

“ Trade flows have been impacted during the last 2 years as the pandemic caused changes in consumer demand, and Brexit caused further shipping implications. HMRC have recently released trade figures for April 2022 which reveal the patterns seen in red meat so far this year, whilst production levels on the domestic market have been mixed and farmgate prices have been firm. ”



Glesni Phillips – Data Analyst

## BEEF & VEAL

Figures from HMRC have revealed that fresh and frozen beef export volumes have been strong so far in 2022 when compared to year-earlier levels. For April, the volume of beef **exported** from the UK increased by 53% on year-earlier levels to total 10,800 tonnes. Looking at the year to date (YTD), the total volume of fresh and frozen beef shipped from the UK currently stands at almost **42,500 tonnes**. This is 57% higher than 2021, with the value of beef exports totalling £169.1 million – up

93% on the year, as the value of each tonne rose by 23% on the year following higher UK farmgate prices. Export volumes have increased despite beef production during this same period being down 2% on the corresponding period in 2021, according to figures from Defra.

Whilst exports grew, **imports** of fresh and frozen beef during April also increased with volumes totalling 20,000 tonnes - which is 10% more than April 2021.

Volumes imported so far this year total **78,000 tonnes**, which is 24% higher than last year as shipments of Irish beef drove up total imports. The value of fresh and frozen beef imports stood at £391.6 million (up 48% on the year). There were also increased shipments of beef coming from Germany (an additional 4,000 tonnes) and the Netherlands (an additional 2,500 tonnes). The UK is not self-sufficient in beef production, and continues to be a net importer.

## SHEEP MEAT

During April alone, the UK **exported** almost 7,000 tonnes of fresh and frozen sheep meat – up 33% on year-earlier levels. Fresh and frozen sheep meat volumes exported are up 24.5% on the YTD at almost **24,500 tonnes**. Increased domestic lamb production, coupled with lamb prices being lower than other key lamb producing nations, have led to exports being much higher than year-earlier levels. The EU continues to receive around 95% of exported volumes from the UK, however France recorded a 20% year-

on-year increase as some exporters are now transporting lamb through France to other EU countries (and so not all product is necessarily destined for the French market). The value of UK exports currently stands 35% higher than year-earlier levels at £159.7 million.

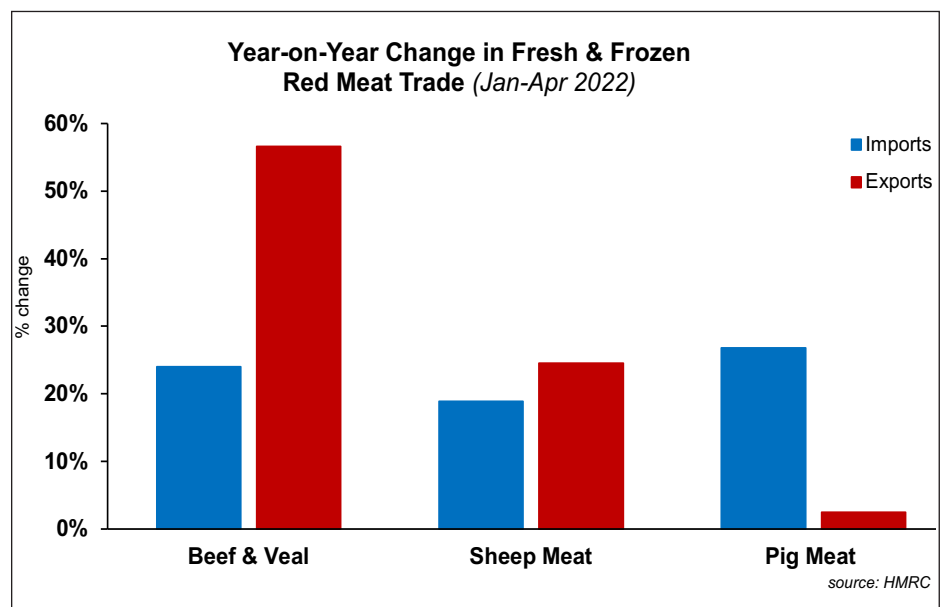
**Imported** volumes of fresh and frozen sheep meat between January and April increased by 19% on the year to total **22,300 tonnes**. Although import volumes are elevated compared to 2021, current

