

# Statistics Commentary 2023

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## Overview

The livestock sector observed marginal growths across the cattle, sheep and goats sectors whereas the pig sector recorded a marginal dip in overall marketing. This growth trickled down to the meat sector, which saw an increase in production during 2023 coupled with relatively good prices.

## Cattle Sector

In 2023, 294 938 cattle were marketed across all marketing channels. Of this total, 151 808 were exported live on hoof to neighboring SADC member states, 104 549 were slaughtered at local A-class abattoirs and 38 581 were slaughtered at various Livestock and Livestock Products Board of Namibia (LLPBN) B & C class abattoirs nationwide. This brings the growth of the cattle sector up by 17.6 percent from 250 751 heads marketed during 2022.

Comparing activities of the three marketing channels, it is evident that the B & C - class segment recorded the highest growth of 88.3 percent followed by A-class abattoirs that grew by 45.2 percent and lastly, live exports grew by 8.7 percent.

The growth in slaughtering at all export approved abattoirs supported improvements in producer prices with the s-VFC beef all grade average hitting N\$ 60.31/kg whereas, the n-VCF beef-all grade averaged N\$36.34/kg.

Year-on-year, the B2 producer price increased by N\$0.85/kg and averaged N\$62.03/kg, relative to the N\$61.18/kg paid to producers during 2022. The further outbreak of FMD in South Africa severely affected producer prices within the South African market. As a result, the Red Meat Abattoir Association (RMAA) came in N\$12.72/kg lower than its Namibian counterpart. Domestic weaner prices at auctions faced downward pressure recording lower levels than their South African counterparts during 2023.

Internationally, Namibian producer prices traded below the USA, EU, Argentina and Uruguay prices. Generally, Australian beef prices trend higher than the USA and the EU but that was not the case for 2023. Australian beef prices largely remained under pressure due to unfavourable climatic conditions resulting in increased supply of beef on the global market.

The number of animals slaughtered by export approved abattoirs increased from 70 568 cattle in 2022 to 105 549 cattle in 2023.

An estimated 16 916 508 kg was exported by Namibian export approved abattoirs during the year 2023 of which 9 051 245 kg was exported to the EU. Top beef export destinations for the period of 2023 included South Africa (3 176 347 kg), UK (1 989 496 Kg) and China (1 279 884 kg) while African countries took up the least volumes. Interestingly, no beef was exported to the USA during the past three years.

Beef production north of the Veterinary Cordon Fence (nVCF) remained limited with only 4 005 cattle slaughtered by the Katima Mulilo and Rundu abattoirs.

## Sheep Sector

The sector recorded an expansion in activity of 36.7 percent led by live exports and slaughtering at A-class abattoirs. Live exports expanded by 41.3 percent growing from 581 873 heads in 2022 to 795 145 heads in 2023.

South Africa remained the main buyer of sheep with 99.7 percent of live export market share while exports to other countries remained relatively insignificant at 0.28 percent. The increase in sheep marketing during the period of 2023 was driven by an increase in demand from South Africa coupled with increased slaughter activities by export-approved

abattoirs that serviced both domestic and international markets.

While A-class abattoirs recorded a significant growth, B & C class activities declined by 13.1 percent from 122 919 heads in 2022 down to 106 804 heads in 2023. The shift in marketing dynamics is owed to improved sheep numbers to a great extent and partially on better producer price paid by sheep export approved abattoirs during the 2023 period. The Namibian A2 producer price averaged N\$82.92/Kg during 2023 up by N\$2.45/kg from the 2022 level of N\$80.47/kg.

While Namibian sheep prices saw a marginal improvement of 3.0 percent, the price difference between Namibia sheep export abattoirs and the Northern Cape sheep abattoirs narrowed down. The Namibian A2 producer price on average traded above the N\$80.00/kg mark throughout 2023. The Northern Cape A2 producer price averaged N\$80.49/Kg during 2023, N\$2.43/kg lower than the Namibian A2 producer price. The Northern Cape abattoir prices are the most common benchmark for Namibian producers as most of the export of sheep are destined to the Northern Cape abattoirs.

On the meat front, mutton production during 2023 increased significantly. As a result, a total 940 863 kg of mutton was exported to various destinations, up from the 2022 volume of 395 016 kg. 62.4 percent of mutton exports went to South Africa, 33.8 percent was exported to Norway- as part of the Norway mutton quota shared by Namibia, Eswatini and Botswana while, the remaining 3.8 percent went to Botswana.

#### **Goat Sector**

The sector recorded a growth of 4.9 percent during the period 2023. 150 592 goats were marketed during 2023 relative to 143 568 goats marketed during 2022. The growth is owed to an increase in live exports that grew by 7.2 percent. The performance of the sector, although marginal, was moderated by slaughtering activities at local abattoirs that dropped by 36.6 percent during 2023.

#### **Pork Sector**

Namibia remains a net importer of pork due to limited production and as such, local production is often supplemented with imported pork to meet local demand. During 2023, the situation was

however, further exacerbated by the continued ban on the importation of fresh pork products from South Africa - Namibia's biggest pork supplier since August 2022 due to the FMD outbreak in South Africa.

A total of 45 274 pigs were marketed at LLPBN approved abattoirs in 2023, which is 2.3 percent lower than the 46 330 pigs marketed during 2022. Furthermore, 198 pigs were exported to Angola through the Oshikango border post for breeding. In terms of consumption (inclusive of processed pork), on average, 60.7 percent of pork consumed in Namibia during 2023 was imported, whilst domestic supply serviced 39.3 percent of local pork demand.

Of the imported pork, 50.8 percent originated from Germany, followed by Spain and South Africa with a market share of 24.7 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively. The remaining less than 1 percent originated from Botswana and other European countries – a market that has since begun to be more noticeable. Namibia therefore, remains a net importer of pork, with 6 675 531 kg crossing its borders in 2023 to cover local consumption shortfalls.

Although imports are dominant in the market, the Pork Market Share Promotion Scheme, administered by the LLPBN continues to assist local producers in maintaining significant market share.

#### **Conclusion**

2023 proved to be a good year in terms of overall industry performance despite a couple of challenges faced by the Industry. Marketing activities across all the sectors of the industry have recorded growths during the 2023 period and are showing signs of returning to conventional levels. The industry anticipates a modest cyclical decline marketing as a result of normal herd building that follows a drought year.