

## UK pig herd increasing in December

Figures from the December Defra census show a modest increase in the overall UK pig herd, of 3% to 4.5 million head.

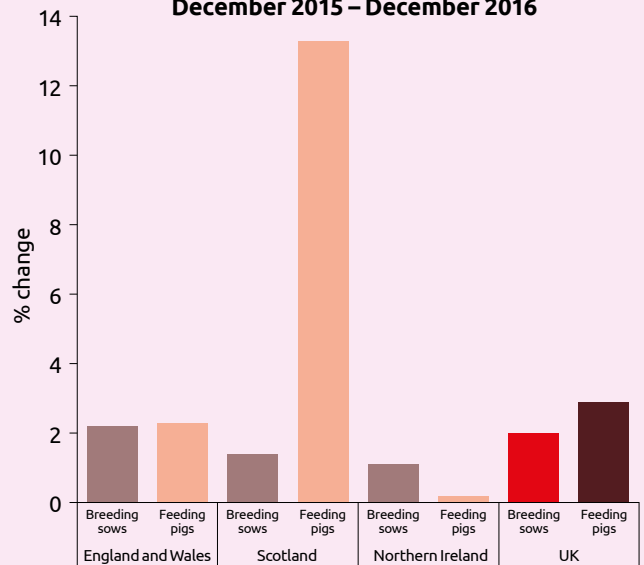
The increase comes at a time when pig producers are in a much better situation than a year earlier. Export demand from China and a tightening of supply has driven the pig price up, which has encouraged producers to expand their herds. Feeding pig numbers are up by 3% to 4 million head. However, this increase is somewhat surprising given the fall in slaughtering levels over recent months, so there is an inference that these figures may be somewhat overstated.

The female breeding

herd was reported to have increased by 2% to 409,000 head. While this absolute figure is in excess of AHDB forecasts, the increase is in line with expectations. Of the UK total, the number of in-pig sows grew by 3%, while the number of in-pig gilts was up by 9%. At the same time, maiden gilts were back by 6%. This would all suggest that producers are beginning to expand their herds, to capitalise on the stronger price and satiate demand.

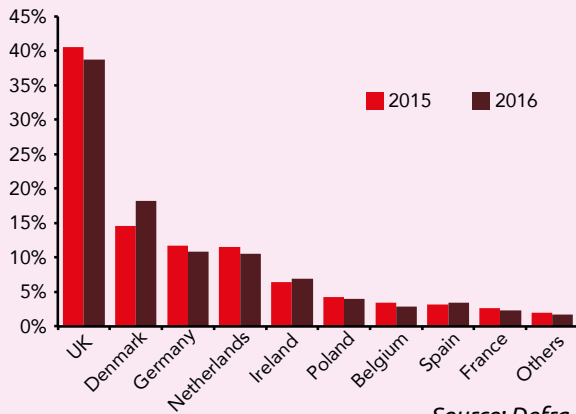
More detail on how supply levels are likely to develop will be clearer following the release of AHDB Pork's updated forecasts later this month. >

Changes in pig herd by UK country December 2015 – December 2016



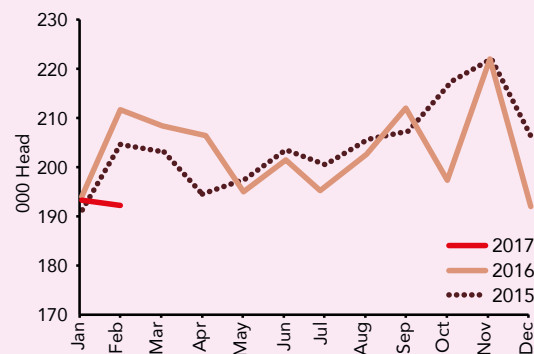
Source: Defra, Scottish government, DARDNI

