Poultry Slaughter

ISSN: 1949-1581

Released February 22, 2021, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Ready-to-Cook Weight Down 9 Percent from Last Year

January 2020 contained 23 weekdays (including 2 holidays) and 4 Saturdays.
January 2021 contained 21 weekdays (including 2 holidays) and 5 Saturdays.

Poultry certified wholesome during January 2021 (ready-to-cook weight) totaled 4.11 billion pounds, down 9 percent from the amount certified in January 2020. The December 2020 revised certified total at 4.24 billion pounds, was up 2 percent from December 2019. The December revision represented an increase of 9.15 million pounds from last month's preliminary pounds certified.

The preliminary total live weight of all federally inspected poultry during January 2021 was 5.42 billion pounds, down 9 percent from 5.99 billion pounds a year ago. Young chickens inspected totaled 4.79 billion pounds, down 9 percent from January 2020. Mature chickens, at 59.9 million pounds, were down 12 percent from the previous year. Turkey inspections totaled 560 million pounds, down 13 percent from a year ago. Ducks totaled 13.4 million pounds, down 25 percent from last year.

Young chickens slaughtered during January 2021 averaged 6.43 pounds per bird, up slightly from January 2020. The average live weight of mature chickens was 6.75 pounds per bird, down slightly from a year ago. Turkeys slaughtered during January 2021 averaged 33.5 pounds per bird, up slightly from January 2020.

Ante-mortem condemnations during January 2021 totaled 12.4 million pounds. Condemnations were 0.23 percent of the live weight inspected, as compared with 0.23 percent a year earlier. Post-mortem condemnations, at 26.2 million pounds, were 0.63 percent of quantities inspected, as compared with 0.75 percent a year earlier.
### Poultry Slaughtered, Total Live Weight, and Average Live Weight by Type – United States

[Federally inspected only]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>January 2020 (1,000 head)</th>
<th>December 2020 (1,000 head)</th>
<th>January 2021 (1,000 head)</th>
<th>January 2021 as % of January to January 2020 (percent)</th>
<th>January 2021 as % of January to January 2021 (percent)</th>
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1 Includes geese, guineas, ostriches, emus, rheas, and squab.
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<th>December 2020</th>
<th>January 2021</th>
<th>January 2021 as % of</th>
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- Represents zero.
(X) Not applicable.
1 Includes geese, guineas, and squab.
## Ante-Mortem Condemnations by Type – United States

[Federally inspected only]

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<th>Commodity</th>
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<th>December 2020</th>
<th>January 2021</th>
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<th>2021 as percent of 2020</th>
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1 Includes geese, guineas, and squab.
2 Pounds condemned as a percent of live weight pounds inspected.
### Post-Mortem Condemnations by Type – United States

[Federally inspected only]

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<th>December 2020 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>January 2021 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>January 2021 as % of January to January (percent)</th>
<th>January 2020 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>December 2020 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>2020 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>2021 (1,000 pounds)</th>
<th>2021 as percent of 2020 (percent)</th>
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1 Includes geese, guineas, and squab.

2 Pounds condemned as a percent of pounds certified plus post-mortem condemnations.
## Condemned Post-Mortem by Cause and Type – United States: December 2020 and January 2021

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1 Represents zero.

1 Includes any portion of the carcass affected by an inflammatory process, plant-rejected carcasses, missing viscera, or ascites fluid preventing proper inspection of the carcass.
### Young Chickens Slaughtered, Total Live Weight, and Average Live Weight – States and United States: December 2020 and January 2021

[Data may not add to totals due to rounding]

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<td>(1,000 head)</td>
<td>(1,000 pounds)</td>
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- Represents zero.

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.
### Young Chickens Pounds Certified and Post-Mortem Condemnations – States and United States: December 2020 and January 2021

[Data may not add to totals due to rounding]

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<th>Percent</th>
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(D) Represents zero.
(X) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.
(X) Not applicable.
1 Ready-to-cook weights.
2 Pounds condemned as percent of pounds certified plus post-mortem condemnations.
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<th>January (head)</th>
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<th>January (head)</th>
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<th>January (head)</th>
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- Represents zero.

1 Includes any portion of the carcass affected by an inflammatory process, plant-rejected carcasses, missing viscera, or ascites fluid preventing proper inspection of the carcass.
### Young Turkeys Slaughtered, Total Live Weight, and Average Live Weight – States and United States: December 2020 and January 2021

[Data may not add to totals due to rounding]

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- Represents zero.

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown.
Young Turkeys Pounds Certified and Post-Mortem Condemnations – States and United States: December 2020 and January 2021

[Data may not add to totals due to rounding]

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¹ - Represents zero.
(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.
(X) Not applicable.
² Ready-to-cook weights.

Poultry Slaughter (February 2021)
USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

11
Terms and Definitions Used for Poultry Slaughter Estimates

Ante-Mortem Condemnations: Birds condemned prior to their entry into the slaughter plant.

