



Food Protection and Defense Institute

A Homeland Security Center of Excellence

July 31, 2020

COVID-19 Near-Term Issues Spotting in Food Supply Chain

Meat Supply Chain and Mass Hog Depopulation – UPDATE #38

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Updates issued on Fridays to track recovery trends



Action Opportunity Update

Critical path to meat supply chain disruption resolution

- Maintain operating capacity at processing facilities in consideration of worker health
 - Implement weekend processing to enhance short-term capacity
 - Coordinate worker protective equipment to:
 - maintain worker safety with normal operation PPE (specific to each job function and may include, for example, cut-resistant clothing, bump caps, dust masks/respirators, protective eyewear, protective foot wear, etc.);
 - maintain food safety with normal operation sanitation wear (specific to each product produced and may include, for example, hair/beard nets, disposable gloves, cloth or disposable coats/gowns, shoe covers, etc.); and
 - enhance COVID-19 infection control measures through cloth-face coverings, social distancing, physical barriers, etc.
- Continue to manage overstock through processing capacity, husbandry practices, alternative slaughter options, rendering, composting, and burial as appropriate in each locality
- Support livestock producers and processors in achieving new equilibrium including financial and liability considerations

Transition point from meat supply chain to broader food system disruption

- Address increasing level of COVID-19 infections in non-meat supply chain food production and facilities
 - Enhance COVID-related worker health and surveillance processes
 - Coordinate worker protective equipment to:
 - maintain worker safety with normal operation PPE;
 - maintain food safety with normal operation sanitation wear; and
 - enhance COVID-19 infection control measures
- Monitor food production and processing status to identify transition points and potential cascading effects
- Monitor global impact of COVID-19 on food security as a potential precursor for civil unrest



Situation Update

Action by Appointed and Elected Officials

- [Warren, Booker Release Information from their Investigation into Giant Meatpackers Exploiting Workers and Consumers during COVID-19](#) – July 24, 2020
- [Population Point Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 Infection Based on a Statewide Random Sample — Indiana, April 25–29, 2020](#) – CDC, July 24, 2020
- [USDA Provides Update on Investigation Following 2019 Tyson Beef Plant Closure and COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – USDA, July 22, 2020

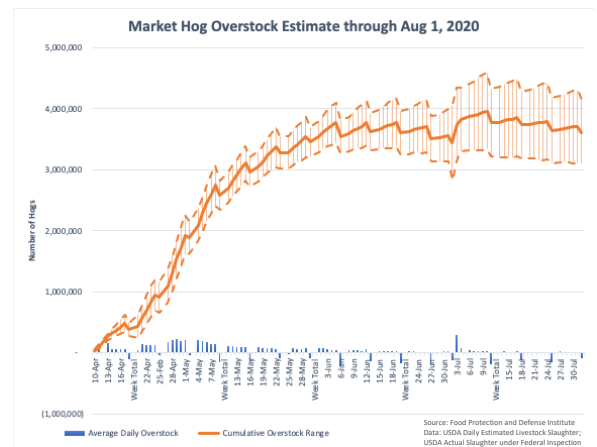
Hog Update

Daily Hog Slaughter and Overstock Addition

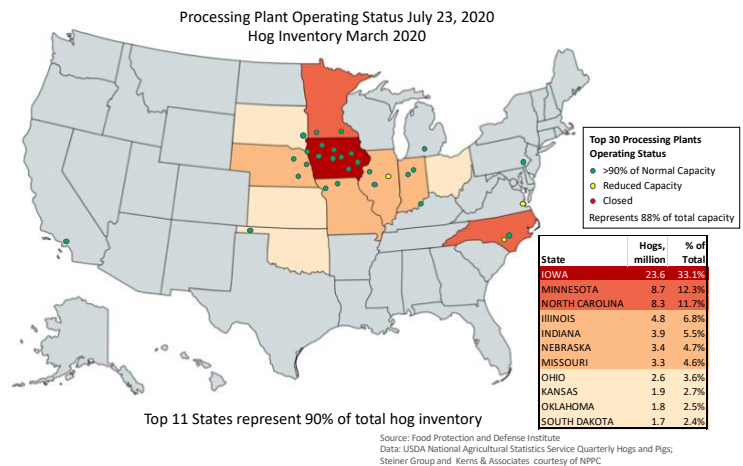
- Cumulative overstock estimate
 - 3.6MM, uncertainty 3.1-4.1 MM
 - similar to the previous week
 (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Daily slaughter numbers

