Statistics Commentary
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LIVESTOCK AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS BOARD

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Overview

Livestock and dairy marketing activity in January 2026 reflected a mixed but generally stable start to the year, reflecting seasonal adjustments and shifting marketing dynamics. Cattle marketing remained below January 2025 levels despite month-on-month recovery supported by stronger slaughter activity, while sheep marketing expanded significantly, driven mainly by live exports to South Africa. Goat marketing improved year-on-year but moderated compared to December, and the pork sector remained relatively stable. Poultry throughput and egg marketing showed strong improvement, while milk production declined modestly. Trade patterns continued to reflect strong dependence on established regional and European markets, with imports supplementing domestic supply where production remained constrained.

Cattle Sector

Cattle marketing declined by 19.1% year-on-year (y/y) in January 2026, with total volumes falling from 14,625 head in January 2025 to 11,832 head. The contraction was primarily driven by lower slaughter and live export activity. Total slaughtering declined by 15.5% to 8,471 head, reflecting reduced throughput particularly in B & C class abattoirs, which fell by 36.3% year-on-year. A-class abattoir slaughter also declined moderately (-2.9%).

Live exports declined by 26.9% to 3,361 head, with South Africa continuing to account for the bulk of exports despite a reduction in volumes. The overall decline in marketing likely reflects improved grazing conditions and producer retention of animals following earlier drought-induced offloading.

On a month-on-month (m/m) basis however, total cattle marketing increased by 8.7% from 10,882 head recorded in December 2025 to 11,832 head in January 2026. The expansion was driven by a 18.3% increase in slaughter throughput, while live exports declined by 9.7% compared to December levels, attributing to seasonal aspects.

Beef exports increased significantly in January 2026, rising by 93.8% y/y from 441,962 kg in January 2025 to 856,370 kg. The expansion was largely driven by increased slaughtering, output being mainly absorbed by the EU (836,184 kg), representing 97.6% of total exports, an 89.2% increase y/y.
Within Europe, the Netherlands remained the dominant destination, accounting for 652,049 kg or 76.1% of total exports. Greece and Norway absorbed 13.9% and 5.5%, respectively, while Germany re-emerged as a destination market since December 2025, taking 2.2% of total exports in January 2026.

Regional (Southern African) exports totaled 20,186 kg, representing 2.4% of total exports. Since the end of the third quarter of 2025, Lesotho remained the principal regional destination, accounting for 99.0% of total regional exports (2.3% of total exports (virtually the entire regional share)), while South Africa and Botswana absorbed marginal volumes equivalent to 0.8% and 0.2%, respectively regionally (equivalent to 0.02% and 0.01%, respectively of total exports). No exports were recorded to the Rest of the World, underscoring the continued concentration of Namibia's beef exports within European markets.

Hides and processed leather exports totaled 43,863 kg in January 2026, consisting entirely of processed leather. This represents an 89.2% year-on-year increase from 23,181 kg exported in January 2025. Notably, no raw hides were exported in January 2026, marking a complete decline from the 33,490 kg exported in January 2025 and the 55,574 kg recorded in December 2025. South Africa remained the primary destination, absorbing 26,016 kg (59.3%) of total exports, while Zimbabwe accounted for 17,847 kg (40.7%). The absence of raw hide exports and the exclusive shipment of processed leather could be a reflection of a shift toward higher value-added exports during the period.

Producer prices continued to increase from 2025. The January average B2 producer price averaged N$82.53/kg, up by N$11.29/kg (15.9%) in comparison to the 2025 average of N$71.4/kg. At auctions, weaner producer prices averaged N$ 34.91/kg, up by N$3.44/kg (10.9%) y/y, reflecting sustained demand amid limited supply.

Sheep Sector

Sheep marketing increased significantly in January 2026 in comparison to January 2025, rising by 157.5% year-on-year from 19,771 head in January 2025 to 50,897 head. On a month-on-month basis, total marketing increased by 14.4% from 44,491 head recorded in December 2025, supported by strong growth in live export activity alongside improved slaughter throughput at export abattoirs.

Total sheep slaughtering increased by 62.7% in January 2026 to 11,713 head from 7,200 in January 2025. The y/y increase was supported primarily by A-class abattoirs, which recorded a substantial 429.7% increase compared to January 2025. In contrast, B & C class abattoir slaughter declined by 11.2%, indicating a shift toward export-oriented processing. However, m/m total slaughter declined by 19.8% compared to December 2025, falling to 11,713 head from 14,610 head. While A-class abattoir throughput increased moderately by 12.6%, B & C class slaughter declined sharply by 40.5%, indicating reduced domestic slaughter activity at the start of the year.

Live exports more than tripled, increasing by 211.7% to 39,184 head (a 31.1% m/m increase from 29,881 head in December). South Africa remained the dominant market, absorbing 99.1% of total live exports, while marginal volumes were exported to Zambia (0.8%) and other neighboring countries took the rest (Angola, Zimbabwe and Botswana). The strong performance reflects improved cross-border demand and favorable marketing conditions at the start of 2026.

In terms of sheep meat exports, volumes increased significantly from 272 kg in January 2025 to 13,078 kg in January 2026, representing a 4,709.6% year-on-year increase. However, compared to December 2025 (71,190 kg), exports declined sharply month-on-month, indicative of a return to normal conditions in the sector after a long period of reduced slaughter activity. South Africa accounted for 100% of sheep meat exports in January 2026, highlighting continued market concentration. Overall, January 2026 performance reflects strong cross-border demand, with live exports playing a dominant role in marketing expansion, while domestic slaughter activity moderated compared to the previous month.

