



Overview of the United States Slaughter Industry

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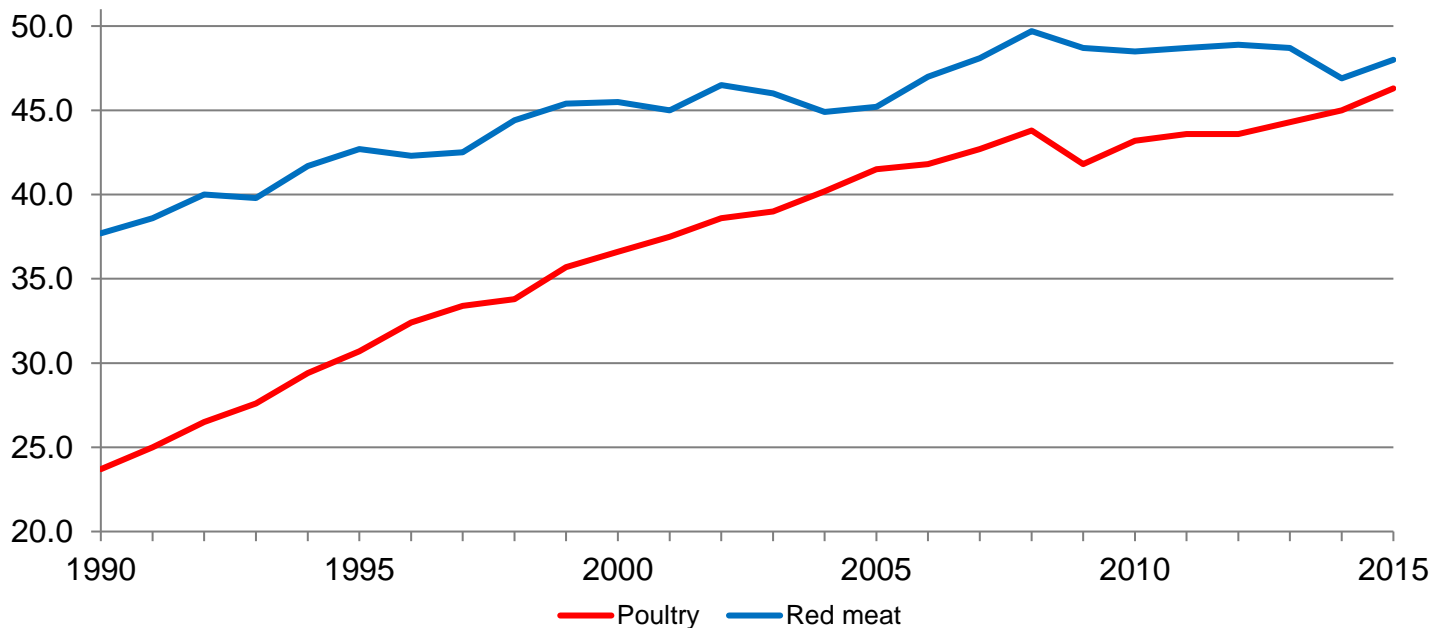
Poultry Slaughter Production Narrows Gap on Red Meat Production

Total federally inspected red meat and poultry production in 2015 was 94.3 billion pounds, a record high. Federally inspected poultry slaughter production also reached a record high in 2015 at 46.3 billion pounds. Since 1990, poultry slaughter production has almost doubled. In 1990, federally inspected red meat production was about 60 percent higher than poultry production. The gap between poultry and red meat has steadily decreased and red meat is currently only 4 percent higher than poultry. In terms of gross domestic product, the red meat and poultry slaughter industry is the largest segment of United States agriculture. Red meat and poultry products from slaughter also contribute to agriculture's positive trade balance. In 2015, beef and veal exports totaled over \$5.15 billion, pork exports totaled over \$4.01 billion and chicken exports totaled over \$2.79 billion.

The *Overview of the United States Slaughter Industry* report provides an official review of changes in the United States slaughter industry over the past 25 years. Additionally, this report gives a brief overview of survey and estimation procedures as well as terminology used in the National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) slaughter publications. The 2016 *Overview of the United States Slaughter Industry* report will highlight data from NASS' annual *Livestock Slaughter* report and annual *Poultry Slaughter* report.

Total Federally Inspected Slaughter Production – United States

Billion pounds



Commercial Pork Production Reaches Record High in 2015

Total commercial red meat production was 48.4 billion pounds in 2015, up 2 percent from 2014. Commercial red meat production reached a record high in 2008 at 50.2 billion pounds. In the past 25 years, commercial red meat production has increased 25 percent. Most of the increase is due to a rise in pork production.

Commercial beef production during 2015 was 23.7 billion pounds, down 2 percent from 2014. Over the past 25 years, beef production has held relatively steady, ranging from a low of 22.6 billion pounds in 1990 to a high of 27.1 billion pounds in 2002.

Commercial veal production was a record low in 2015 at 82.5 million pounds, 12 percent below 2014. This was the seventh year in a row that veal production was a record low.

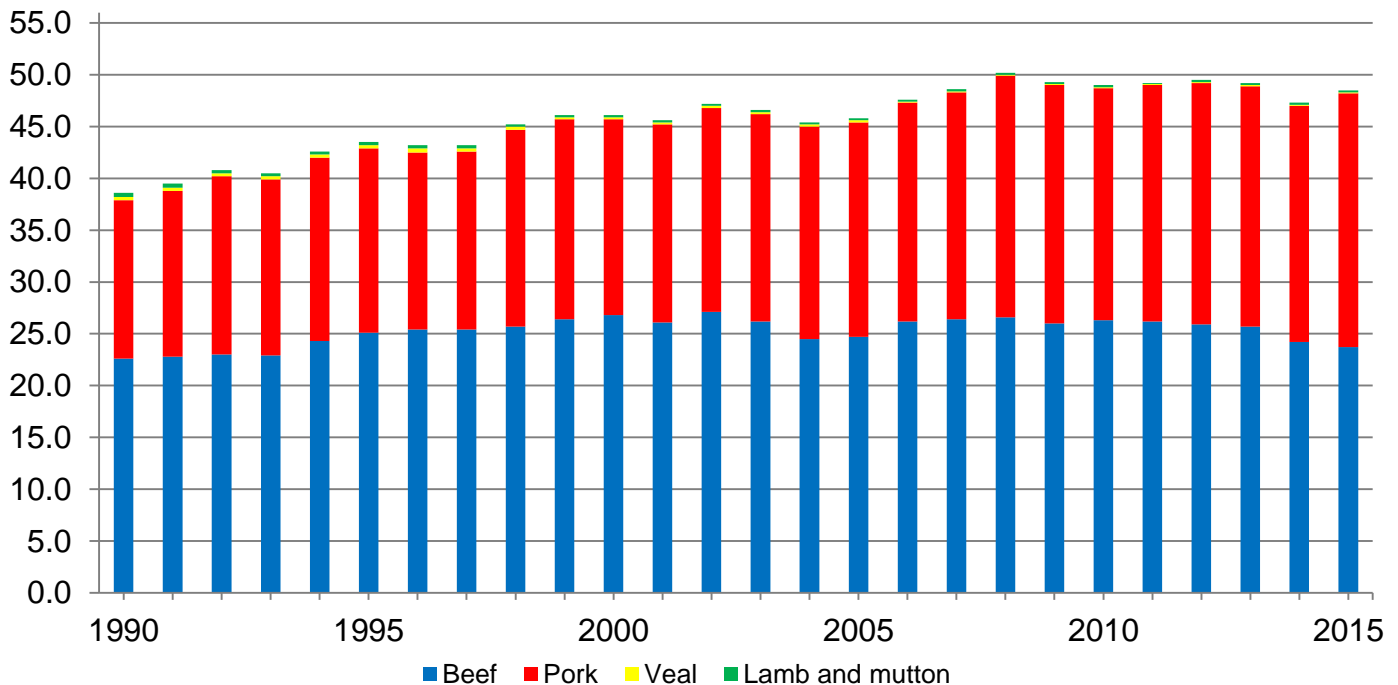
Commercial pork production during 2015 was a record high at 24.5 billion pounds, 7 percent above the 22.8 billion pounds produced in 2014. Pork production also surpassed beef production as the majority of red meat production for the first time in 2015. Since 1990, pork production has increased 60 percent.

Commercial lamb and mutton production was 150.6 million pounds in 2015, 3 percent below 2014 and the second lowest production on record. Lamb and mutton production has been on a steady decline the past 25 years and reached a record low in 2011 at 148.7 million pounds.

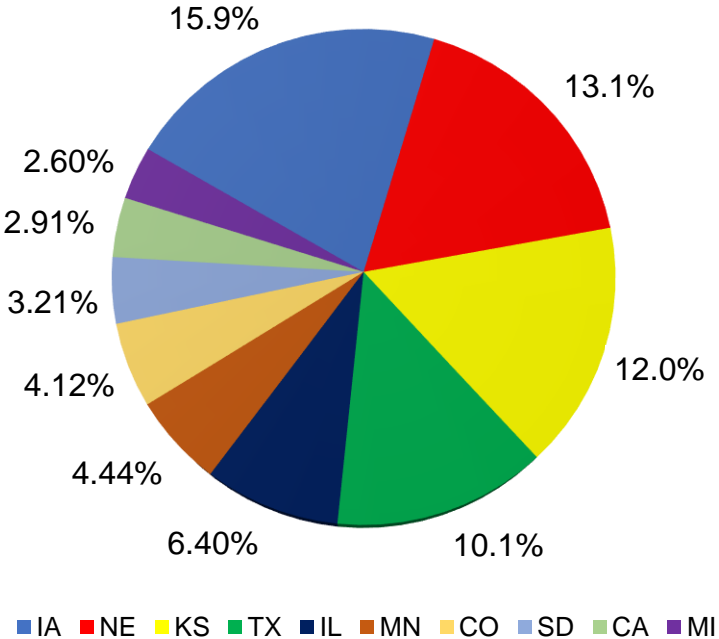
The percent of commercial red meat production by state over the past 25 years been relatively unchanged. In 1990, the top 10 states were Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Texas, Illinois, Minnesota, Colorado, South Dakota, California, and Michigan. In 2015, the top 10 states were Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Texas, Illinois, Minnesota, North Carolina, Colorado, Missouri, and Indiana. These states had 75 percent of the commercial red meat production in 1990 and 78 percent of the commercial red meat production in 2015.