	Daily Estimate	Same day April 3-9	Year Ago
July 27	455,000	474,731	450,166
July 28	475,000	483,431	467,875
July 29	477,000	472,974	472,130
July 30	475,000	467,945	470,700
July 31	474,000	482,993	449,430
Aug 1	182,000	140,189	36,242

- Daily pork processing capacity
 - Approximately 102% of pre-COVID capacity for the week ending July 24
 - Capacity reduction from maximal capacity approximately 5% on July 23 with 25 of 28 previously impacted plants functioning at over 90% normal capacity and 21 of these over 95% capacity. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; Kern and Associates courtesy of NPPC)



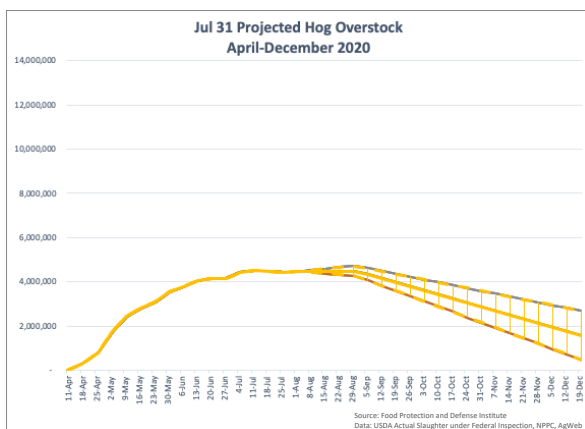
(USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)





Weekly Hog Slaughter and Overstock Projections

- Weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending July 31 were slightly higher than pre-COVID levels with a 9% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 11. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Total hog overstock projections through December 2020 may be near peak at about 4.4MM market weight hogs due to continued accelerated recovery.



Assumptions

- Hog inventory at 95% plant capacity through mid-October representing market conditions for pigs already born and in growth cycle prior to COVID-19
- Year on year capacity increase of 6.4% to April 9 excluded after Aug 31, 2020
- Adjusted for normal weekly fluctuation in plant capacity (e.g. holiday reductions)
- Average plant capacity
 - 90% by week of Jun 5
 - Normal capacity through remainder of year
- Young pig and sow culling (relative to Q1)
 - No culling prior to April 10
 - 5% for pigs reaching market weight in mid-September
 - 5% for pigs reaching market weight in mid-October

(Date: July 31, 2020)

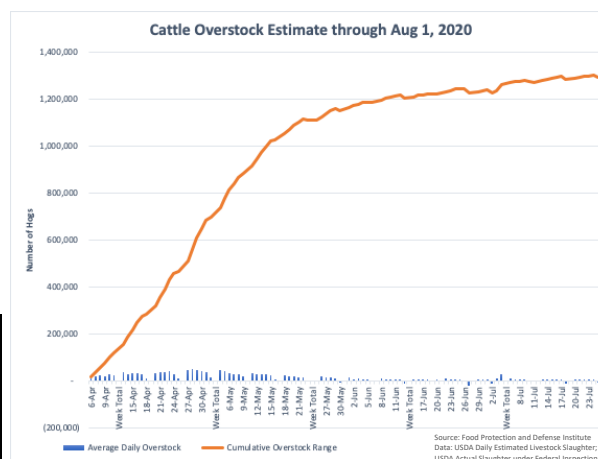
Cattle Update

Daily Cattle Slaughter and Overstock Addition

- Total overstock estimates – 1.3MM, uncertainty range 0.8M to 1.8MM – similar to previous week (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Daily slaughter numbers

