

Monthly Hogs and Pigs

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March Pig Crop Down 3 Percent

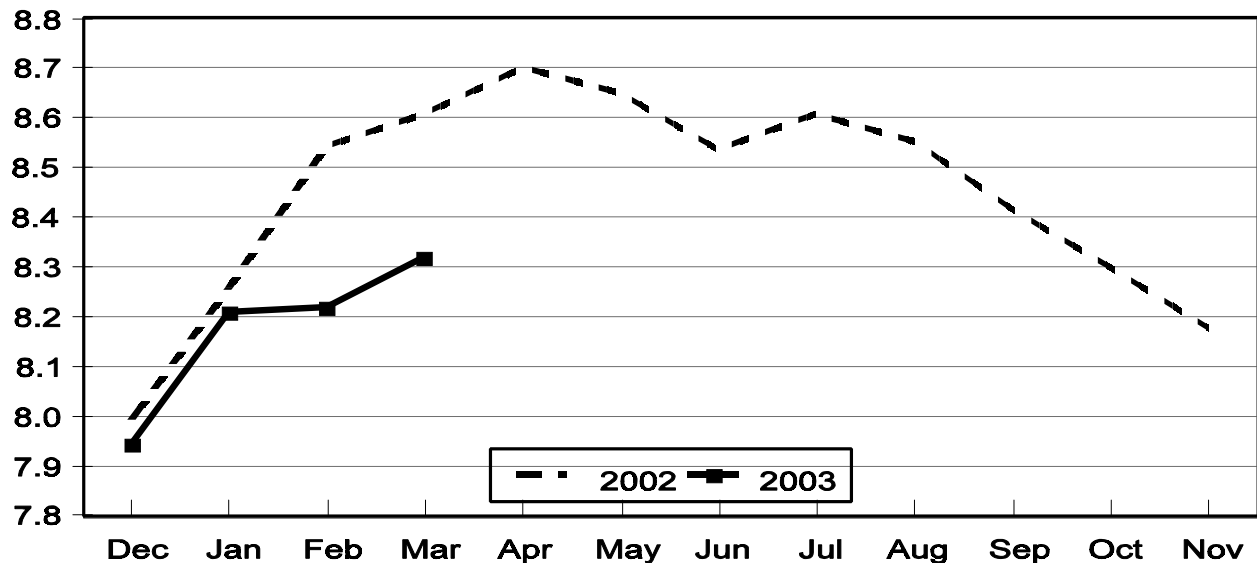
The March 2003 U.S. pig crop at 8.32 million head, was 3 percent below the previous year. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 940 thousand head, 4 percent below last year. The average pigs per litter for March increased to 8.85, compared to 8.80 last year.

The U.S. inventory of sows and gilts on April 1, 2003, was 5.80 million head, down 3 percent from April 1, 2002.

U.S. sows and gilts bred during March totaled 1.15 million head, down 3 percent from the previous year.

U.S. Monthly Pig Crop

Million Head



Special Note

Monthly farrowing and pig crop estimates are preliminary and may be revised in the Quarterly Hogs and Pigs Reports. Various factors can require revisions, such as sample variability, difference in reporting time-frame (monthly vs. quarterly), and pre-weaning and post-weaning death loss. Please refer to the Revision Policy on Page 3 of this report for more information.

**Monthly Farrowings: Number of Sows, Pigs per Litter, and Pig Crop,
United States December-November 2002-2003^{1 2}**

Month	Sows Farrowing		Pigs per Litter		Pig Crop	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>
Dec ¹	923	908	8.66	8.75	7,994	7,943
Jan	946	931	8.73	8.82	8,257	8,211
Feb	967	928	8.83	8.86	8,543	8,220
Mar	978	940	8.80	8.85	8,608	8,319
Apr	983		8.85		8,700	
May	982		8.81		8,651	
Jun	960		8.89		8,537	
Jul	968		8.89		8,609	
Aug	959		8.92		8,554	
Sep	951		8.85		8,416	
Oct	940		8.83		8,300	
Nov	926		8.83		8,176	
Total	11,483		8.83		101,344	

¹ December preceding year.

² Monthly values may not add to quarterly or annual totals due to rounding.

**Monthly Sows and Gilts: Inventory and Number Bred,
United States December-November 2002-2003¹**

Month	Inventory 1st of Month			Bred during Month		
	2002	2003		2002	2003	
		Number	as % of 2002		Number	as % of 2002
	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Dec ¹	6,031	5,850	97	1,194	1,165	98
Jan	6,022	5,835	97	1,190	1,150	97
Feb	6,020	5,810	97	1,156	1,125	97
Mar	6,075	5,830	96	1,181	1,145	97
Apr	5,980	5,795	97	1,173		
May	5,985			1,170		
Jun	6,030			1,168		
Jul	5,975			1,145		
Aug	5,940			1,120		
Sep	5,890			1,145		
Oct	5,870			1,160		
Nov	5,860			1,170		

¹ December preceding year.

Survey Procedures: A random sample of 2,800 U.S. producers from contractors to independent producers were used to provide data for these estimates. Survey procedures ensured that all breeding and farrowing operations, regardless of size, had a chance to be included in the survey. Large producers were sampled more heavily than small operations. Data were collected during the first-half of the month by mail, telephone, and face-to-face personal interviews. Operations were asked to provide information on sow and gilt inventories as of the first of the month, sows and gilts bred during the previous month, sows and gilts farrowed during the previous month, and the pig crop from these litters.

Revision Policy: Revisions to previous monthly estimates are made during the quarterly report. These revisions are to improve month to month, and quarter to quarter relationships. In December, estimates for all months and quarters of the current and previous year are reviewed. The reviews are primarily based on hog check-off receipts and slaughter. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the Department of Agriculture five-year Census of Agriculture are available. No revisions will be made after that date.

Reliability: Since all operations with sow and gilt inventory are not included in the sample, survey estimates are subject to sampling variability. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplication, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. The affects of these errors cannot be measured directly. They are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and through a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

The next "Monthly Hogs and Pigs" report will be released at 3 p.m. ET on May 30, 2003.

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