Commercial Red Meat Production – United States

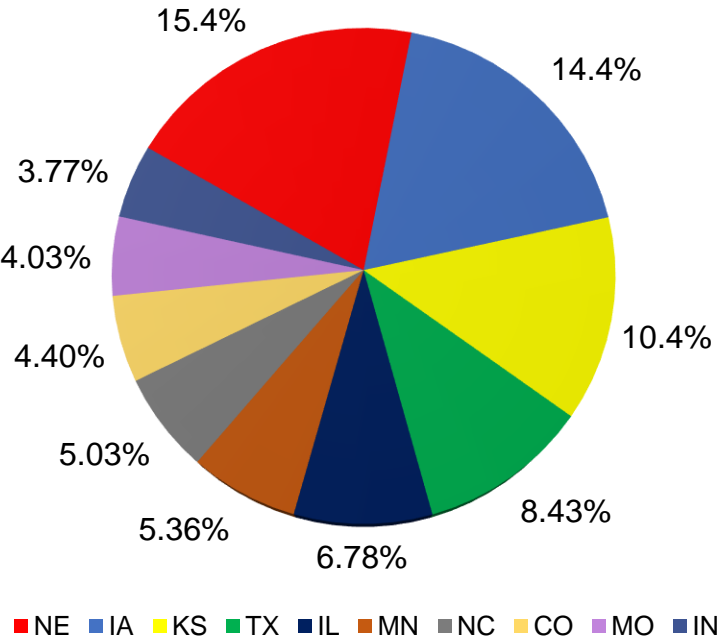
Billion pounds



Percent of Commercial Red Meat Production by State – Top 10 States: 1990



Percent of Commercial Red Meat Production by State – Top 10 States: 2015



Cattle Weights Reached Record High in 2015

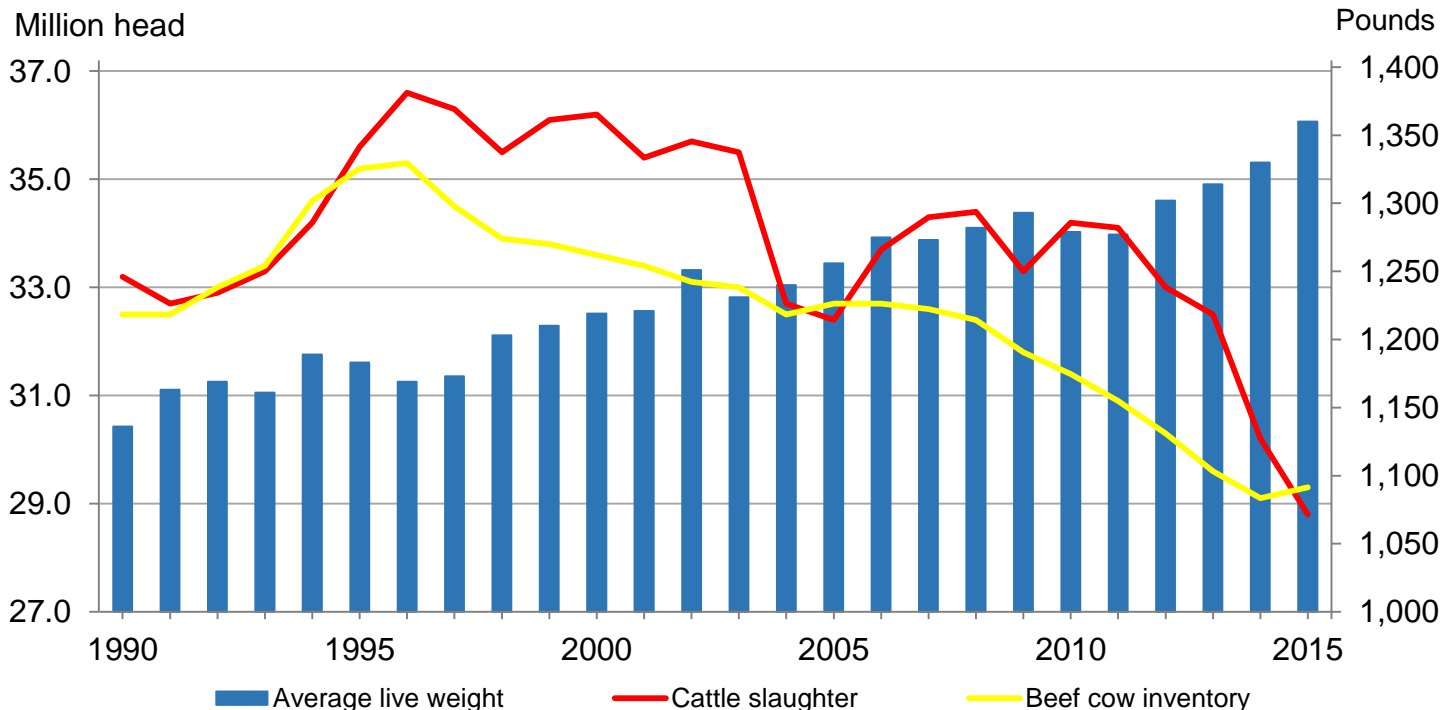
Commercial cattle slaughter has trended down since the early 2000's after a steady increase during the 1990's. Cattle slaughter was 28.8 million head in 2015, down 5 percent from 2014 and the smallest annual cattle slaughter since 1963. The largest number of cattle slaughtered in the last 25 years was 36.6 million head in 1996. This coincides with the peak of the 1990 to 2004 cattle cycle.

Commercial cattle average live weights have seen a steady increase over the past 25 years and reached a record high in 2015 at 1360 pounds. This was 30 pounds higher than the year before. Since 1990, average live weight has increased 224 pounds, or 20 percent. Since USDA slaughter records began in 1935, commercial cattle average live weights have increased by 56 percent.

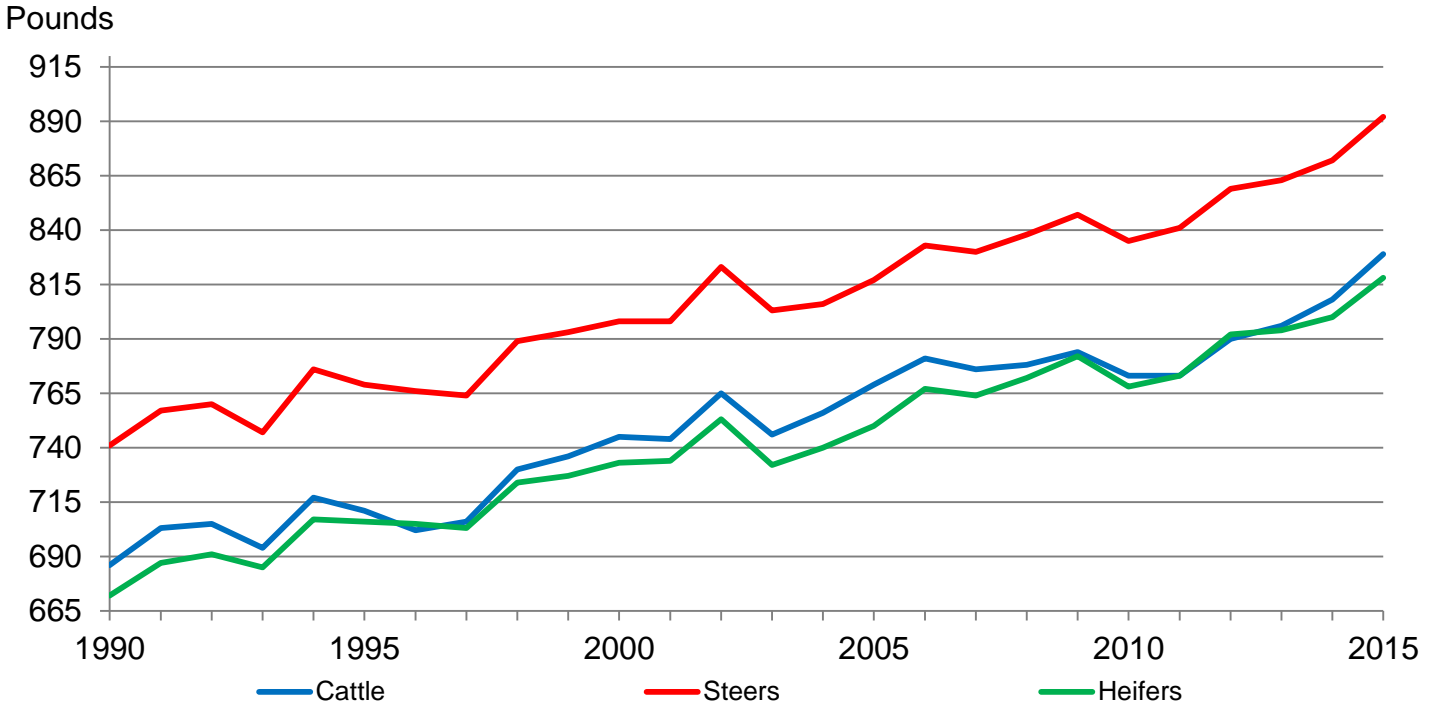
Federally inspected average dressed weights for all cattle, steers and heifers have also steadily increased. Cattle average dressed weights reached a record high of 829 pounds in 2015, up 21 pounds from 2014. Since 1990, cattle average dressed weights have increased 143 pounds, or 21 percent. USDA records began in 1921 when federally inspected average dressed weight for cattle was 541 pounds and reached a low of 450 pounds in 1934. Steer and heifer average dressed weights also reached record highs last year. Steers averaged 892 pounds in 2015, 20 pounds higher than a year earlier. Heifers averaged 818 pounds, 18 pounds higher than 2014.

Due to changes in size group categories since 1990, a comparison of what size plants are slaughtering cattle was limited to 2000 and 2015. In 2000, plants that slaughtered over 1,000,000 head per year slaughtered 21.1 million head or 59 percent of the federally inspected cattle slaughter. In 2015, plants that slaughtered over 1,000,000 head per year slaughtered 16.2 million head or 57 percent of the federally inspected cattle slaughter. The biggest changes have come in the second and third largest size groups. In 2000, 15 percent of federally inspected slaughter was conducted in plants where 500,000 to 999,999 head are slaughtered yearly versus 8.5 percent in 2015. However, only 10 percent of slaughter was conducted at plants slaughtering 300,000 to 499,999 head during the year in 2000 versus nearly 19 percent in 2015.

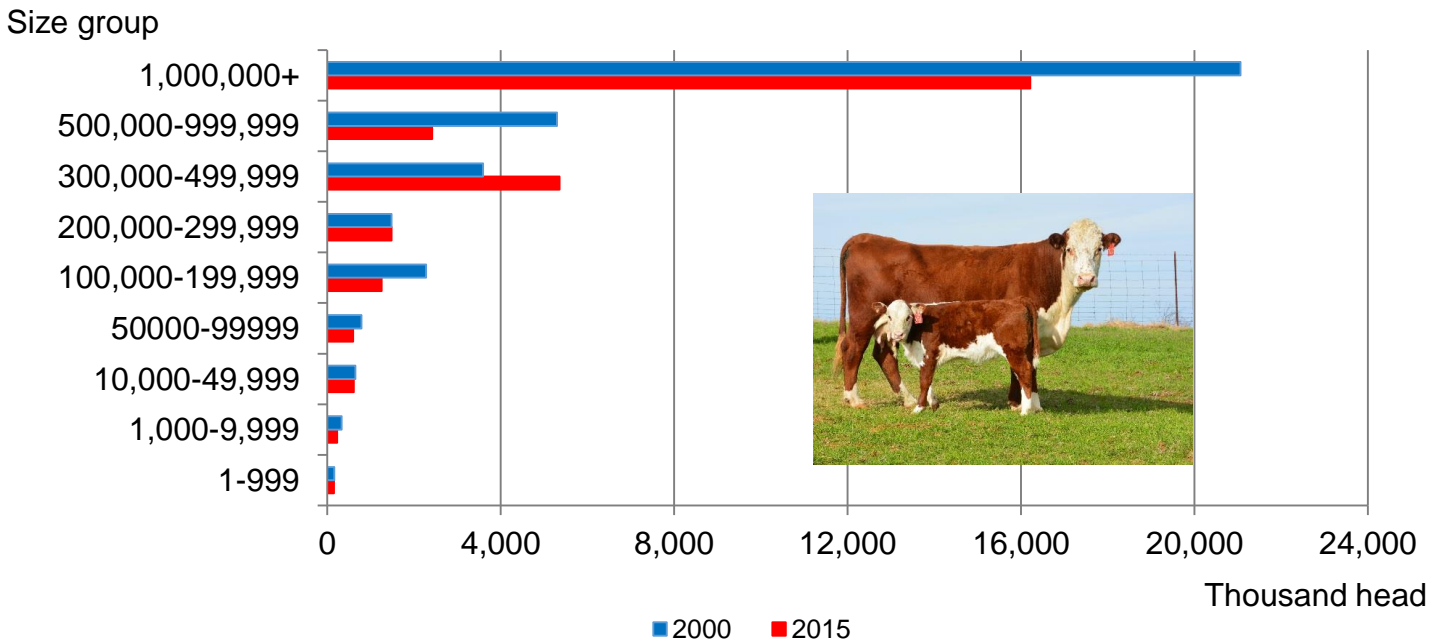
Commercial Cattle Slaughter, Number of Head and Average Live Weight – United States



Cattle, Federally Inspected Slaughter Average Dressed Weight – United States



Cattle, Federally Inspected Head Slaughtered by Size Group – United States: 2000 and 2015