### Sources of pig meat consumed in the UK



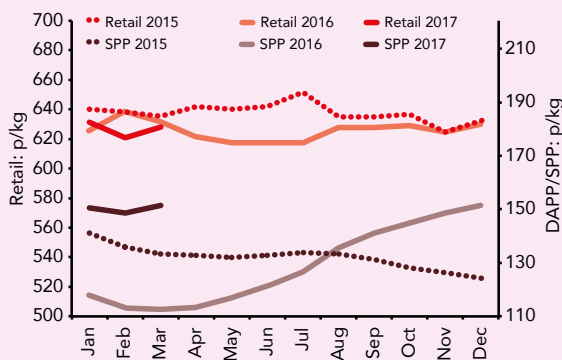
Source: Defra, HMRC

### UK weekly clean pig slaughtering



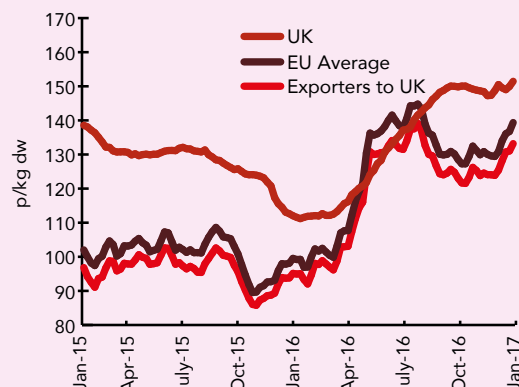
Source: Defra

### GB average retail pork saleable carcase price and DAPP



Source: AHDB Market Intelligence

### Comparison of UK and EU pig reference prices



Source: AHDB Market Intelligence, EU Commission



Mike Sheldon



Robert Beckett



Rick Buckle



Robert Mutimer

# New look AHDB Pork board

A new chairman has been appointed to AHDB Pork to replace Meryl Ward who has completed her term of office.

Mike Sheldon is no stranger to the industry as he has a long history of working within the pig industry, starting in 1982 as a graduate trainee with PIC.

He spent 14 years with the company, working in production, sales and marketing in UK and Europe before setting up Greenway Farms, a 1,200 sow unit producing parent boars and grandparent gilts under contract to PIC.

He sold the farm in 2014 and retired from active pig production. Meanwhile, in 1999 he was the founding Chief Executive of the NPA, leaving that post to join the BPEX Board, where he worked for 12 years before stepping down.

From 2012 he has been the chairman of the Pig Sector Board of Red Tractor Assurance and also chairs the Red Tractor Marketing Committee. When not engaged in work for the pig industry, Mike operates Good Wine Hunter, an independent

importer and retailer of European wines.

As well as chairing the AHDB Pork Board, he is also a member of the main AHDB Board.

Mike said: "I am committed to the industry and am really looking forward to playing an active part in the work of AHDB Pork."

The other new members of the AHDB Pork board are Robert Beckett, Rick Buckle and Robert Mutimer.

Yorkshire pig producer Robert Beckett runs a multisite indoor breed-to-finish pig business. He is the son of a Shropshire farmer, where he started off as a stockman, progressing through all levels of management to his current position of Joint Managing Director.

He has been involved in the pig industry for more than 25 years. Robert is a director of Thames Valley Cambac and sits on the PHWC Welfare committee and Real Welfare review group.

Rick Buckle returned to the family farm in 1992 after completing an NDA

at Bishop Burton College of Agriculture. The family partnership owns, rents, and contract farms more than 5,000 acres of arable land in East Yorkshire. He runs the pig enterprise on the farm which consists of a 1,050 sow farrow to finish indoor unit, finishing all progeny on site, all feed is home mixed. Rick and his team were the winners of the 2015 National Pig Awards Producer of the Year.

After graduating from Harper Adams in 1995 with a BSc in Agri-Food Marketing Robert Mutimer joined the family mixed farming business in north Norfolk. He and his wife Helen currently run 750 outdoor sows with indoor straw-based finishing, producing pigs for the Waitrose supply chain. They have developed Swannington Farm to Fork, a wholesale and retail butchery with business with two shops and 200 wholesale customers in Norfolk and North Suffolk.

He is a board member of the National Pig Association and has been on the producer group for the past two years. >

## The Swine Dysentery Charter closed 1 May

We now have the new Significant Disease Charter. Producers are not automatically moved across, please sign up to the new charter through your Pig Hub account at: [www.pighub.org.uk](http://www.pighub.org.uk)

If you need help to access your account, please do not hesitate to email us at [pighub@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:pighub@ahdb.org.uk) or contact [cheryl.barker@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:cheryl.barker@ahdb.org.uk) or call 024 7647 8893. >