	Daily Estimate	Same day Wk Apr 4	Year Ago
July 27	117,000	118,756	119,909
July 28	119,000	119,473	118,719
July 29	119,000	117,235	121,201
July 30	119,000	115,152	122,747
July 31	113,000	107,188	115,464
Aug 1	51,000	53,495	34,744

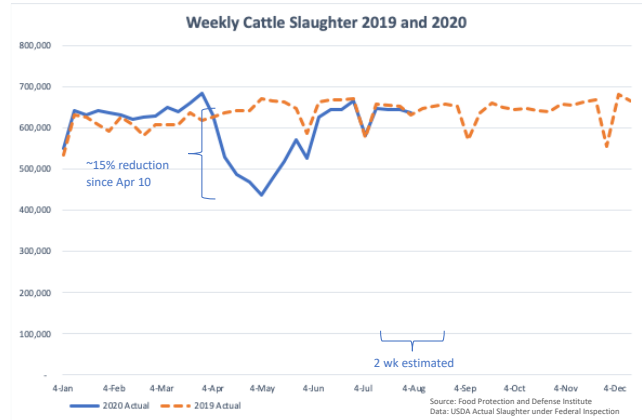
(USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)





Weekly Cattle Slaughter and Overstock Projections

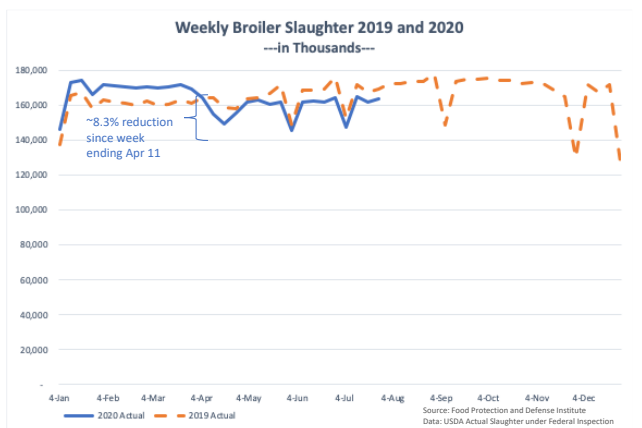
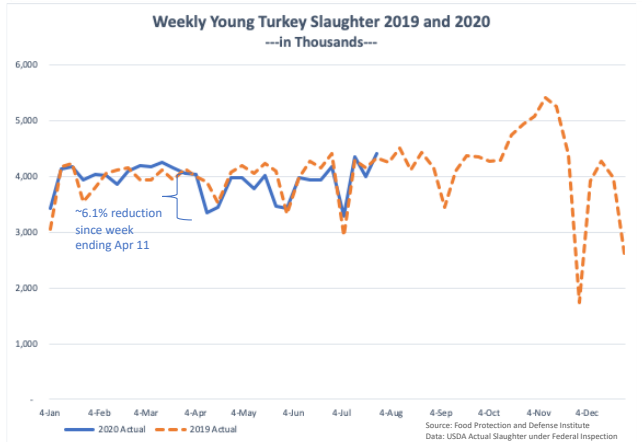
- Weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending July 31 were near normal capacity with a 15% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Daily Estimated Livestock Slaughter; USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Cattle slaughter has been steady for several weeks at near 2019 levels indicating little flexibility in increasing capacity to manage overstock. Thus, it is likely that overstock will gradually diminish as calf placements are throttled.