Commercial Hog Slaughter and Weights Continue Upward Trend

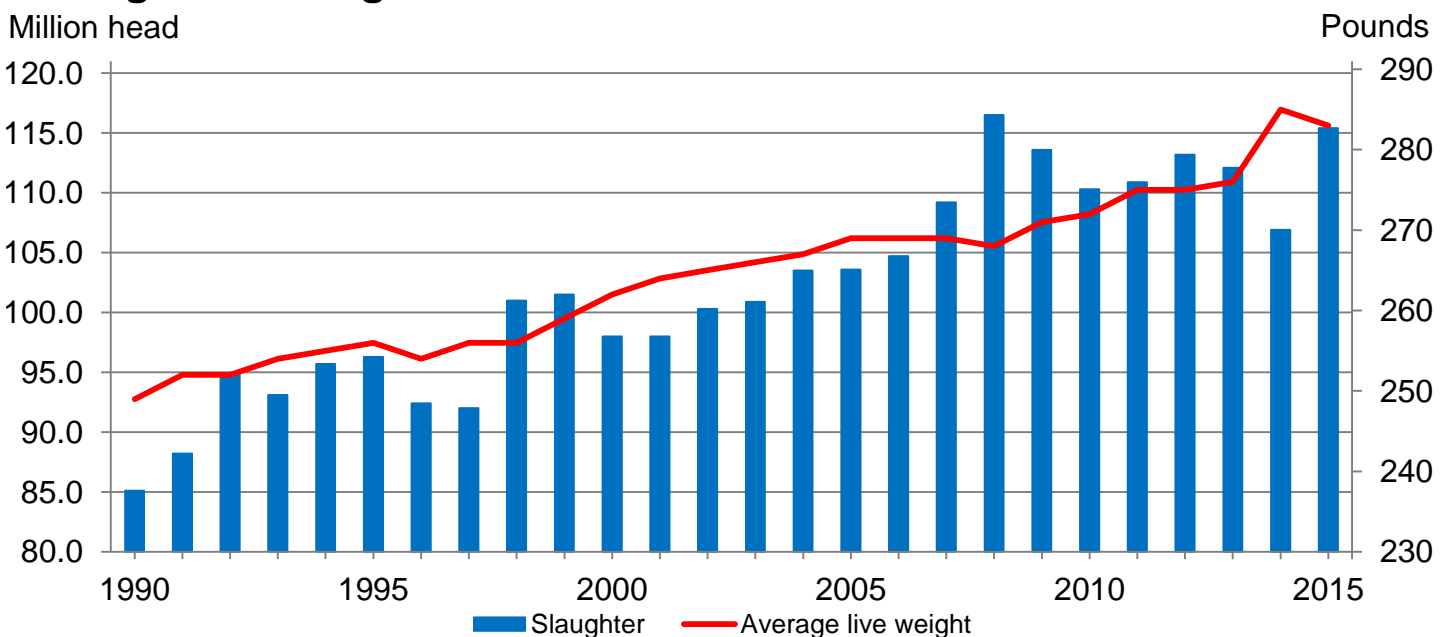
Commercial hog slaughter has trended upward since 1990. A record high commercial hog slaughter of 116.5 million head was recorded in 2008. Since 2008, commercial hog slaughter hasn't been below 110 million except in 2014 when the porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv) hit the industry. In 2015, commercial hog slaughter was the second largest it has ever been, at 115.4 million head. Since 1990, commercial hog slaughter has increased over 35 percent.

Commercial hog average live weights have seen a steady increase over the past 25 years and reached a record high in 2014, at 285 pounds. This was 9 pounds higher than the year before. Since 1990, average live weight has increased 34 pounds, or approximately 14 percent. In 2015, average live weights decreased 2 pounds to 283 pounds. Since USDA slaughter records began in 1935, commercial hog average live weights have increased by 27 percent.

Federally inspected average dressed weights for all hogs and barrows and gilts have also steadily increased. Hog average dressed weights reached a record high of 214 pounds in 2014, up 7 pounds from 2013. Since 1990, hog average dressed weights have increased 33 pounds, or 18 percent. Hog average dressed weights decreased by 1 pound in 2015 to 213 pounds. USDA records for slaughter began in 1921 when federally inspected average dressed weight for hogs was 173 pounds and reached a low of 137 pounds in 1958 and 1959. Barrow and gilt average dressed weights reached a record high in 2014, at 212 pounds. Weights were 210 pounds in 2015. Sow average dressed weights have been relatively steady over the past 25 years. In 2015, sow average dressed weight was 309 pounds, up 4 pounds from 2014. In 2002, sow average dressed weights reached a record high of 317 pounds.

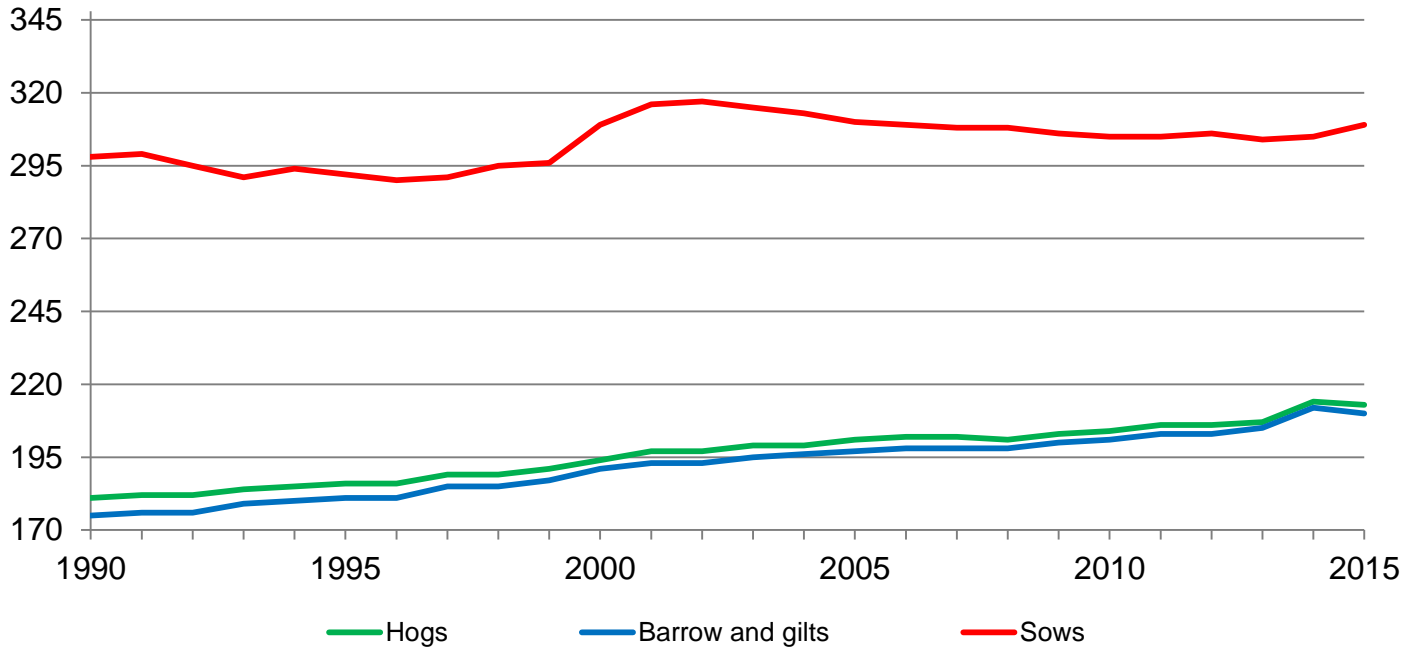
Due to changes in size group categories since 1990, a comparison of what size plants are slaughtering hogs was limited to 2000 and 2015. In 2000, plants that slaughtered over 4,000,000 head per year slaughtered 24.7 million head or 34 percent of the federally inspected hog slaughter. In 2015, plants that slaughtered over 4,000,000 head per year slaughtered 68.7 million head or 60 percent of the federally inspected hog slaughter. There were large decreases in the second and fourth largest size groups. In 2000, 35 percent of federally inspected slaughter was conducted in plants where 3,000,000 to 3,999,999 head are slaughtered per year versus 3 percent in 2015. In plants that slaughtered between 1,000,000 and 1,999,999 head per year, 24 percent of federally inspected slaughter was conducted at these plants in 2000 versus only 4 percent in 2015.

Commercial Hog Slaughter, Number of Head and Average Live Weight – United States



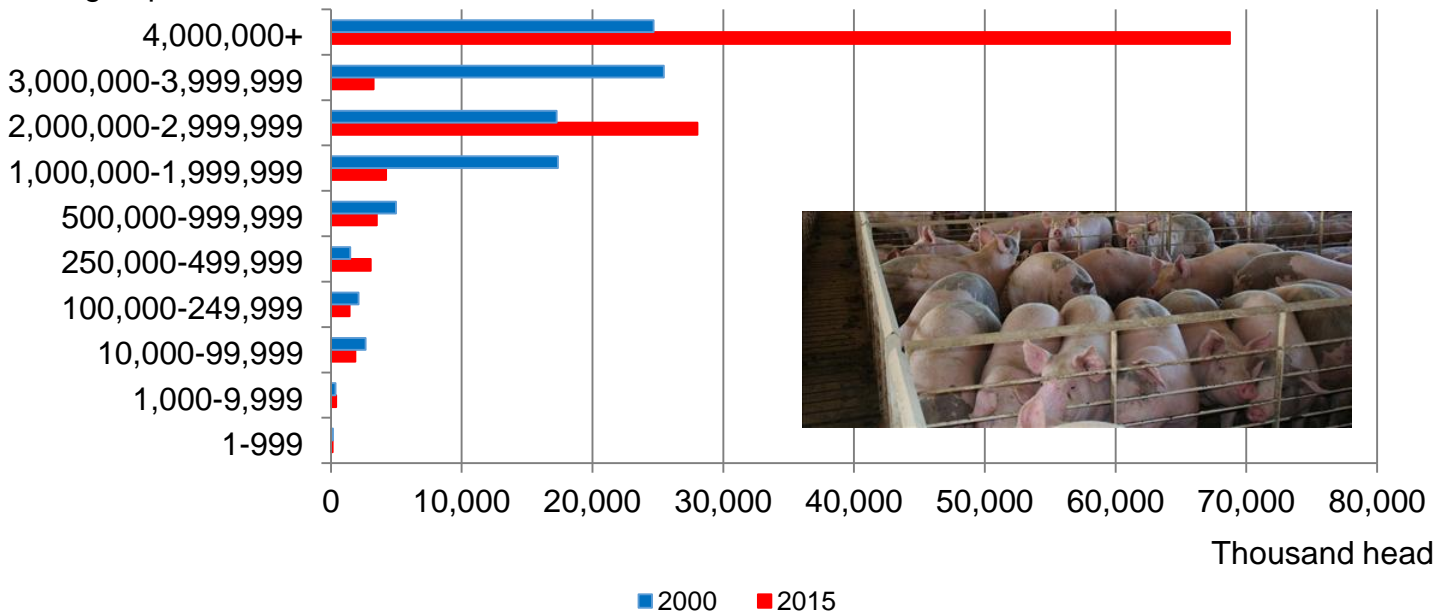
Hogs, Federally Inspected Slaughter Average Dressed Weight – United States

Pounds



Hogs, Federally Inspected Head Slaughtered by Size Group – United States: 2000 and 2015

Size group



Commercial Sheep and Lamb Slaughter Continues Decline

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter has trended downward since 1990. A record low commercial sheep and lamb slaughter of 2.16 million head was recorded in 2011. Since 1990, commercial sheep and lamb slaughter has declined 60 percent. Commercial average sheep and lamb live weights steadily increased from 1990 to 2000 and have leveled off since that time. A record high of 143 pounds was recorded in 2012. In 2015, commercial sheep and average live weight was 136 pounds, 11 pounds higher than 1990.

Goats, Bison, and Equine

Federally inspected, non-federally inspected, and commercial slaughter numbers for goats and bison have been collected and published since 2006. Average live weights for goats are also published on a monthly and annual basis. Federally inspected slaughter numbers by state for goats and bison are also available annually beginning in 2006.