Average Live Weight: The weight of the whole bird, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Certified Ready-to-Cook: The weight of poultry certified wholesome by inspection after post-mortem condemnation pounds are removed. Ready-to-cook represents poultry meat ready for the marketing channel.

Dressing Percent: Usually expressed as a percentage yield of frozen and chilled carcass in relation to the weight of the live bird.

Ducks: Includes all ducks regardless of age and weight.

Federally Inspected (FI) Plants: Plants that transport meat interstate must employ federal inspectors to assure compliance with USDA standards.

Mature Chickens: Fowl from breeder and market egg flocks and stags and cocks.

Number of Head: Includes post-mortem condemnations.

Old Turkeys: Fully matured birds held for egg production, usually over 15 months of age.

Plant, Slaughter: An establishment where birds are killed and butchered.

Post-Mortem Condemnations: Carcasses or parts condemned by the inspector because of disease or mishandling and removed from the slaughter line and destroyed.

Slaughter: Killing and butchering of birds primarily for food.

Total Live Weight: The total weight of live birds, before slaughter. Excludes post-mortem condemnations.

Young Chickens: Commercially grown broilers-fryers and other young immature birds such as roasters and capons.

Young Turkeys: Young birds grown to a matured market age, and other turkeys such as fryers/roasters and young breeders.
**Statistical Methodology**

**Data Sources:** Data for poultry slaughter estimates are collected by inspectors of the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), USDA for all Federally Inspected plants. Over 99 percent of the total United States slaughter for any species is under Federal Inspection. The number of head slaughtered daily, by species and class, as well as condemnations and total live and dressed weights are obtained by shift for each plant. Approximately 370 plants slaughtered poultry in the United States under Federal Inspection in 2019. Young chickens were slaughtered in 38 States, young turkeys in 33 States.

**Revision Policy:** Data for the previous month and year-to-date totals are subject to revision the following month after the initial monthly estimates are published. Final data are published in the annual summary released in February and include any revisions made to current and previous year’s published data. Revisions are generally the result of late reports or corrections received by FSIS from plants and are usually less than one-half of one percent. No revisions will be made to the previous year’s data after publication of the annual summary in February.

**Procedures and Reliability:** Plant inspectors submit data electronically for each shift a plant operates. An edit provides checks for the detection of errors such as invalid plant information, duplication, and erroneous data. Data are accumulated to monthly totals for this release.

Data for major slaughter plants with missing reports are adjusted prior to publication to assure that all plants slaughtering a significant portion of a specific class are included. Estimates for missing shifts are made only after verifying that the plant was in operation. Adjustments are based on a shift determined to be similar to the one missing. Late reports replace imputed data as they become available. While there is a varying degree of incompleteness from month to month, it has only a minimal impact on the published totals.

Poultry slaughter estimates are based on a census of operating plants and, therefore, have no sampling error. However, they may be subject to errors such as omissions, duplications, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. These errors are minimized through strict quality controls in the edit and summarization process, and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

**Information Contacts**

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to nass@usda.gov

Travis Averill, Chief, Livestock Branch ................................................................. (202) 692-0069

Vacant, Head, Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section ................................................................. (202) 690-3223

   Holly Brenize – Poultry Slaughter ........................................................................... (202) 720-0585
   Alissa Cowell-Mytar – Cold Storage, Capacity of Refrigerated Warehouses .................. (202) 720-4751
   Liana Cuffman – Catfish and Trout, Mink, Census of Aquaculture .................................. (202) 720-8784
   Fatema Haque – Turkey Hatchery, Turkeys Raised .................................................. (202) 720-3244
   Derron Martin – Chicken Hatchery, Egg Products .................................................. (202) 690-3237
   Adam Peters – Honey, Honey Bee Colonies ................................................................ (202) 690-4870
   Autumn Stone – Layers, Eggs .............................................................................. (202) 690-3676
   Takiyah Walker – Broiler Hatchery .................................................................... (202) 720-6147
Access to NASS Reports

For your convenience, you may access NASS reports and products the following ways:

- All reports are available electronically, at no cost, on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov

- Both national and state specific reports are available via a free e-mail subscription. To set-up this free subscription, visit www.nass.usda.gov and click on “National” or “State” in upper right corner above “search” box to create an account and select the reports you would like to receive.

- Cornell’s Mann Library has launched a new website housing NASS’s and other agencies archived reports. The new website, https://usda.library.cornell.edu. All email subscriptions containing reports will be sent from the new website, https://usda.library.cornell.edu. To continue receiving the reports via e-mail, you will have to go to the new website, create a new account and re-subscribe to the reports. If you need instructions to set up an account or subscribe, they are located at: https://usda.library.cornell.edu/help. You should whitelist notifications@usda-esmis.library.cornell.edu in your email client to avoid the emails going into spam/junk folders.

For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: nass@usda.gov.

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