YTD levels are 11% below 2020 and 16% below 2019. This suggests that import volumes are recovering following reduced imports in 2021 (due to shipping difficulties and reduced lamb production in the EU), but remain below historical averages. New Zealand continues to dominate imports into the UK, however the proportion coming from Australia is increasing. Sheep meat export volumes are currently outweighing imports as domestic production is up on the year, meaning there is an increased supply of lamb available to trade.

## PORK

Total fresh and frozen pork **exports** during the year to April stood at **69,000 tonnes**, which is similar to year-earlier levels (up 2.5%), whilst the value of exported product fell by 13.5% to stand at £108.2 million. Shipments to China continue to dominate, however volumes were down almost 40% (or 14,000 tonnes) on the year. This is largely due to the Chinese pig herd recovering at a rapid rate, and therefore there is less reliance on imported proteins.

Total fresh and frozen pork **imports** during the YTD increased by 27% when compared with the same period in 2021 at **120,000 tonnes**. France, Germany and the Netherlands all contributed to the overall increase in volume, but an additional 11,600 tonnes received from Spain drove the overall increase.



# Monthly Market Round-Up

## CATTLE

### Prices – week ending 25 June

The prime cattle average price at auction markets in England and Wales stood at **246.6p/kg**. This was:

- +2.3p on the previous week,
- +25.8p compared with year-earlier levels,
- 50.1p higher than the 5-year average (2017-21 average: 196.4p/kg).

The average deadweight prices in England and Wales for steers stood at 440.7p/kg. This was:

- -0.4p on the previous week,
- +49.0p above year-earlier levels.

The deadweight prices for heifers stood at 438.7p/kg (-1.7p on the week), young bulls at 436.5p/kg (+0.5p), and cull cows at 363.0p/kg (+1.1p).

### Throughput – May 2022

- Total cattle throughput at UK abattoirs = 239,500 head – up 9% on the year
- Total prime cattle throughput = 179,700 head – up 8% on the year.
  - steers +7%, heifers +11%, and young bulls +3%.
- Average prime cattle carcase weights = 345.0kg (-1.6kg on the year).
- Adult cattle throughput = 52,700 head – up 5% on the year.

## SHEEP

### Prices – week ending 25 June

The New Season Lamb average liveweight SQQ at auction markets in Wales stood at **303.6p/kg**. This was:

- 1.7p on the previous week,
- +64.6p compared with year-earlier levels,
- 86.5p higher than the 5-year average (2017-21 average: 217.1p/kg).

Cull ewe prices at auction markets in Wales averaged **£90.50/head**. This was

- -£5.50 on the previous week,
- +£11.40 above year-earlier levels.

GB deadweight lamb prices averaged 646.7p/kg (-15.9p on the week).

### Throughput – May 2022

- Total sheep throughput at UK abattoirs = 1.0 million head – up 11% on the year.
- Lamb throughput = 924,100 head – up 11% on the year.
- Average lamb carcase weights = 20.4kg (+0.4kg on the year).
- Cull ewe and ram throughput = 82,600 head – up 5% on the year.

## PIGS

### Prices – week ending 18 June

EU-spec All Pig Price (APP) in GB stood at **191.6p/kg**. This was:

- +2.5p on the previous week,
- +3.1p compared with year-earlier levels,
- Almost 32p higher than the 5-year average (2017-21 average: 159.8p/kg).

Industry reports suggest that although farmgate prices have improved during recent weeks, it is not enough to cover the estimated cost of production at the moment.

### Throughput – May 2022

- Total pig throughput at UK abattoirs = 979,100 head – up 1% on the year.
- Clean pig throughput = 957,000 head – up 5% on the year.
- Average clean pig carcase weights = 89.3kg (+2.7kg on the year)
- Sow and boar throughput = 22,100 head – up 9% on the year