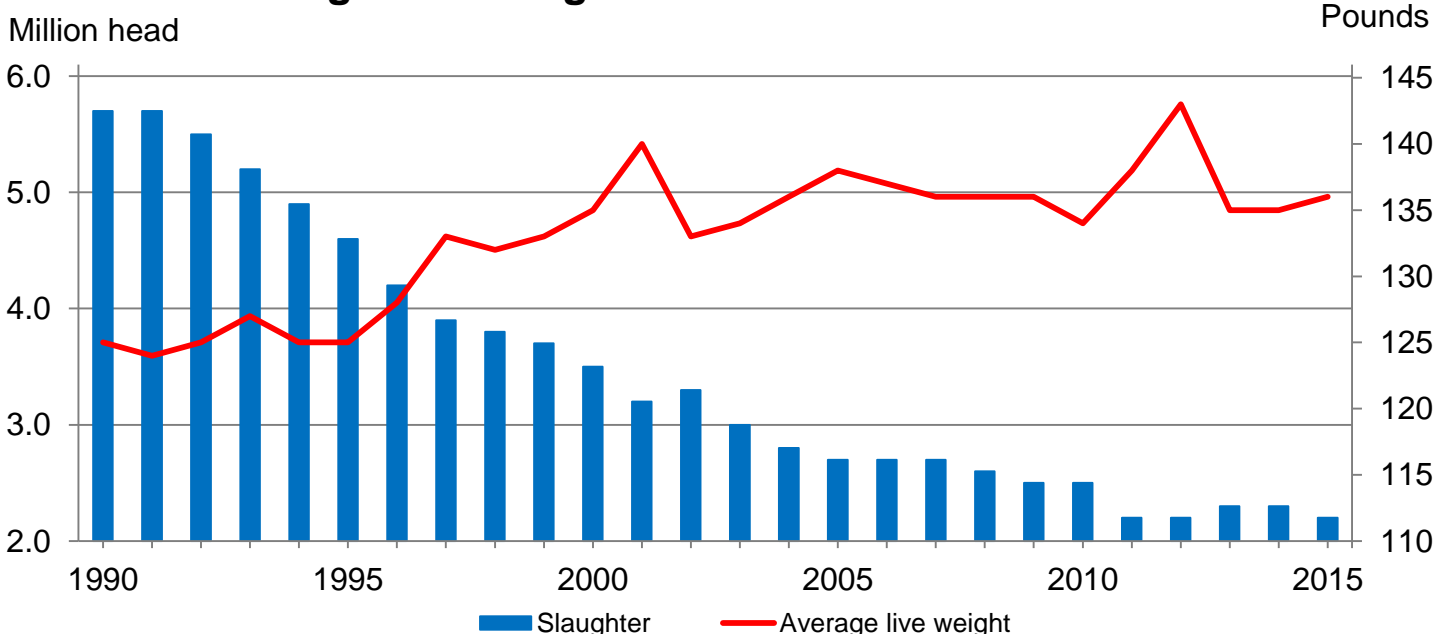
Federally inspected weekly slaughter numbers for equine were published beginning in 1980 and ended on September 22, 2007 when equine slaughter was discontinued in the United States. The largest number of equine slaughtered in any week while data was being collected was 9,700 head on June 21, 1986.

Number of Livestock Slaughter Establishments Decline 40 Percent Since 1990

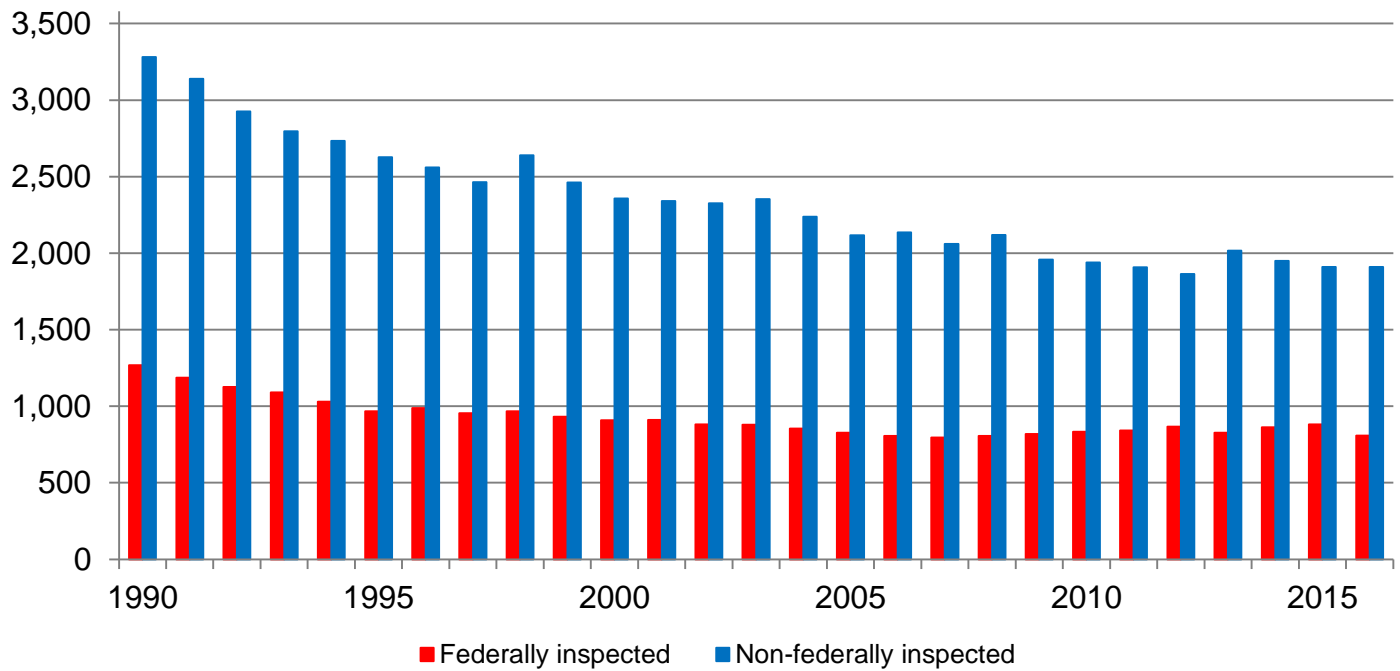
Federally inspected and non-federally inspected slaughter establishments have both declined since 1990, but the decline in non-federally inspected slaughter establishments has been steeper. Since 1990, federally inspected establishments have decreased by 36 percent. In 1990, there were 1,268 federally inspected establishments versus 808 in 2016. Non-federally inspected establishments declined 42 percent since 1990 when there were 3,281 establishments versus 1,910 in 2016.

Federally and non-federally inspected establishments are spread throughout the country. On January 1, 2016, Pennsylvania had the largest number of federally inspected slaughter plants with 83 while Montana had the largest number of non-federally inspected slaughter plants with 164. Texas had the largest number of total establishments with 189, while Alaska and Nevada had the smallest number of total establishments with 3 each. Wyoming has no federally inspected establishments while Alaska, Florida, Hawaii, and Nevada do not have any non-federally inspected establishments.

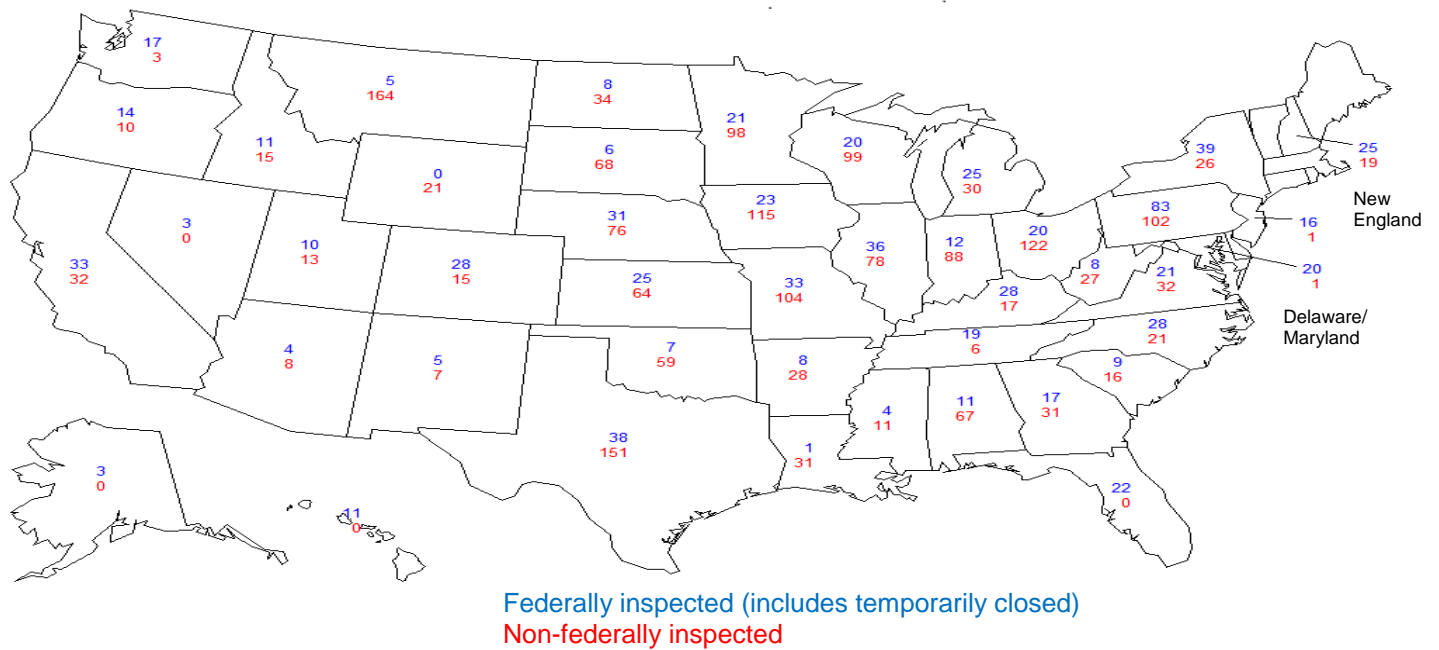
Commercial Sheep and Lamb Slaughter, Number of Head and Average Live Weight – United States



Number of Livestock Slaughter Establishments by Type – United States: January 1



Number of Livestock Slaughter Plants by Type of Inspection – States: January 1, 2016



Poultry Production Almost Doubles Since 1990

Federally inspected poultry production reached a record 46.3 billion pounds of ready-to-cook weight in 2015. The poultry industry has undergone significant growth in the last two and a half decades. Since 1990, the total live weight of poultry slaughtered under federal inspection increased by 89 percent. Certified ready-to-cook poultry produced under federal inspection increased by 95 percent since 1990. Chicken and turkey both contributed to the expanding poultry production, though chickens to a much larger magnitude.

Ready-to-cook chicken production during 2015 was a record 40.6 billion pounds, up 4 percent from 2014. Since 1990, chicken production increased by 113 percent. Since USDA records began in 1960, chicken production has grown almost 900 percent.