Poultry Update

Weekly Poultry Slaughter and Overstock

- Young Turkeys
 - Young turkey weekly slaughter numbers for the week ending July 25 were near normal capacity with a 6% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)
- Broilers
 - Broiler slaughter numbers for the week ending July 25 were down approximately 8% from normal capacity an 8% reduction to date starting from the week ending April 4. (USDA Actual Slaughter under Federal Inspection)





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Livestock Media Update

Webinars

- [Recorded Webinar: Prospects for the pork production and global market after Covid-19](#) – Pig333, July 30, 2020

Processing facilities media coverage

(This section contains exemplary material from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

- [Lawsuit Alleges Worker Danger](#) – Progressive Farmer, July 28, 2020
- [Meat companies refuse to get specific about Covid-19 caseloads, record exports during height of pandemic](#) – The Counter, July 27, 2020
- [Tyson Foods adopts weekly coronavirus testing for workers](#) – Washington Post, July 30, 2020
- [Smithfield responds to senators' inquiry on meat industry handling of COVID-19](#) – Meat+Poultry, July 27, 2020
- [Pork processing giant Smithfield says not all plant workers can be socially distanced](#) – St. Louis Post-Dispatch, July 24, 2020 (Context: Report on congressional inquiry)
- [Ailing Under Slaughterhouse Rules](#) – Johns Hopkins University, July 27, 2020
- [Reduced COVID-19 rates in meat plants could be attributed to decreased testing](#) – The Pig Site, July 29, 2020
 - [COVID-19 Cases Appear To Be Slowing At Meat Plants. But Companies Aren't Releasing Test Results](#) – Successful Farming, July 27, 2020
- [Test taking success during COVID-19](#) – Meat+Poultry, July 28, 2020 (Context; testing plan in meat facility)
- [Covid-19: Crisis in US pork sector is not over yet](#) – Pig Progress, July 24, 2020 (“...if additional packing plant disruptions occur in the weeks and/or months to come due to Covid-19 worker infections, “the number of hogs backed up on farms will swell precipitously.”)
- [Covid-19 disrupts poultry production chain](#) – Poultry World, July 24, 2020
- [What's next for meat processing plants post-COVID-19?](#) – Feed Strategy, July 22, 2020
- [COVID-19 Outbreaks Associated with Meat and Poultry Processing Plants in Virginia](#) – Virginia Department of Health, July 30, 2020
- [Mapping Covid-19 outbreaks in the food system](#) – Food & Environment Reporting Network
 - “According to data collected by FERN, as of July 30 at 12pm ET, at least 543 meatpacking and food processing plants (382 meatpacking and 161 food processing) and 79 farms and production facilities have had confirmed cases of Covid-19. At least 49,369 workers (38,403 meatpacking workers, 5,502 food processing workers, and 5,464 farmworkers) have tested positive for Covid-19 and at least 193 workers (171 meatpacking workers, 14 food processing workers, and 8 farmworkers) have died.” (Context: see testing and reporting articles above which indicate this data may not provide a complete picture of worker impact due to lack of testing and reporting)

Producer media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

Update #38 July 31, 2020
supersedes Update #37 July 24, 2020



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- [Holding back hogs, recovering from COVID-19](#) – National Hog Farmer, July 27, 2020
- [Even with packing plants open, pork future remains uncertain](#) – KWWL, July 24, 2020
- [Utah rancher asks Mike Pence to prevent a crisis for lamb producers in the West](#) – Deseret News, July 27, 2020

Economic media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue.)

- [Warren and Booker Press Meatpackers on Exports to China](#) – New York Times, July 23, 2020
- [Meat Industry Campaign Cash Flows To Officials Seeking To Quash COVID-19 Lawsuits](#) – The Intercept, July 24, 2020
- [Pig Raising Market and Pork Market in China Rapidly Increasing in Size Globally : Latest Report with Current Trends, Future Estimations and Opportunity Analysis | Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – MarketWatch, July 28, 2020
- [China blocks poultry imports from Brazil amid COVID-19 concerns](#) – The Poultry Site, July 30, 2020

Food shortage media coverage

(This section contains exemplary media coverage from multiple perspectives around the issue. At present, there are no indications of wide-scale food shortages although supply chain disruptions continue to create spot limited supply or out of stock situations.)

