

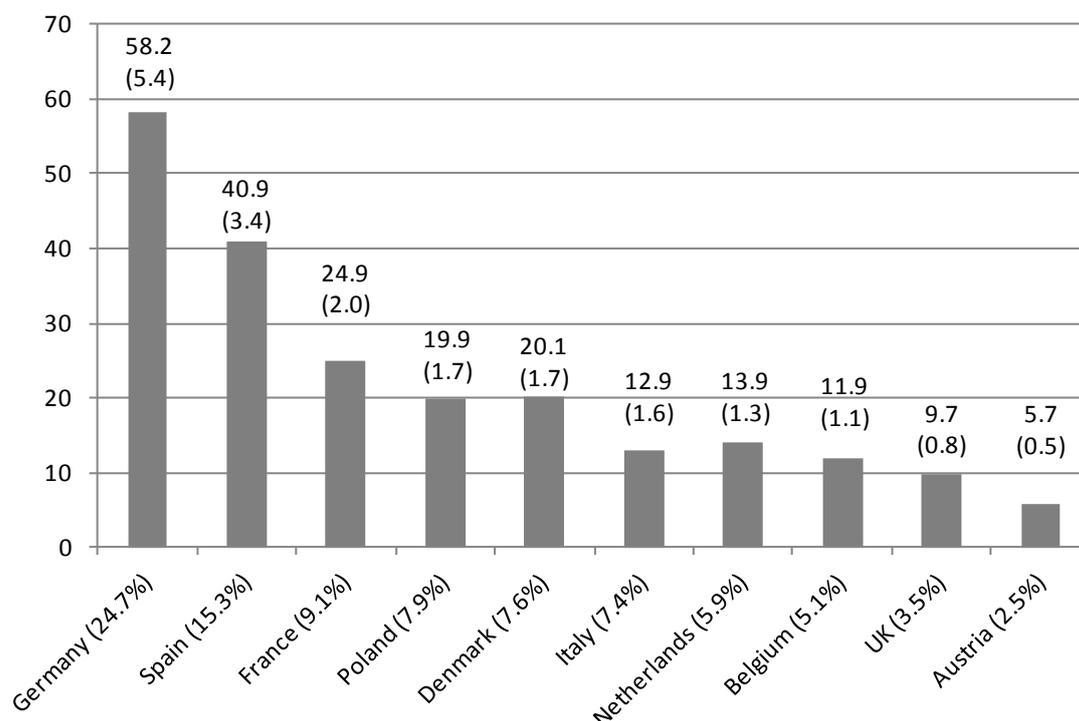
Pig meat production in the EU

Production

There are 13.5 million breeding sows in the EU-27 producing 22 million tonnes of pig meat from just over 248 million finished pigs (Eurostat, 2010). Germany is by far the largest producer, followed by Spain (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Top 10 pig meat producing countries in the EU.

Graph shows million head slaughtered per annum (million tonne meat produced) by country (% of EU meat production) (Eurostat, 2010)



Germany is the 3rd largest global producer of pig meat; Spain is the 4th, France is the 8th and Poland is the 10th. China is by far the largest global producer of pig meat, slaughtering over 677 million head per annum (47.3% total production), followed by the USA slaughtering 110 million head per annum (9.3%) (FAO stat, 2010).

Germany is the largest exporter of pig meat (15.2% of total export), followed by the USA (12.8%) and Denmark (10.8%). Germany is also the largest global importer of pig meat (9.8% of total imports) followed by Japan (9.6%), Italy (8.7%) and the UK (8.1%) (FAO Stat, 2009).

Consumption

In 2009, per capita consumption of pork meat products in the EU-27 was 37kg per annum, down 4kg compared to the previous year (European Commission, 2011). Denmark (81kg), Cyprus (72kg), Spain (62kg), Austria (57kg), and Germany (54kg) have the highest per capita apparent consumption. Consumption is less than average in the UK at 20kg per capita, and is around the average for France (34kg), Italy (38kg) and the Netherlands (41kg).

Legislation

Minimum standards for the protection of pigs are laid down in COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2008/120/EC (codified version). Attention should be paid to the following:

Article 3

For all holdings as of 1 January 2013

Sow stalls will be prohibited from four weeks after service to one week before the expected time of farrowing (see Article 3, 4).

Sows and gilts must have permanent access to manipulable material (Article 3, 5)

In order to satisfy hunger, all dry pregnant sows and gilts must be provided with bulky or high fibre food (Article 3, 7)

Annex I Chapter I

Pigs must have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such, which does not compromise the health of the animals (point 4)

Uniform reduction of piglet corner teeth by grinding or clipping / docking part of the tail / castration of male pigs (by means other than tearing of tissues) are exempt from prohibition in accordance with the following:

'Neither tail-docking nor reduction of corner teeth must be carried out routinely but only where there is evidence that injuries to sows' teats or to other pigs' ears or tails have occurred. Before carrying out these procedures, other measures shall be taken to prevent tail-biting and other vices, taking into account the environment and stocking densities. For this reason inadequate environmental conditions or management systems must be changed.' (point 8)

Annex I Chapter II

In the week before expected farrowing time sows and gilts must be given suitable nesting material in sufficient quantity unless it is not technically feasible for the slurry system used in the establishment (point B3).

Some countries have additional requirements to those outlined in Council Directive 2008. For example, the use of sow stalls is prohibited in the UK and Sweden and includes the 4 week post service period, whereas in the Netherlands stalls are permitted up to 4 days post service, and tail docking is prohibited in Sweden (Mul et al., 2010). Only 7 countries (Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Sweden and UK) are expected to be fully compliant with the legislation by 31st December 2012 (European Parliament, 2012).

References

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