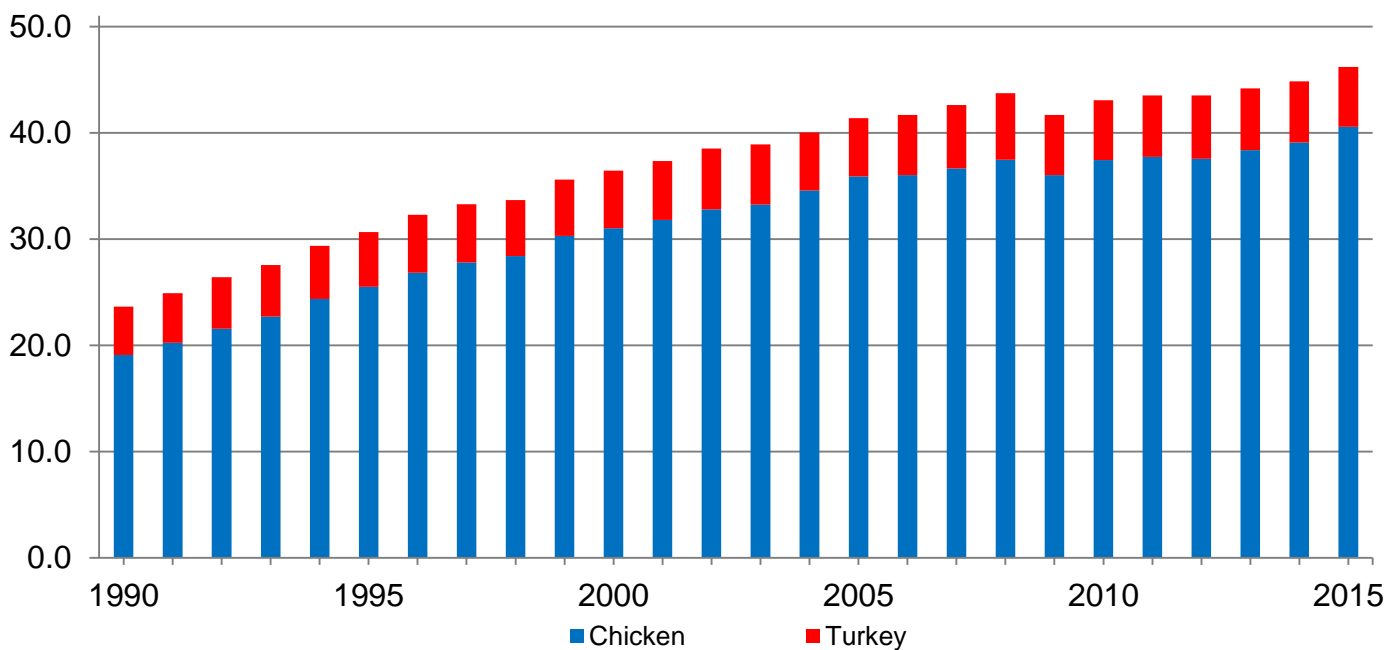
Ready-to-cook turkey production during 2015 was 5.63 billion pounds, down 2 percent from 2014. Since 1990, turkey production has risen 23 percent. Production has been relatively steady over the last 5 years. Turkey production has increased almost 500 percent since 1960.

Ready-to-cook duck production during 2015 was a record 138 million pounds, up 5 percent from 2014. Since 1990, duck production increased by 41 percent. Ready-to-cook other poultry production during 2015 was 2.41 million pounds, up 15 percent from 2014. Other poultry including geese, guineas, and squab. Duck and other poultry combined make up less than 0.5 percent of poultry production.

The most common causes of post-mortem condemnations were the same in 1990 and 2015. Septicaemia accounted for 37 percent of the number of head condemned post-mortem in 1990, compared with 41 percent in 2015. Airsacculitis made up 25 percent of post-mortem condemnations in 1990, compared with 21 percent in 2015. Contamination accounted for 6 percent of post-mortem condemnations in both 1990 and 2015. Post-mortem condemnations reported under miscellaneous accounted for 15 percent of the total in 1990 and 26 percent of the total in 2015.

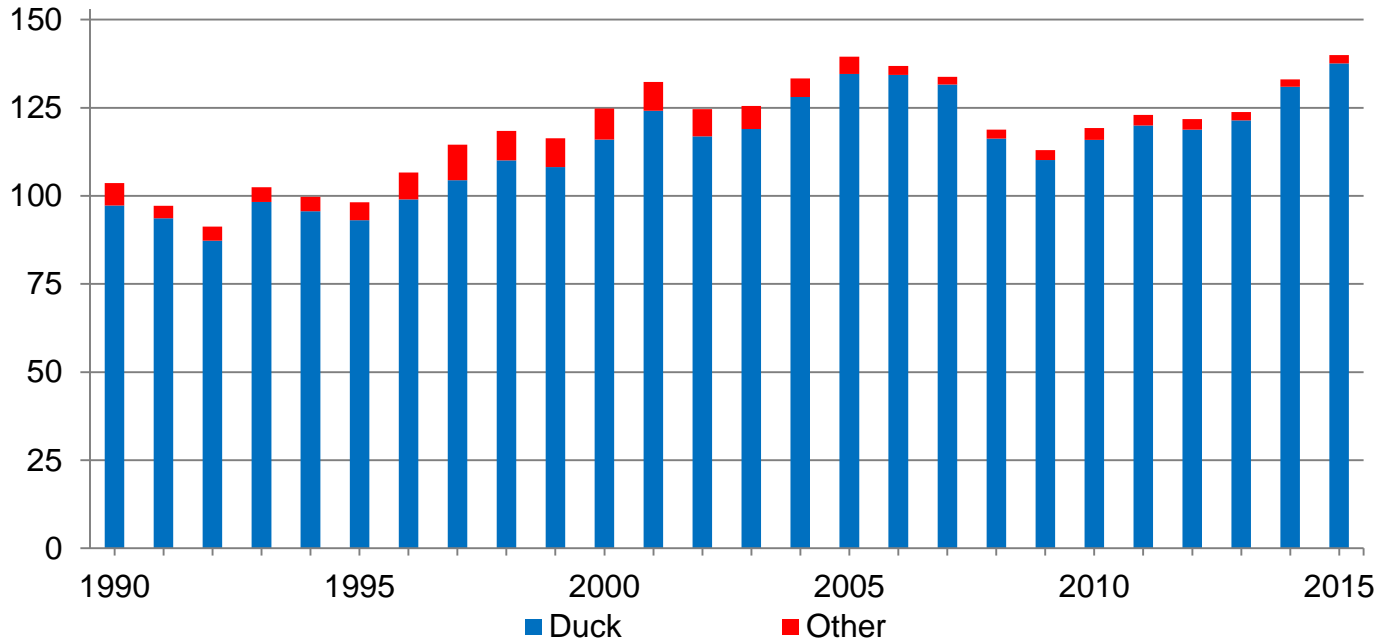
Federally Inspected Chicken and Turkey Production, Ready-to-Cook – United States

Billion pounds

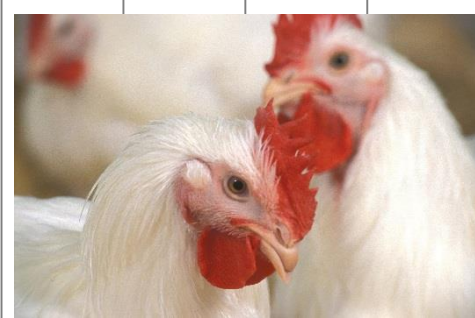
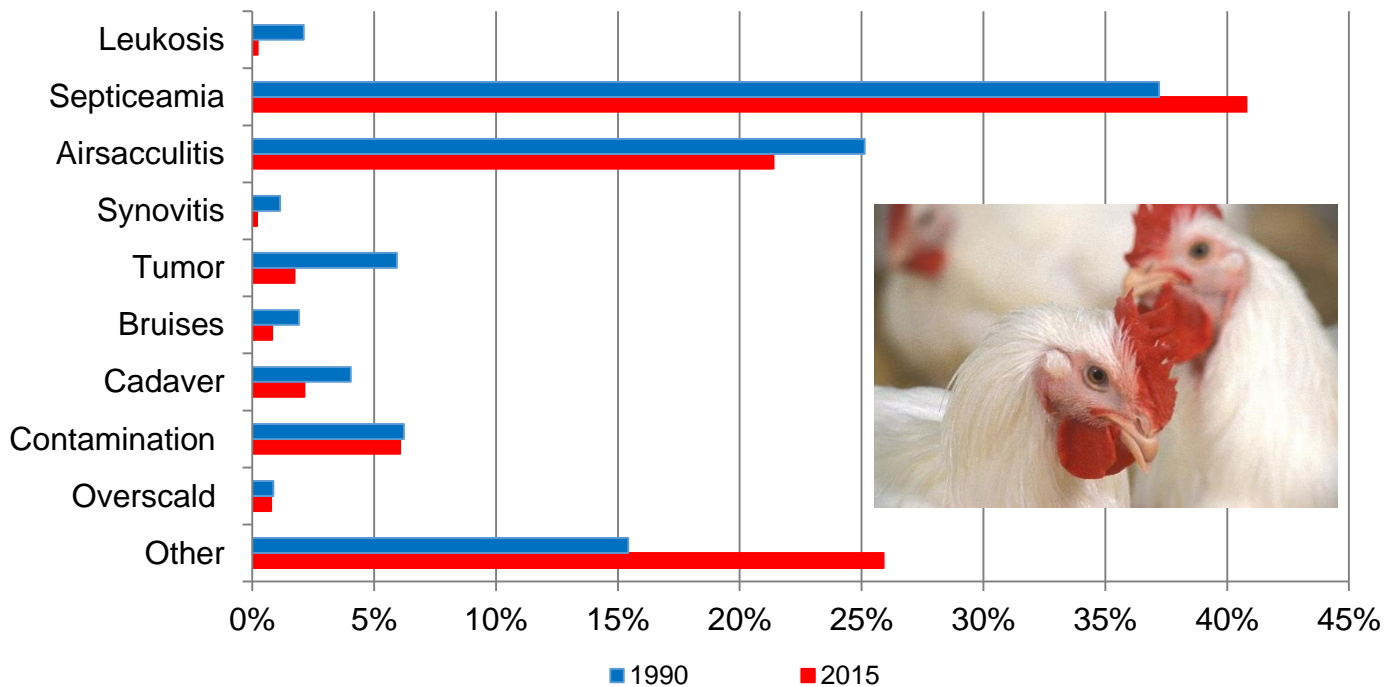


Federally Inspected Duck and Other Poultry Production, Ready-to-Cook – United States

Million pounds



Post-Mortem Condemnation, Percent by Type, Chickens and Turkeys – United States: 1990 and 2015



Tuberculosis was not reported in 1990 or 2015

Chicken Weights Reached Record High in 2015, Production Up 113 Percent Since 1990

Federally inspected chickens slaughtered held level since the late 2000's after steadily increasing from 1990 to 2008. Chicken slaughter was 8.82 billion head in 2015, up 2 percent from 2014 but 3 percent below the record high reached in 2008. Chicken average live weights have consistently increased since the early 1990's. Starting at an average live weight of 4.38 pounds in 1990, the average live weight climbed each year, and reached a record high of 6.12 pounds per chicken in 2015. The 40 percent increase in average live weight is the largest of any animal type in that time frame. Since 1960, chicken average live weights have increased by 77 percent.

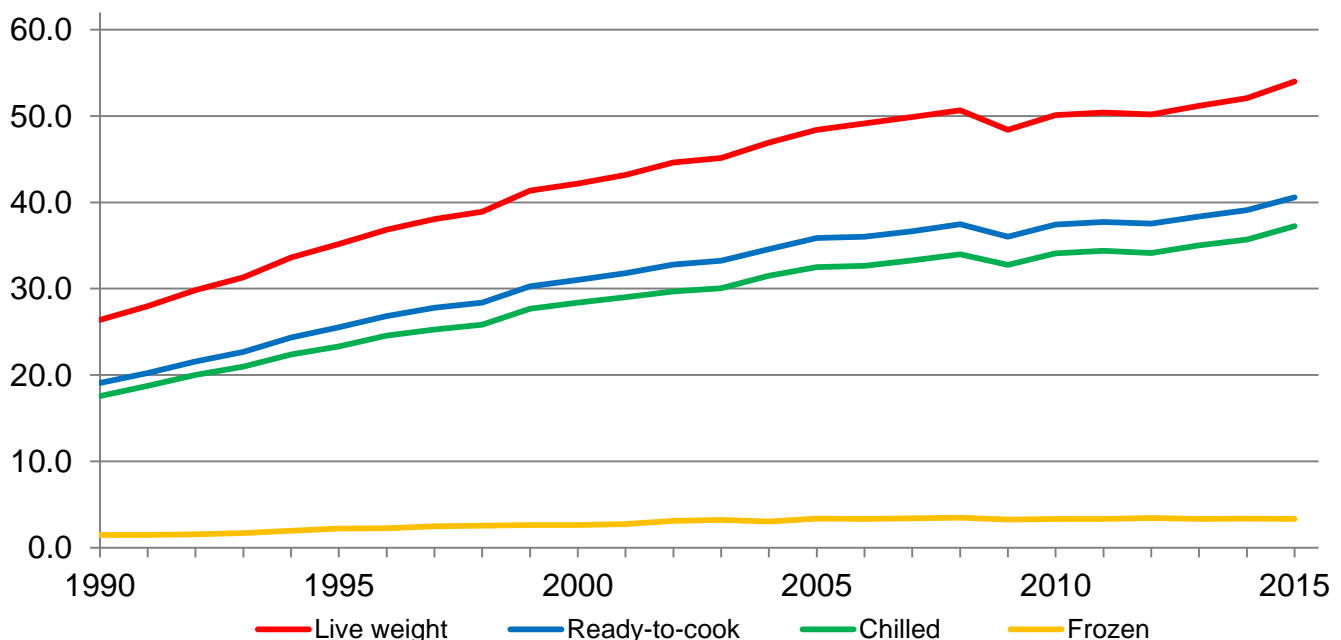
Chilled ready-to-cook production accounted for the majority of output over the last 25 years. In 1990 and in 2015, production broke down to 92 percent chilled and 8 percent frozen. The trend from 1990 to 2015 was young chickens making up a growing proportion of chicken slaughter. Young chicken made up 99 percent of total chicken produced under federal inspection in 2015, with mature chicken accounting for 1 percent. Young chicken was 97 percent of total chicken production in 1990, with mature chicken accounting for 3 percent.

