

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Livestock and Products Report

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Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

Estonian Swine inventories are expected to decrease by 7 percent in 2015 due to slaughter of pigs in the areas affected by African Swine Fever (ASF). Low level of farm-gate prices for swine, outbreak of ASF and introduction of the Russian import ban in 2014 are the major factors adversely affecting Estonian swine production later in 2015 and in 2016. Production of pork in 2015 is expected to decrease by 6 percent as a result of lower swine inventories and high level of losses caused by ASF. Cattle inventories are expected to increase in 2015 because of the growing number of beef cattle. Production of beef is expected to decline in 2015 due to higher exports of live cattle.

General Information:

Swine

Production

At the beginning of 2015 inventories of swine and sows amounted to 358,000 and 34,600 head, respectively. In the first half of 2015 Estonian swine inventories continued to grow because of the low level of feed prices. However, an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in August 2015 has entirely changed the situation in swine production. Since August 2015 there were 18 outbreaks of ASF in the swine population. In Estonia, the first case of ASF in domestic pigs was detected in the middle of July 2015. To cope with ASF, Estonia applied all the preventive and eradication measures provided in the EU regulations in order to control the situation including slaughter of 23,000 head of animals. All outbreaks occurred in mainland areas and so far Estonian islands are free from ASF. Estonia will participate in the EU's program of reduction of wild boar population within the Common ASF Strategy established by the EU for Baltics and Poland. Hunters will receive from the EU a payment of Euro 100 (U.S. \$106) per each female wild boar killed. It is estimated that currently there are around 50,000 wild boars in Estonia. The export restrictions from several pork importers related to ASF and the Russian ban on imports of agricultural products (including pork) introduced in August 2014, are expected to result in a 10 percent reduction of swine inventories at the beginning of 2016. The epizootic situation and the level of feed prices will have a primary influence on the increase of swine inventories in the first half of 2016. According to the Estonian veterinary service the process of eradication of ASF may last for several months.

Consumption

Slaughter of hogs in 2015 is expected to be 6 percent lower than a year ago because of the high losses caused by ASF. The average slaughter weight of hogs in 2015 is expected to increase in 2015 because of delays in procurement in the areas affected by ASF and fluctuations of farm-gate prices for swine.

Trade

In 2014 Estonia exported 110,000 head of swine mainly to Lithuania, Poland and Latvia. Reduction of swine inventories accompanied by ASF restrictions are expected to limit exports of piglets in 2015. In the first 9 months of 2015 exports of piglets were reduced by 30 percent in comparison to the same period of 2014.

Pork

Production

It is estimated that pork output in 2015 will amount to 34,000 MT and will be 7 percent lower than in 2014. Lower pork production will result from the reduced slaughter. However, higher slaughter weight is expected to partly offset lower number of slaughtered animals.

Consumption

In 2014 the annual per capita domestic consumption of pork amounted to 37 kilograms. Two Finnish meat processing companies slaughter 40 percent of swine in Estonia. Preferences of Estonian consumers towards pork stimulate imports and are forcing the government to introduce measures which will help the pork industry to recover. One of the elements of this program is a governmental support to production of canned pork.

Trade

Estonia is a net importer of pork. In 2014 Estonia imported 21,262 MT of pork. It is estimated that in 2015 the reduced output of pork will stimulate imports. In the first nine months of 2015 Estonia imported 10 percent more pork than in the same period of 2014. Major suppliers of pork are Denmark, Germany, Poland and Finland. In 2014 overall exports of pork amounted to 9,308 MT, a 30 percent drop compared to previous year because of the Russian import ban.

Cattle

Production

In December 2014 cattle inventories amounted to 265,000 head and were over one percent higher than a year ago. Inventories of cattle continued to grow mainly due to the growing popularity of beef cattle production. Cattle inventories are expected to remain stable towards the end of 2015 because of lower prices for calves destined for export. In Estonia there are 70,000 head of beef cattle mainly Angus, Hereford and Limousine breeds. A lot of young cattle are exported to Turkey. In the last 12 months inventories of beef cattle increased by 14 percent. Only farms below 20 cows receive a subsidy from the domestic funds for beef production.

Consumption

Slaughter of cattle in 2014 was 3 percent higher than a year ago because of growing inventories and reduced exports of calves. It is expected that slaughter of cattle will decrease in 2015 due to higher exports of calves and heifers.

Trade

In 2014 Estonia exported 36,311 head of cattle mainly to the Netherlands and Poland. Cattle exports were 9 percent lower than in the previous year because of reduced EU prices. In the first 10 months of 2015 Estonia exported 3,500 heifers to Belarus compared to 1,500 head in the same period of 2014. It is expected that exports of cattle in 2015 will grow by 4 percent mainly due to higher demand from Turkey and Germany. Imports of cattle are limited to breeding stock from Germany, Switzerland and Denmark.

Beef

Production

In 2014 beef production amounted to 11,900 MT. Production of beef is expected to decline in 2015 because of lower slaughter. Most of beef produced in Estonia comes from dairy breeds. However, there is a growing interest to develop pure bred beef production in Estonia and promote consumption of high value beef. Estonia has natural conditions for the development of high value beef production, however, there is a need for importation of genetics of beef cattle and education of farmers on beef production technology.

Trade

Estonia is a net exporter of beef. In 2014 exports of beef amounted to 1,968 MT and remained at the same level as in 2013. The Netherlands and Finland are major importers. In the first 9 months of 2015 beef exports increased by 4 percent mainly due to higher sales within the EU. In 2014 Estonia imported 1,419 MT of beef mainly from Lithuania, Latvia and Poland.

End of the Report.