**AHDB** Pig Hub  
PORK

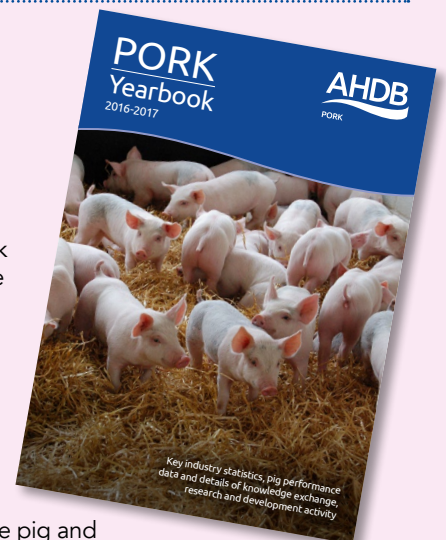
## A wealth of information

Look out for two new publications, the AHDB Pork Yearbook and Pig & Poultry Pocketbook which are both due for publication any day now.

The Yearbook provides a range of key industry statistics and pig performance data, including international comparisons. As well as this the publication includes details of AHDB Pork's knowledge exchange activity, including the latest results from field trials and research projects.

The Pig & Poultry Pocketbook is pocket sized and packed with a range of key statistics about the pig and poultry sectors, including industry structure, production statistics, prices, international trade values and consumption. The publication also includes maps showing the destination of UK pig meat and poultry meat exports.

Both publications will be available online and in hard copy and producers will be receiving the Yearbook through the post over the coming days. However, if you don't receive one, or would like additional copies, simply email [comms@ahdb.org.uk](mailto:comms@ahdb.org.uk) with your details. >



# May Export “Team Tour” Begins

Spring is a busy time for the export team here at AHDB, with the international food show season at its peak. International trade fairs provide a high profile platform for the British pork industry to continue to build on its reputation as a supplier of high quality pig meat in international markets. During May the AHDB export team will be travelling to Asia and North America helping our pork exporters to develop further their international pork businesses.

HOFEX in Hong Kong is the leading fine food show in Southern East Asia this year, the show is held every second

year, alternating with its sister, FHA in Singapore. This year marks the 30th anniversary of HOFEX. In 2016, the UK exported an impressive £29m worth of pork and offal to the territory. On the British meat pavilion, a number of exporters with individual company branded booths will promote a variety of their high-value British pork products including branded pork, sausages, ham and bacon to impress this discerning and wealthy market. A number of activities will take place on the stand to attract our share of the 50,000 trade visitors. The

UK will step into the prestigious role of “official country partner” for day three of the show. Delegates will start their day with a real highlight, a proper British pork breakfast, which will focus their minds as they do business with our exporters and enjoy some of the skilful butchery demonstrations taking place on the main platform.

Next stop will be SIAL, Asia’s largest food innovation exhibition, taking place in Shanghai. In 2016, UK pork exports to China increased by 47% with offal shipments up by more than a third, representing nearly 70% of all UK offal exports. The AHDB pavilion will provide a platform for our exporters to enhance their existing business and seek new partners in, what is now, the leading destination for UK pig meat exports. The pavilion will include British pork tastings to stimulate sales of higher value cuts.

The final stop of the month, will be Chicago, for the National Restaurant Association show, this the leading North American trade show for the all-important foodservice sector. The show is held in the heart of Chicago’s historic meat packing district and attracts decision makers from all 50 states of the US. The focus here is on high-welfare, high-quality, hormone-free pork which commands a premium in this important market. Strong export growth to the US was recorded in 2016, with shipments increasing by 35% to more than 8,000 tonnes. >



## A flying visit to Futterkamp

A few of the team, along with several college/university lecturers, visited a demonstration and research facility at Futterkamp in Germany. The group looked at a range of novel buildings, materials, equipment and techniques which could help improve production efficiency.

Being able to compare materials and techniques side by side in working pig buildings was really useful and meant that the group was able to see lots of interesting

ideas in a short space of time. Some of the systems the group visited included farrowing pens, flooring and ventilation systems and growing and finishing pens, they also witnessed multi-suckling in operation.

More details from this trip can be found in Nigel Penlington’s column or on the AHDB Pork website in the form of a photo story and blog. The full report will be available to share soon. >



Charlotte Evans, Dominic Charman, Mark Campbell, Susan Rabbich, Alan Stewart, Nigel Penlington, Nicola Blackie, Emma Slater