

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), produces a volume of data which livestock markets depend on. Key reports include monthly Cattle on Feed, Quarterly Hogs and Pigs, monthly Cold Storage, and Cattle inventory. NASS also compiles and publishes official slaughter data.

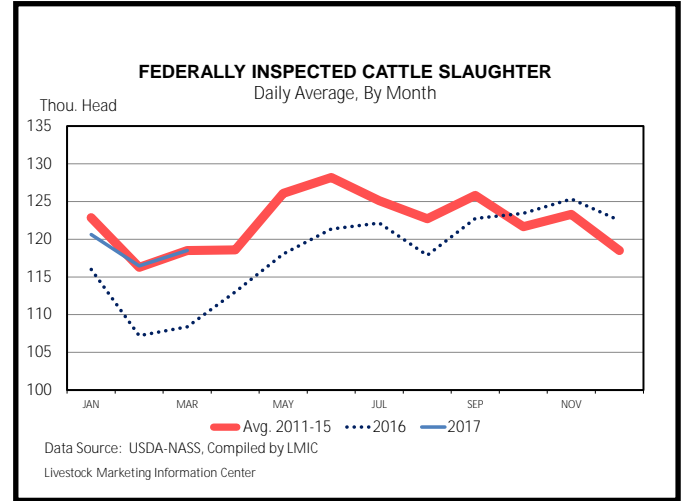
Federal law requires slaughter plants to provide data. Primary data for the commercial livestock slaughter estimates are obtained from the daily reports provided electronically by inspectors from USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service at Federally Inspected (FI) plants. Those counts are combined with data from state-administered non-FI plants to derive total commercial slaughter estimates. Data include the number of head that were slaughtered daily under FI by species and class as well as daily live and dressed weights. Data for missing submissions are imputed.

In NASS reported slaughter data, adjusting imputed and preliminary daily slaughter estimates by plants results in a series of revisions. Last week (on April 19th) NASS released the "Livestock Slaughter 2016 Summary" report (full report is [here](#)). Those that maintain databases of NASS reported slaughter data need to be vigilant in incorporating revisions; the 2016 summary report provided the final adjustments to both monthly and weekly data. That annual report includes slaughter data by state, multi-state (regional) summaries, and some data on head processed by plant size. Most U.S. livestock are harvested in FI plants. For 2016, FI slaughter as a percentage of total commercial slaughter was 98.5% for cattle, 98.4% for calves, 99.3% for hogs, and 89.8% for lamb.

FI cattle slaughter, on a daily average basis, including the monthly NASS Livestock report data for March (released Thursday April 20th and available [here](#)) and the revised data for 2016, is shown in the provided graphic. In March, daily harvest was up just over 10,000 head (9.3%) from a year ago and so far this year has been near the prior 5-year average (2011-2015).

Now we dig deeper into the annual NASS slaughter report, turning to the breakdown of the national FI slaughter by plant size and year-over-year changes. The NASS data are summarized in the accompanying tables for cattle and hogs. The smallest category includes plants that slaughtered 1-999 head during calendar year 2016. The largest cattle category is plants with over 1 million head harvested in 2016 and for hogs the largest category is over 4 million head. There are nine size categories for cattle and 10 for hogs. The larger plants distribute nationwide and often to foreign buyers, while the plants in the smaller categories mostly support local markets and farm-direct sales.

For cattle, there were 650 FI slaughter plants in 2016, up 9 from 2015's. The smallest plants (those that slaughtered 1-999 head in 2016) were 72.5% of the total and slaughtered only 0.5% of the FI animals. The largest 13 plants (which each harvested over 1 million head last year) were 2.0% of the facilities and processed 57.9% of the animals. As with cattle, in the hog



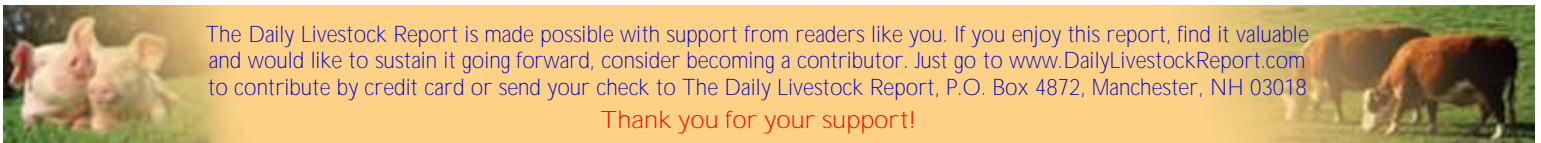
Cattle: FI Plants and Head Harvested in 2016 By Size and Change from '15

Size Group (Annual Head Slaughtered)	2016 Plants Number	Change from 2015	2016 Head Harvested Thousands	Change from 2015
1-999	471	1	155.4	4.2
1,000 - 9,999	105	10	244.8	16.9
10,000 - 49,999	21	-2	502.1	-106.0
50,000 - 99,999	7	-1	490.2	-102.3
100,000 - 199,999	8	-1	1,037.6	-216.4
200,000 - 299,999	8	2	2,007.0	529.0
300,000 - 499,999	11	-2	4,659.0	-696.5
500,000 - 999,999	6	2	3,583.4	1,167.0
1,000,000 and more	13	0	17,434.9	1,222.1
Total	650	9	30,114.4	1,818.0

Hogs: FI Plants and Head Harvested in 2016 By Size and Change from '15

Size Group (Annual Head Slaughtered)	2016 Plants Number	Change from 2015	2016 Head Harvested Thousands	Change from 2015
1-999	371	-5	129.0	-0.3
1,000 - 9,999	149	10	380.4	-7.8
10,000 -99,999	47	1	1,855.4	-15.4
100,000 - 249,999	14	4	2,191.4	766.5
250,000 - 499,999	8	-1	2,768.6	-264.0
500,000 - 999,999	4	-1	3,106.4	-404.5
1,000,000 - 1,999,999	3	0	4,534.9	309.9
2,000,000 - 2,999,999	11	0	29,115.0	1,092.6
3,000,000 - 3,999,999	1	0	3,415.3	148.2
4,000,000 and more	13	0	69,891.6	1,147.4
Total	621	8	117,388.0	2,772.6

sector there are many small plants (59.7% of the total FI facilities), but most of the head harvested (59.5%) occurred in the largest 13 plants, each of which processed over 4 million animals in 2016.



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