According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, the per capita availability of boneless chicken meat in 2015 was 58.7 pounds, which exceeded beef, pork, and turkey. From 1990 to 2015, the per capita availability of beef, pork, and turkey declined, while chicken availability grew steadily. Chicken overtook pork as the second most consumed meat in 1996 and overtook beef as the most consumed meat in 2010.

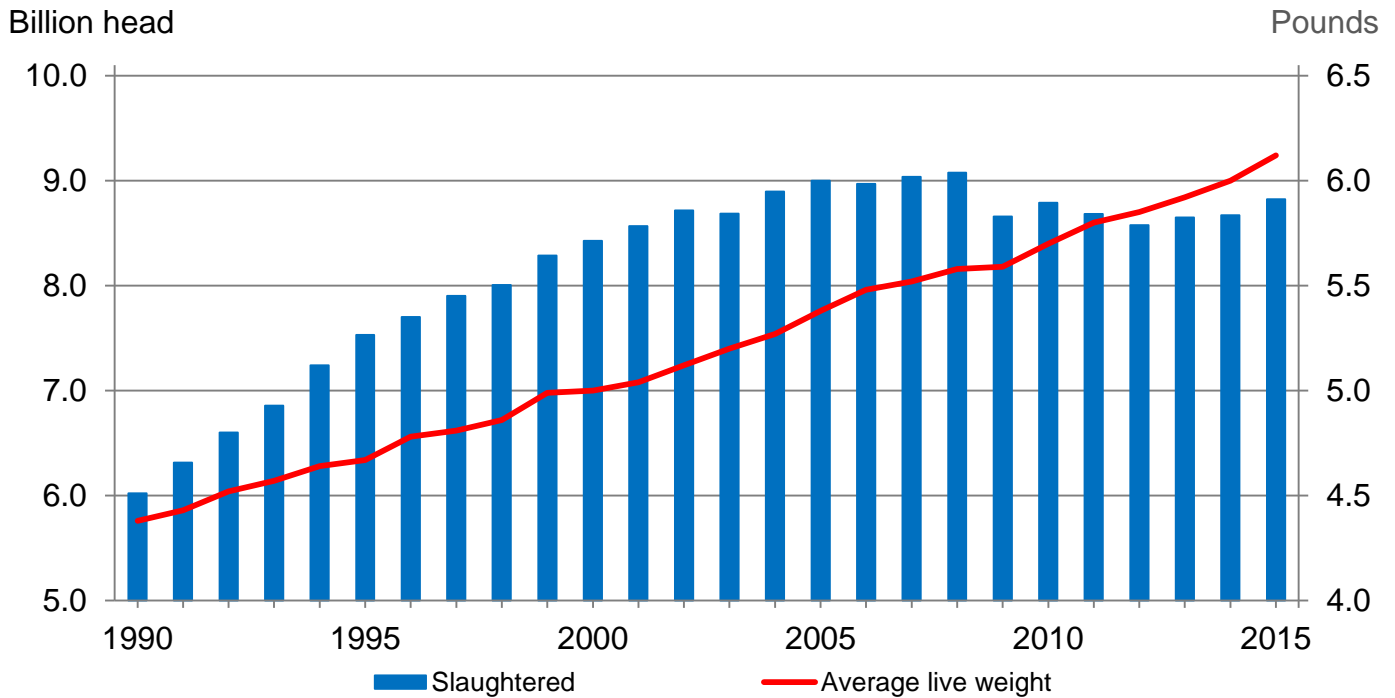
The 10 largest states producing federally inspected young chicken accounted for about 79 percent of United States production in recent years. In 1990, the top 10 states with young chicken slaughter were Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Mississippi, Texas, Virginia, Delaware, California, and Maryland. In 2015, the top 10 states were Georgia, North Carolina, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, Delaware, South Carolina, Missouri, and Virginia. In 1990, the top 10 states accounted for 83 percent of total production, while in 2015 the top 10 states accounted for 79 percent of United States production. South Carolina and Missouri were newcomers to the top 10 since 1990, and California and Maryland dropped out of the top 10.

Chicken Live Weight and Ready-to-Cook Weight Slaughtered – United States

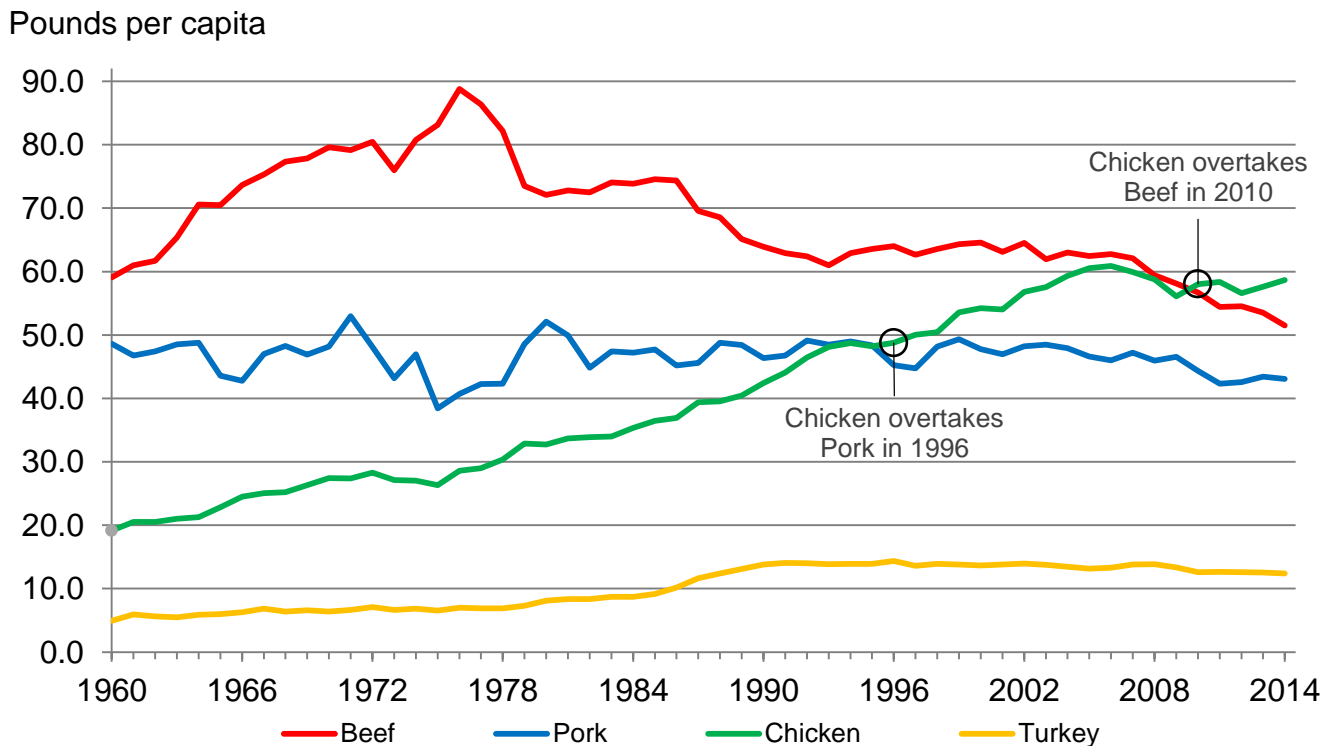
Billion pounds



Chickens Slaughtered Under Federal Inspection, Head and Average Live Weight – United States



Per Capita Availability of Boneless Meat – United States



Source: USDA – Economic Research Service, Food Availability Data System

Turkeys Slaughtered Trends Down since 1996

There were 232 million turkeys slaughtered under federal inspection in 2015, down 2 percent from 2014. Since 1960, the number of turkeys slaughtered trended upward and peaked at 293 million in 1996. Since that point, turkeys slaughtered has trended down. Increased average live weight of turkeys has offset the decrease in number of head slaughtered. Since 1990, the average live weight of a turkey slaughtered has increased every year except 2009 and 2015. The average weight of a turkey slaughtered in 2015 was 30.2 pounds, nearly 9 pounds higher than in 1990, and more than 13 pounds larger than in 1960.

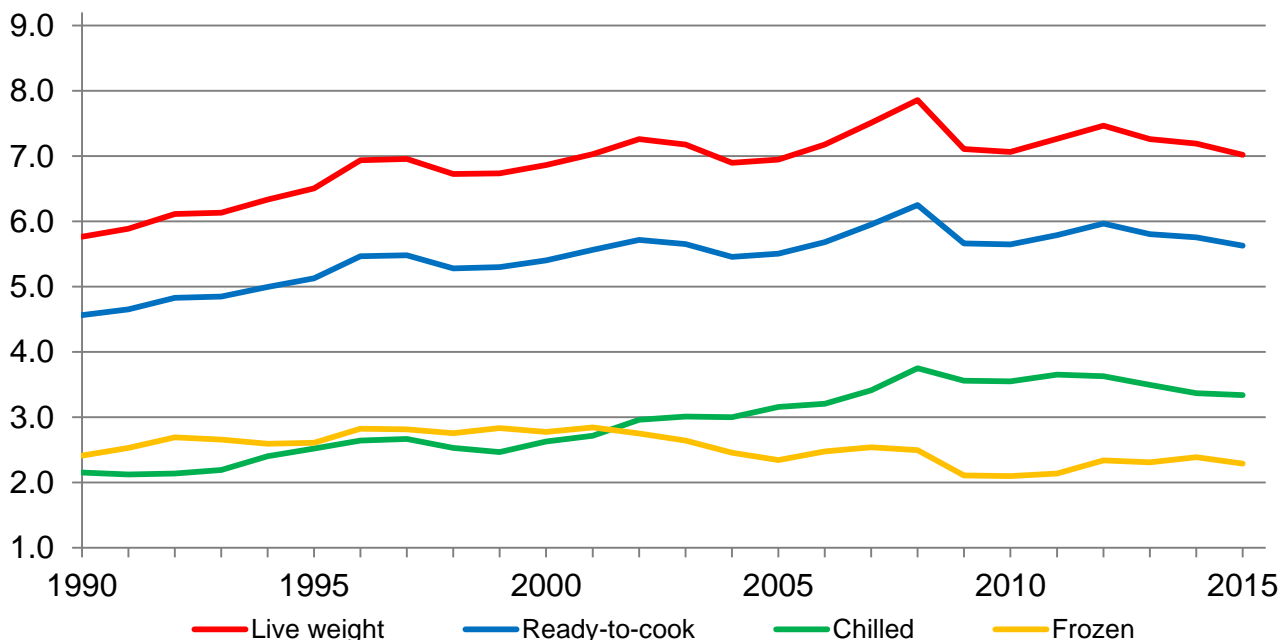
Ready-to-cook turkey weight totaled 5.63 billion pounds in 2015, down 2 percent from 2014. Ready-to-cook frozen turkey production has remained somewhat flat since the early 1990s, while chilled production increased by 55 percent, equating to a greater proportion of ready-to-cook turkey production being chilled than in the past. In 1990, 37 percent of ready-to-cook turkey was chilled and in 2015, 59 percent was chilled. From 1990 to 2015 young turkey made up the vast majority of total turkey produced under federal inspection. In 1990, old turkey accounted for slightly more than 1 percent of production, while in 2015 old turkey contributed less than 1 percent.