There were no skins exported in January 2026.

The average producer prices stood at N$99.29/kg, which is N$4.83/kg (5.1%) higher than the 2025 average of N$94.45/kg. At auctions, lamb (Dorper) prices averaged N$31.52/kg, low by N$9.04/kg (22.3%) compared to the 2025 level of N$40.56/kg.

Goat Sector

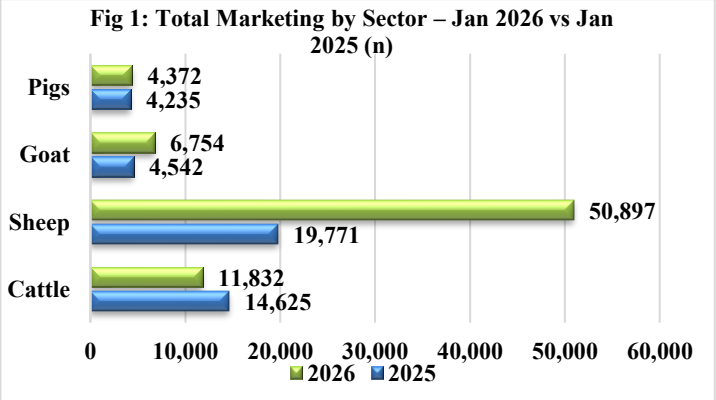
Goat marketing increased by 48.7% year-on-year in January 2026, rising from 4,542 head in January 2025 to 6,754 head. However, on a month-on-month basis, total marketing declined sharply by 64.1% compared to the 18,796 head recorded in December 2025, reflecting the seasonal slowdown following strong December export activity.

Slaughter activity remained minimal. The sector continues to be largely export-driven, with live exports dominating overall marketing performance.
Live exports accounted for the majority of marketing, increasing by 49.8% year-on-year to 6,729 head. South Africa remained the principal market, absorbing 84.8% of total live exports. Zambia accounted for 8.9%, Angola 4.6%, Zimbabwe 1.4%, and Botswana 0.2%, indicating moderate regional diversification relative to other livestock sectors. The sector continues to be largely export-driven, with live exports dominating overall marketing performance.

The average auction price for goat lambs averaged N$37.82/kg in January 2026 lower by N$7.15/kg, a decline of 15.9% in comparison to the 2025 average, while Kapater and ram prices increased to N$48.00/kg and N$54.00/kg, from N$46.75/kg and N$53.75/kg in 2025 respectively.

Pork Sector

Pig marketing (constituting entirely of slaughter) recorded a marginal increase of 3.2% year-on-year in January 2026, rising from 4,235 head in January 2025 to 4,372 head. However, compared to December 2025, total marketing declined by 11%, reflecting a seasonal normalization following higher December throughput.
No live exports were recorded during the period, underscoring the domestic orientation of the pig sector.



Poultry and Poultry Products

Chicken marketing increased significantly by 44.7% year-on-year in January 2026, rising from 1,171,897 head in January 2025 to 1,696,159 head.
On a month-on-month basis, total marketing declined by 8.4% compared to the 1,851,790 head recorded in December 2025, reflecting seasonal normalization following festive demand.

In terms of trade, Poultry meat imports declined by 28.6% y/y in January 2026, falling from 2,368,150 kg in January 2025 to 1,692,143 kg. However, compared to December 2025, imports increased modestly by 5.6%, reflecting continued domestic demand supplementation. Poland remained the leading supplier to Namibia, accounting for 40.1% of total imports, followed by Brazil (29.2%), Argentina (10.9%), and the Netherlands (9.9%). Spain contributed 4.6%, while South Africa accounted for 3.3% of total imports. Other suppliers, including Belgium and Swaziland, represented marginal shares.
The import structure indicates continued reliance on European and South American suppliers, with limited regional sourcing. The year-on-year decline may reflect improved domestic poultry production, as evidenced by increased slaughter volumes during the period.

Egg marketing increased significantly by 47.6% y/y in January 2026, rising from 6,777,612 eggs in January 2025 to 10,002,913 eggs, although declining by 10.6% compared to the 11,037,881 eggs marketed in December 2025, reflecting seasonal normalization after peak festive demand.

Dairy Sector

Milk production declined by 4.3% year-on-year in January 2026, falling from 1,334,878 litres in January 2025 to 1,277,545 litres. On a month-on-month basis, production declined by 8.7% compared to December 2025, reflecting seasonal adjustments in supply.
In contrast, milk imports increased sharply by 92.4% y/y to 1,315,202 litres from 683,663 litres in January 2026, indicating increased reliance on external supply (mainly South Africa which supplied 99.7%). Based on combined domestic production and milk imports, Namibia's milk self-sufficiency ratio stood at approximately 49.3% in January 2026. Producer prices remained at an average of N$6.70 per litre.

Total dairy product imports also increased significantly, rising by 102.0% y/y to 1,888,703 kg and a 29.8% increase m/m from 1,455,082 kg imported in December 2025. South Africa remained the dominant supplier, accounting for 95.9% of total dairy imports, with other countries contributing marginal volumes. The import structure underscores continued regional dependence in the dairy sector.

Conclusion

Overall, January 2026 reflects a sector balancing recovery in slaughter throughput with continued reliance on international markets. While demand conditions remain stable, market concentration in key markets particularly the European Union for beef and South Africa for live exports, highlights limited diversification. Sustained market access, improved value addition, and enhanced production efficiency will remain critical to strengthening competitiveness and long-term resilience across Namibia's livestock value chains.

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