

Yesterday, USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) compiled and posted (available [here](#)) the monthly U.S. trade data for meat and livestock. The latest compilation is for July. For meat and poultry, ERS converts the raw product weight data to carcass equivalent for meats and poultry is put on a ready to cook basis. Today, we will only summarize the tonnage aspects and ignore other important aspects of U.S. exports like variety meats (liver, tallow, etc.) and hides/skins. Also, today's focus on tonnage exported and imported overlooks the dollar values involved, that is important, for example, because the dollar values of beef that U.S. imports is typically much less than that of exports.

In July, compared to June's, U.S. beef export tonnage was essentially unchanged. Still, the trend of year-over-year increases since July 2016 was maintained (up 10%). A total of 83 different countries bought enough U.S. beef to be recorded by ERS in July. Among the major destinations, more tonnage was shipped than a year earlier to Japan (up 22%), Hong Kong (33%), Vietnam (59%), and Canada (5%).

A bit of a surprise in the data was the tonnage of beef imported by the U.S. in July, which increased month-over-month by 2% and was 11% above 2016's. Of the major import sources, the only drops compared to a year ago were for products from Australia and Brazil.

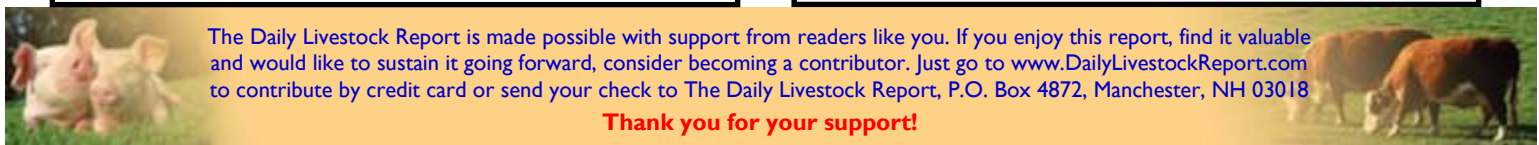
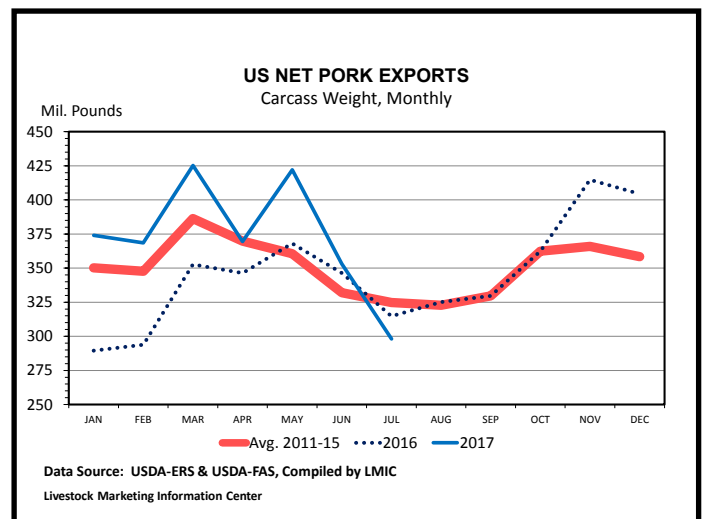
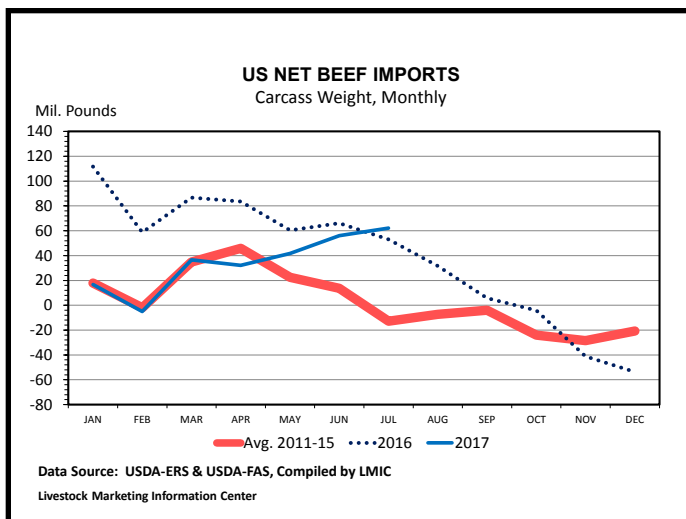
As expected based on weekly data, U.S. pork export tonnage faltered in July. As has been discussed in this newsletter, the weekly data are preliminary and do not include all pork items sold. Month-over-month, July's tonnage dropped a dramatic

13%. The year-over-year decline was 4%. July's U.S. pork exports were shipped to 77 different countries. Both monthly and year-over-year declines in pork sales occurred to Japan, China, and Hong Kong. In July, U.S. pork imports declined 3% for the month but were 1% above a year earlier.

Turning to U.S. poultry exports, in July, the tonnage of chicken sold increased 7% for the month but remained unchanged compared to a year ago. Chicken exports continued to lag the prior 5-year average (2011-14). In July, the U.S. broiler parts were sold to 110 countries, the largest destination by far, as usual, was Mexico. Turkey exports dropped (down 3%) in July compared to June's, however, posted a 10% gain compared to 2016's. In July, U.S. turkey was purchased by 64 countries, Mexico remained the largest foreign market.

The graphics provided below are beef and pork net trade tonnage. That is net beef imports beef (tonnage of imports minus exports) and net exported tonnage (exports minus imports) for pork. Again, as stated earlier, this is tonnage and not value (the value of exported beef per unit is well bigger than that of imported product). In June, the tonnage of beef imported by the U.S. exceeded exports. Note that typically the U.S. flips from being a net importer to a net exporter of beef during the second half of the calendar year. The net status of pork remained positive (i.e., exported tonnage was greater than imported).

Readers can study more monthly trade graphics compiled by the LMIC [here](#).



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