

## Daily Livestock Report

**So just what is the difference in production, slaughter, etc.?** We get a lot of questions along the lines of “How many cattle did we produce last year?” or “How much beef did we produce last year?” or “How much pork did we consume last year?” Before we answer, we usually tell the questioner that it depends on what he/she is a) interested in, b) wants to know or, perhaps most important, c) wants to show or prove to someone else. These output measures are generally taken at different points along the production and marketing chain and use different units. They are all measures of supply quantity but all measure it a bit differently. Consider:

- The amount of animals “produced” could be measured at the breeding farm level. In this instance, production would be measured by births or hatchings but even those can be a bit difficult to pin down. For instance, the pig crop is the number of pigs “saved” in a particular quarter or year. “Saving” a pig might have once been well-defined as weaning a pig at perhaps 6-8 weeks of age, the almost universal practice of the time. All pre-weaning death loss was removed from the number of pigs born to get “pigs saved”. But most pigs are now weaned at roughly 3 weeks of age so is the pig still “saved” at weaning or should we apply that definition to pigs coming out of nurseries at the age of 8 weeks or so? Just where does the pre-8 weeks-of-age death loss fit? The calf crop, on the other hand, is defined as “calves born” during a period of time. That number does not reflect death losses at all. So, the numbers are a bit different across species.
- The amount of animals “produced” could also be at the to feeding level, This would be “marketings” for fed cattle but there is no actual measure of “marketings” for hogs. Some people ask for farm-level production which usually means the output of live animals in pounds at the feeding level. About the only direct data published on this measure is annual live weight production in USDA’s Meat Animals Production, Disposition and Income report. More frequent estimates can be made using average live weights and either marketings or slaughter numbers.
- Slaughter is denominated in head while meat production is denominated in pounds. The graph at bottom right shows the difference, over time, between beef production (pounds) and cattle slaughter (head). The connecting factor between these two, of course, is average carcass weight. Chicken and turkey production are denominated in “ready-to-cook” weight which includes giblets.
- And finally there is the mis-named concept of consumption. The amount of product actually consumed by U.S. consumers is never actually measured. Consumption is actually just the amount of supply (production + imports + beginning stocks) that we cannot account for as part of exports and ending stocks. It is more appropriately termed “disappearance” but, as you can see, it is actually a “supply” variable since higher production will, all other factors held constant, result in higher “consumption”. Further, it can be measured in carcass weight, retail weight which adjusts for some other usage such as pet food or boneless weight which gets closest to the amount of product that people actually eat — or “disappear”, whatever that is..

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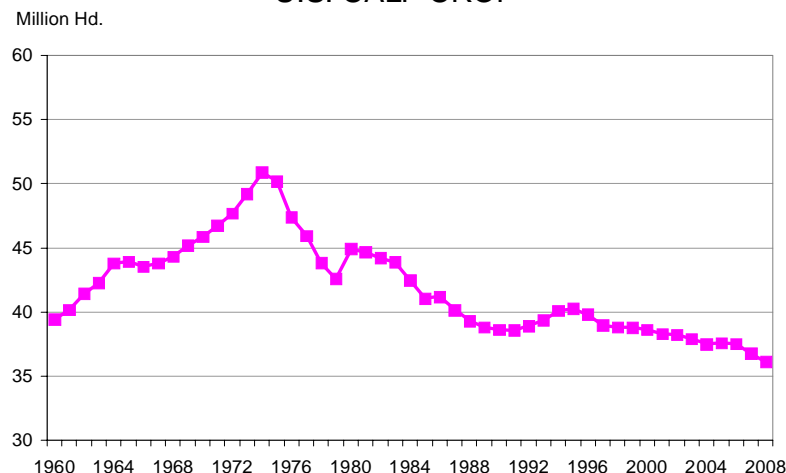
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E-Livestock Volume	2/26/09	2/25/09	2/19/09
LE (E-Live Cattle):	9,772	12,021	15,255
GF (E-Feeder Cattle):	1,244	857	1,483
HE (E-Lean Hogs):	8,919	11,815	12,366

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### U.S. CALF CROP



### U.S. CATTLE SLAUGHTER & BEEF PRODUCTION