The proportion of live weight condemned for both turkeys and chickens trended down from 1990 to 2015. Turkey ante-mortem condemnations during 2015 totaled 17.4 million pounds, while post mortem condemnations totaled 81.6 million pounds. Ante-mortem condemnations were 0.25 percent of turkey live weight inspected and post-mortem condemnations were 1.43 percent. Chicken ante-mortem condemnations during 2015 totaled 130 million pounds, while post-mortem condemnations totaled 393 million pounds. Ante-mortem condemnations were 0.24 percent of chicken live weight inspected and post-mortem condemnations were 0.96 percent of quantities inspected.

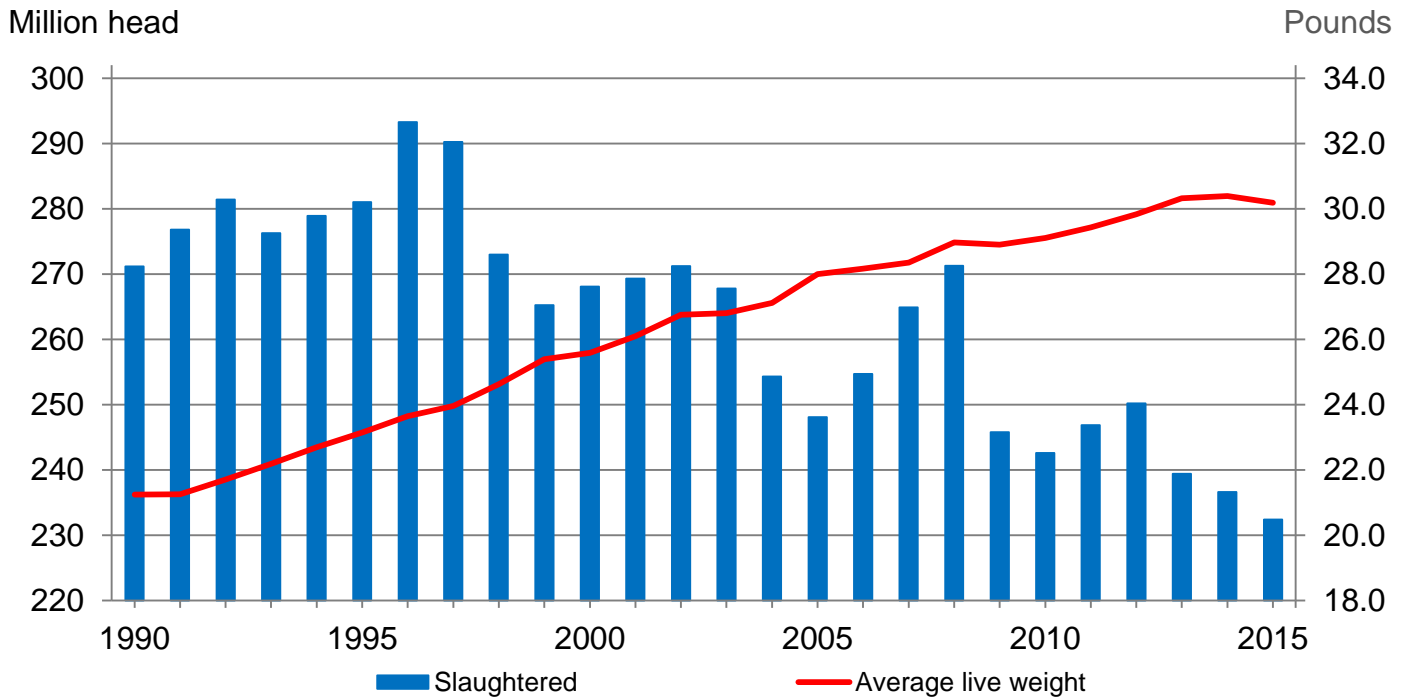
The 5 largest states in federally inspected young turkey production have in recent years accounted for about 60 percent of United States production. In 1990, the top 5 states for young turkey slaughter were North Carolina, Minnesota, California, Virginia, and Arkansas. These states accounted for 60 percent of production in 1990. In 2015, the top 5 states also made up 60 percent of production and were Minnesota, Indiana, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Virginia.

Turkey Live Weight and Ready-to-Cook Weight Slaughtered – United States

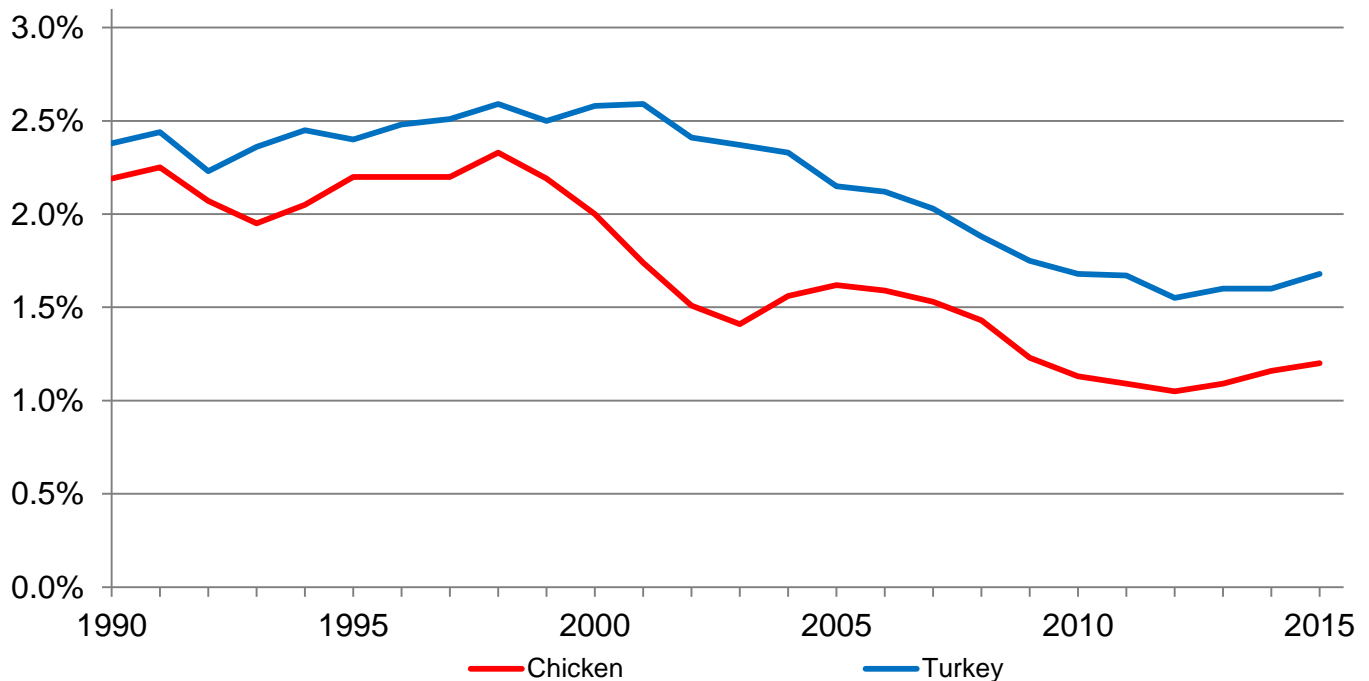
Billion pounds



Turkeys Slaughtered Under Federal Inspection, Head and Average Live Weight – United States



Percent of Chicken and Turkey Live Weight Condemned – United States



Duck Slaughter Reaches New High in 2015, Other Poultry Well Below 1990

There were 27.7 million head of ducks slaughtered under federal inspection in 2015, up 5 percent from 2014 and up 33 percent from 1990. The number of ducks slaughtered increased 175 percent from the 10.1 million head slaughtered in 1960.

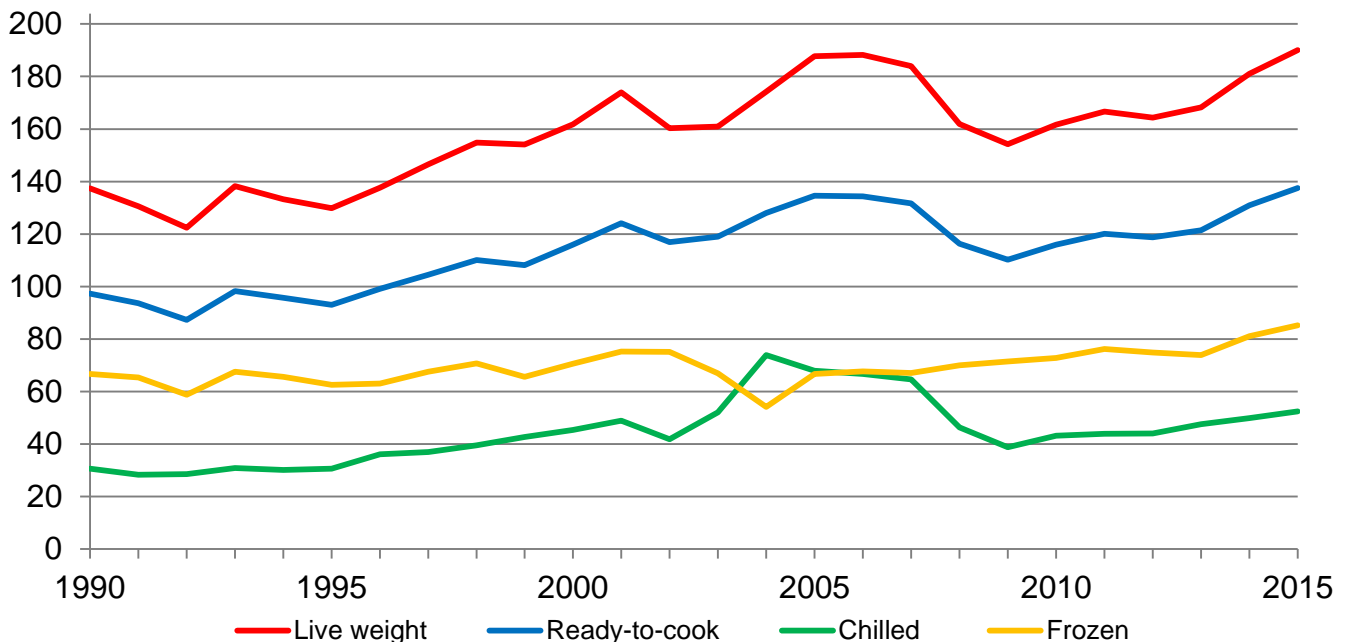
Unlike chickens and turkeys, duck average live weights have shown only modest growth during the last 25 years. The average live weight of a duck slaughtered in 2015 was 6.85 pounds, up 4 percent from 1990. Since 1960, the average live weight has increased 11 percent from 6.18 pounds.

The total live weight slaughtered of other poultry in 2015 was 3.68 million pounds, up 17 percent from 2014. Other poultry production was well below the 9.89 million pounds produced in 1990. Other poultry live weight includes geese, guineas, ostriches, emus, rheas, and squab. Other poultry ready-to-cook weight includes geese, guineas, and squab. Prior to 2008 other poultry ready-to-cook weight consisted of all ready-to-cook poultry products, excluding chickens, turkeys and ducks.

