sows and Boars	24	21	24
Northern Ireland			
Steers	11	14	17
Heifers	9	10	12
Young Bulls	5	4	3
Cows and Adult Bulls	9	10	11
Calves	1	1	1
Clean Sheep	47	45	41
Ewes and Rams	2	3	3
Clean Pigs	146	138	157
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.