- [COVID-19 risks to global food security](#) – Science, July 31, 2020
- [How COVID-19 worsens hunger in India, the world's largest food basket](#) – Phys.org, July 29, 2020
- ['We had to eat our seeds for planting': 10 million in Sudan facing food shortages](#) – The Guardian, July 28, 2020
- [Solving Our Food Crisis Requires a Fundamental Transformation of the System](#) – International Institute for Sustainable Development, July 27, 2020 (Context: COVID focus)
- [Why Hunger Can Grow Even When Poverty Doesn't](#) – New York Times, July, 28, 2020
- [Congress Needs to Act to Prevent a Massive Meat Shortage](#) – Free the People, July 24, 2020
- [Surprising shortages pop up amid the coronavirus pandemic](#) – The Denver Channel, July 29, 2020
- [Where are the graham crackers? Grocery stores still feeling pandemic impact](#) – WHAM, July 27, 2020
- [COVID-19 hits meat and beverage hard](#) – Food Engineering, July 29, 2020

Recommendations from authoritative bodies (cumulative)

- [Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19](#) - CDC
- [Daily Life and Coping](#) – CDC
- [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition](#) – United Nations
- [COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide](#) - USDA



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- Opening Facilities
 - [Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers](#) – CDC
 - [Meat and Poultry Processing Facility Assessment Toolkit](#) – CDC
 - [Agriculture Workers and Employers](#) – CDC and US Dept of Labor
 - [Agricultural Employer Checklist for Creating a COVID-19 Assessment and Control Plan](#)
 - [Guidance for workers and employers](#) – OSHA (many documents available)
 - [COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines for the Meatpacking Industry](#) – Minnesota Department of Health
 - [Reporting a Temporary Closure or Significantly Reduced Production by a Human Food Establishment and Requesting FDA Assistance During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#) - FDA
 - [CDC updates COVID-19 transmission webpage to clarify information about types of spread](#) - CDC
 - [Food and Agriculture: Considerations for Prioritization of PPE, Cloth Face Coverings, Disinfectants, and Sanitation Supplies During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) - FDA
 - [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#) – OSHA (Context – cloth face coverings)
 - [Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#) – CDC
 - [FAQs regarding the use of masks in the workplace](#) – OSHA
 - [Strategies to reduce COVID-19 transmission at Smithfield Foods Sioux Falls Pork Plant](#) - CDC
 - [Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#) - CDC
 - [Exercise Starter Kit for Workshop on Reconstituting Operations](#) – FEMA
 - [North American Meat Institute Coronavirus Update](#) – NAMI
 - [Testing Strategy for Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces after a COVID-19 Case Is Identified](#) - CDC
- Depopulation and Disposal
 - [APHIS Livestock Coordination Center](#) – USDA
 - [Recommendations for Swine Depopulation](#) (updated) – American Association of Swine Veterinarians
 - [Evaluating Emergency Euthanasia or Depopulation of Livestock and Poultry](#)
 - [Emergency Animal Mortality Management – Swine](#) – USDA
 - [USDA Carcass Management Dashboard](#) – USDA
- COVID from Food and Food Packaging
 - [How COVID-19 Spreads](#) – CDC (updated May 20, 2020)
 - [Best Practices for Retail Food Stores, Restaurants, and Food Pick-Up/Delivery Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – FDA
 - [Best Practices for Re-Opening Retail Food Establishments During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) – FDA
 - [Safe Food Handling](#) - FDA
 - [Food Product FAQs](#) - FDA
 - [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) – FDA



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- [What to Do if You Have COVID-19 Confirmed Positive or Exposed Workers in Your Food Production, Storage, or Distribution Operations Regulated by FDA – FDA](#)

Previous updates available upon request