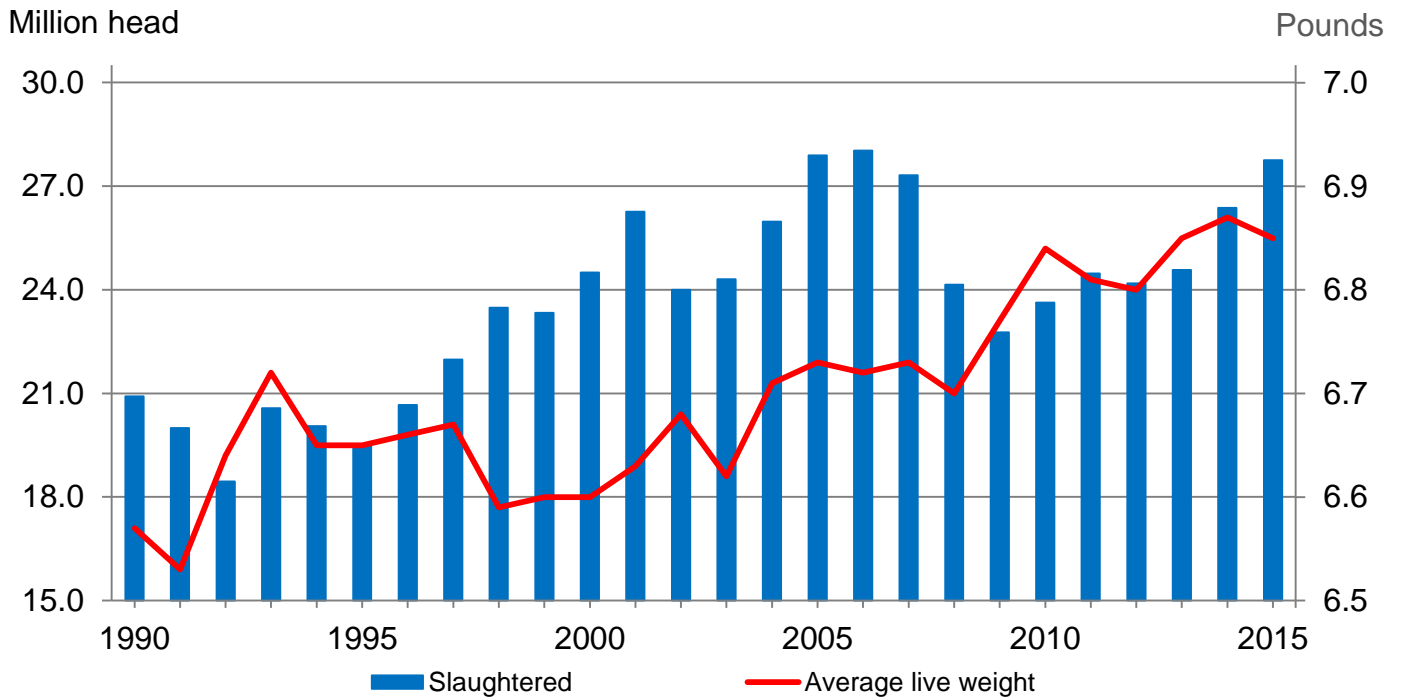
Approximately 350 federally inspected plants slaughtered poultry in 1990 and about 310 plants slaughtered poultry in 2015. In 2015, there were 37 states that had young chickens slaughtered at federally inspected plants. In 2015, there were 30 states that had young turkeys slaughtered at federally inspected plants.

Duck Live Weight and Ready-to-Cook Weight Slaughtered – United States

Million pounds



Ducks Slaughtered Under Federal Inspection, Head and Average Live Weight – United States



Statistical Methodology Used for Livestock Slaughter Estimates

Data Sources: Primary data for the *Livestock Slaughter* publication are obtained from electronic reports completed by inspectors from the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), USDA, which provide daily counts of animals slaughtered in Federally Inspected (FI) plants, in addition to total live and dressed weights. These counts are combined with data from State-administered Non-Federally Inspected (NFI) slaughter plants to derive total commercial slaughter estimates.

There are approximately 800 livestock slaughter plants in the United States operating under Federal Inspection and about 1,900 Non-Federally Inspected (State-inspected or custom-exempt) slaughter plants. Slaughter from State-inspected Talmadge-Aiken plants is included in FI totals (see Terms and Definitions, page 20). To prevent duplication in reporting between FI and NFI plants and assure all FI plants are included, certificates prepared by FSIS identifying operating status are constantly monitored.

Revision Policy: Number of head slaughtered, live weights, and dressed weights are subject to revision the following month after the monthly release. Annual totals are published in the slaughter summary each April which includes any revisions made to current and previous year's published data. Revisions are generally the result of late reports received from slaughter plants and are usually less than one-half of one percent. No revisions will be made to the previous year's data after the publication of the annual summary in April.

Procedures and Reliability: The livestock slaughter data is obtained electronically on a daily basis and summarized approximately two weeks after the week of slaughter. A computer program compares each plant's data with the historical data for that plant. Data are checked for unusual values for head kill, patterns of kill, average weights, and dressing percent, based on each plant's past operating profile. In addition, the computer program provides a listing of missing reports for follow-up contact with FSIS. Average live and dressed weights and dressing percentages by State are compared with the previous weeks as an additional check. Fluctuations are frequently the result of plants permanently or temporarily closing and a shift in the species reported.

The FSIS District Veterinary Medical Specialists (DVMS) are contacted by e-mail or telephone for missing or potentially erroneous slaughter data. This assures that plants slaughtering a large number of head or several species are accounted for each week. Any corrections FSIS makes to the slaughter data are included in the summary.

Computer imputation may be necessary for incomplete reports. The imputation of live and dressed weights is based on the current week reported data of plants of similar size and location. Imputation for live and dressed weight data for cattle and hogs is less than 10 percent and 7 percent, respectively. The imputation for calves and sheep is more frequent and variable. If no data is received electronically or by other means, for plants slaughtering fewer than 50 total head weekly of only one species, data are imputed. The imputation of head for any plant is based on the historical data for that particular plant. The imputation of head slaughtered is rare but when necessary, the imputed head kill for missing plants usually is less than 1 percent of the United States head kill totals.

FI data are summarized weekly and accumulated to a monthly total for this release. These weekly totals are published by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) in **Livestock, Meat, Wool Market News**, Weekly Summary, and statistics are also available on the NASS website. NFI data are summarized monthly only.

Livestock slaughter estimates are based on a census of operating plants and therefore, have no sampling error. However, they may be subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplications and mistakes in reporting, recording and processing the data. These errors are minimized through rigid quality controls in the computer edit program and summarization process, and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

No data are published when an individual plant's data could be divulged. If not published, as indicated with a (D), these data are still included in United States and region totals. A review of the data is made annually to determine the publishable data.

Statistical Methodology Used for Poultry Slaughter Estimates

Data Sources: Data for poultry slaughter estimates are collected by inspectors of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), USDA for all Federally Inspected plants. Over 99 percent of the total United States slaughter for any species is under Federal Inspection. The number of head slaughtered daily, by species and class, as well as condemnations and total live and dressed weights are obtained by shift for each plant. Approximately 310 plants slaughtered poultry in the United States under Federal Inspection in 2015. Young chickens were slaughtered in 37 States, young turkeys in 30 States.

Revision Policy: Data for the previous month and year-to-date totals are subject to revision the following month after the initial monthly estimates are published. Final data are published in the annual summary released in February and include any revisions made to current year's and previous year's published data. Revisions are generally the result of late reports or corrections received by FSIS from plants and are usually less than one-half of one percent. No revisions will be made to the previous year's data after publication of the annual summary in February.

Procedures and Reliability: Plant inspectors submit data electronically for each shift a plant operates. An edit provides checks for the detection of errors such as invalid plant information, duplication, and erroneous data. Data are accumulated to monthly totals for this release.

Data for major slaughter plants with missing reports are adjusted prior to publication to assure that all plants slaughtering a significant portion of a specific class are included. Estimates for missing shifts are made only after verifying that the plant was in operation. Adjustments are based on a shift determined to be similar to the one missing. Late reports replace imputed data as they become available. While there is a varying degree of incompleteness from month to month, it has only a minimal impact on the published totals.

Poultry slaughter estimates are based on a census of operating plants and, therefore, have no sampling error. However, they may be subject to errors such as omissions, duplications, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. These errors are minimized through strict quality controls in the edit and summarization process, and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

Terms and Definitions Used for Livestock Slaughter Estimates

Average Live Weight: The weight of the whole animal, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Commercial Production: Includes slaughter and meat production in federally inspected and other plants, but excludes animals slaughtered on farms. Based on packers' dressed weights.

Custom-Exempt Plants: Plants that do not sell meat but operate on a custom basis only are custom-exempt. The animals and meat are not inspected, but the facilities must meet health standards. These are considered NFI plants and head kill is included in NFI totals.

Dressed Weight: The weight of a chilled animal carcass. Beef with kidney knob in; veal with hide off; lamb and mutton with pluck out; pork with leaf fat and kidneys out, jowls on and head off.

Dressing Percent: Usually expressed as a percentage yield of chilled carcass in relation to the weight of the live animal on hoof. For example, a live hog that weighed 200 pounds on hoof and yielded a carcass weighing 140 pounds would have a dressing percentage of 70.

Federally Inspected (FI) Plants: Plants that transport meat interstate must employ federal inspectors to assure compliance with USDA standards. Any state whose commercial plants operate entirely under federal inspection may still have custom-exempt establishments for which NFI estimates are made.

Food and Meat Inspection: Includes examination, checking, or testing of a carcass and/or meat against established government standards and involves checking the facility for cleanliness, health of animals, or parts of animals and quality of the meat produced.

Non-Federally Inspected (NFI) Plants: Plants which sell and transport only intrastate. State inspectors assure compliance with individual state standards for these NFI plants. Mobile slaughtering units are excluded and are considered farm slaughter.

Number of Head: Includes post-mortem condemnations.

Plant, Slaughter: An establishment where animals are killed and butchered.

Red Meat: Red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter excluding condemnation and is comprised of beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. The FI red meat production is equal to the total carcass weight after slaughter. The NFI meat production formula is $(\text{NFI head kill}) \times (\text{live weight}) \times (\text{FI dressing percentage}) = \text{NFI red meat production}$.

Slaughter: Killing and butchering of animals primarily for food.

Slaughter, Farm: Animals slaughtered on farms primarily for home consumption. Excludes custom slaughter for farmers at commercial establishments, but includes mobile slaughtering on farms. These estimates appear only in the annual slaughter release.

Talmedge-Aiken (TA) Plants: Slaughter plants in which USDA is responsible for inspection. However, federal inspection is carried out by State employees. These plants are considered to be federally inspected.

Total Live Weight: The total weight of live animals, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Wholesome Meat Act: Legislation that specifies that all meat produced for sale in the United States must be inspected. Meat that is transported interstate must be inspected in compliance with Federal (USDA) Standards.

Terms and Definitions Used for Poultry Slaughter Estimates

Ante-Mortem Condemnations: Birds condemned prior to their entry into the slaughter plant.

Average Live Weight: The weight of the whole bird, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Certified Ready-to-Cook: The weight of poultry certified wholesome by inspection after post-mortem condemnation pounds are removed. Ready-to-cook represents poultry meat ready for the marketing channel.

Dressing Percent: Usually expressed as a percentage yield of frozen and chilled carcass in relation to the weight of the live bird.

Ducks: Includes all ducks regardless of age and weight.

Federally Inspected (FI) Plants: Plants that transport meat interstate must employ federal inspectors to assure compliance with USDA standards.

Mature Chickens: Fowl from breeder and market egg flocks and stags and cocks.

Number of Head: Includes post-mortem condemnations.

Old Turkeys: Fully matured birds held for egg production, usually over 15 months of age.

Plant, Slaughter: An establishment where birds are killed and butchered.

Post-Mortem Condemnations: Carcasses or parts condemned by the inspector because of disease or mishandling and removed from the slaughter line and destroyed.

Slaughter: Killing and butchering of birds primarily for food.

Total Live Weight: The total weight of live birds, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Young Chickens: Commercially grown broilers-fryers and other young immature birds such as roasters and capons.

Young Turkeys: Young birds grown to a matured market age, and other turkeys such as fryers/roasters and young breeders.

Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@nass.usda.gov

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