



The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) is a statutory levy board, funded by farmers, growers and others in the supply chain to help the industry succeed in a rapidly changing world. We want to create a world-class food and farming industry, inspired by and competing with the best. We work with the whole supply chain to help us unify the industry, bridge gaps in knowledge and encourage collaboration to build a stronger future for everyone.

Our priorities

Competitiveness: Inspiring British farming and growing to be more competitive and resilient

Productivity: Accelerating innovation and productivity growth through coordinated research and development, and knowledge exchange

Consumers: Helping the industry understand and deliver what consumers will trust and buy

Thought leadership: Delivering thought leadership and horizon scanning to keep the industry ahead of the game

Our commitment to levy payers

We have listened to our levy payers and recognise the importance of change. You told us, in the government-led Request for Views, there is a need for the statutory levy. In return, we must deliver better value for money, focus on key priorities that make a positive difference to your business and help grow British agriculture and horticulture.

You said: We want a greater say on how the levy is invested, and better value for money

We will seek your views on a new strategy this autumn and communicate regularly on how your levy has been spent, and the benefits

You said: We want a vote on whether the levy should continue

We will hold a regular ballot on the future of the levy

You said: Review how the levy is calculated and collected for horticulture and potato growers

We are working with growers and the supply chain to design a modern levy system

You said: Structure AHDB around the key themes of market development and improving farm performance

We will focus on farm performance and market development at home and overseas, driven by independent evidence

You said: We want a governance structure that is more representative and transparent

We are currently reviewing our board and committee set-up, with recommendations due by the end of the year

Productivity

Productivity, especially in the breeding herd, remains behind that of our major competitors.

Our annual Cost of Production in Selected Countries (InterPIG) report compares key production indicators in many of the world's leading pig-producing countries, and shows that the average number of pigs weaned per sow per year on indoor units in Great Britain remains at about 1.2 pigs behind our immediate EU competitors.



Finishing herd performance is closer to the average for the EU but achieved at lower carcass weights and with higher mortality than in most EU countries. All these factors expose the British market to price-based competition.

We produce quarterly key performance indicators (KPIs) for benchmarking, quarterly cost of production estimates as well as sensitivity analysis and trend information. These are all available at: ahdb.org.uk/pork-costings-and-herd-performance-2

The environment

We believe that thriving, sustainable, highly productive businesses deliver a lower environmental impact and go hand in hand with valuing and enhancing the natural environment.

Our 2017–20 strategy had a particular focus on productivity. This is just one of three overarching issues framing the development of a post-Brexit agricultural strategy for the UK, the other two being the environmental and social dimensions.

Our productivity agenda plays into both because resilient, sustainable production interacts strongly with the issues highlighted in the Defra 25 Year Environment Plan and the Clean Air Strategy; our training and skills agenda also has a strong social dimension.

Through our Farm Excellence programme, we are demonstrating and sharing knowledge with farmers and growers to deliver more sustainable food supply chains.

Domestic marketing

Given the developments in relation to coronavirus, we have been working to review our activity and to ensure it delivers solutions in line with the rapidly changing demands of the UK consumer.

As one of the most favoured ways to eat fresh pork, we have been focusing on pulled pork as part of our Midweek Meals campaign to help time-pressed and cash-strapped families enjoy mealtimes that little bit more. Our consumer website – lovepork.co.uk – is the hub for all campaign information, and features new and easy recipes that use only a handful of ingredients, and a whole host of digital content designed to inspire and educate families on how to cook pulled pork and what to do with the leftovers.



Domestic pork consumption

Domestic consumption of food and drink has seen massive upheaval in 2020, with coronavirus impacting retail and foodservice demand, resulting in an overall shift to more in-home eating occasions.

Retail sales volumes have, therefore, seen significant growth and pig meat is consistent with this, seeing volume increases of +8% (Kantar, YTD 6 September 2020). Processed pork, sausages and bacon are the biggest drivers of growth (total processed +12% in volume), with more in-home hot breakfast and lunch occasions, as well as more comforting dinners such as sausage and mash.

On the other hand, with more time at home, a rise in scratch cooking has benefited fresh pork, which also sees strong growth of +7% in volumes driven by all cuts including belly, diced and mince.

We predict the gains seen by total pig meat in retail year-to-date have compensated for foodservice losses, but the full year forecast is down slightly.

Pork exports

Total pork exports in 2019 increased both in value (+24.5%) and volume (+9.2%), with most of the growth coming from outside the EU. This now contributes £610 million to the value of the industry each year. We worked successfully with the British Government in gaining access to new markets during 2019, with British pig meat being exported to over 90 different countries.

The impact of African swine fever (ASF) in Asia, combined with outbreaks elsewhere in the world, and the challenge of coronavirus, is taking a severe toll on global pork production and consumption. ASF will have the most profound effect on trade flows and worldwide meat consumption that we have witnessed in decades.

Education

Through our education work, we are committed to increasing children's understanding of where and how their food is grown, reared, and produced. The Food: A Fact of Life programme aims to promote knowledge and skills about where food comes from, as well as cooking and healthy eating, among young people.

Designed for teachers of 3–16-year-olds and run in partnership with the British Nutritional Foundation (BNF), the programme provides curriculum-relevant resources and teacher training, covering all sectors.

Key contacts

Staff contact details can be found at: ahdb.org.uk/meet-the-team

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