



Uruguay
Meats

inac
Instituto Nacional de Carnes

Uruguay beef and sheepmeat industry

Prepared by National Institute INAC. June 2026¹

Uruguayan beef exports represent 4% of worldwide total. Globally, Uruguay ranks among the top 10 beef exporters. In 2025, Uruguay's beef and by-product exports exceeded USD 2.7 billion, accounting for almost 20% of the country's total goods exports.

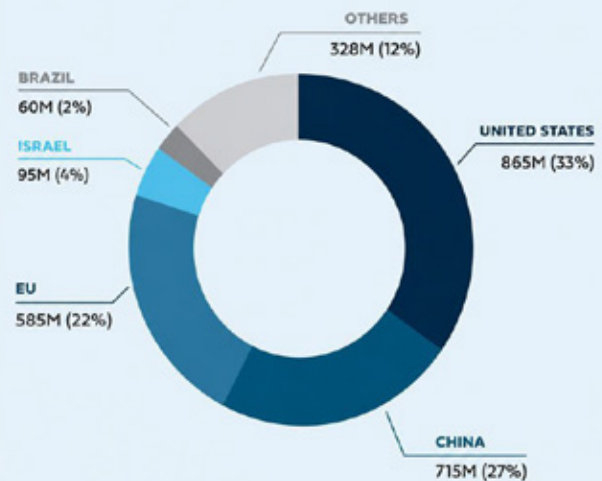
Herd facts and figures³

- ▶ Around 49,800 farms are involved in the cattle industry. More than half are family farms.
- ▶ There are 11.5 million head of cattle and 4.8 million head of sheep in our country.
- ▶ This represents more than 3 cattle per capita.
- ▶ More than 90% of the entire herd is destined to meat production. The most popular breeds are Hereford and Angus.
- ▶ Each cattle has 1 hectare to roam.
- ▶ Hormone and antibiotic use as growth promoters are forbidden by law since 1962 and 2011, respectively.
- ▶ According to FAO, Uruguay is the country with the largest share of agricultural land worldwide. More than 90% of the surface has agricultural use.

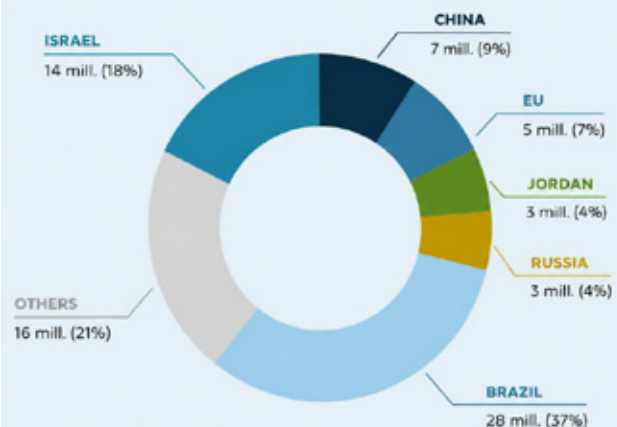
People in the industry⁴

- ▶ Around 82,000 people are employed in the red meat industry, including on-farm production, processing, and associated services.

2025 Uruguay's beef exports by country



2025 Uruguay's sheepmeat exports by country





Commercialization

- ▶ Uruguay produces around 635,000 tons CWE of beef per year.
- ▶ Most of the cattle is pasture-raised and grass-fed. Less than 20% of all cattle processed is produced under grain-finished system (120 days – short fed).
- ▶ Around 13,000 tons CWE⁵ of sheep meat is commercialized between domestic market and exports.

Domestic value and consumption

- ▶ Uruguayans ate 100.5 kg of meat on average during 2025.
- ▶ Beef consumption represented 49% of the total consumed meat.

Export value and volume

- ▶ Uruguay exports around 80% of its total beef production to more than 45 countries, considering the European Union as a single unit.
- ▶ Uruguay has sanitary access to more than three quarters of the importing market. This means that the country is one of the top 5 countries in this metric. Uruguayan beef is mainly imported by the most sophisticated markets, including: United States / Japan / Korea / European Union / Switzerland / China.
- ▶ Almost 85% of sheep meat is exported to more than 25 countries, considering the European Union as a single unit.

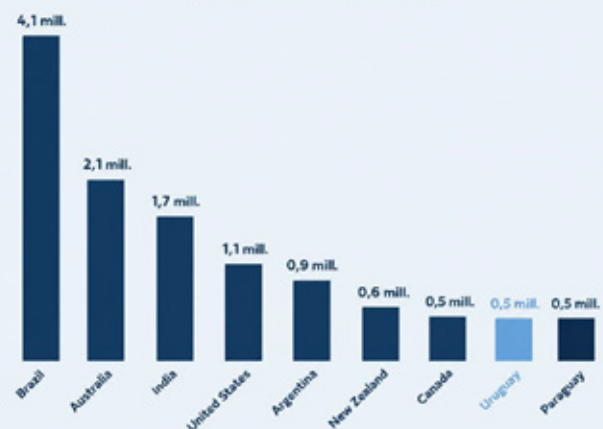
Sources

- 1.Data up to 2025 unless otherwise stated. Data source is INAC unless otherwise stated.
- 2.Source: INAC, Uruguay XXI.
- 3.Source: Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP).
- 4.Source: MGAP.
- 5.Carcass Weight Equivalent (CWE).

2025 Beef exports / Production ratio
by country



Top ten beef exporting countries
(thousand tons CWE)





Uruguay
Meats

inac
Instituto Nacional de Carnes

ACCESS TO +90 MARKETS WORLDWIDE



ACCESS TO
DEMANDING AND
PREMIUM MARKETS



+45
EXPORT-APPROVED
PLANTS



RECOGNIZED
ANIMAL HEALTH
STATUS



URUGUAYAN BEEF: MAIN EXPORT MARKETS

(SHARE OF EXPORT VALUE, 2025)



5%
CHINA



6%
UNITED STATES



14%
EUROPEAN UNION

Sustainability

Sustainable Production System



NATURAL GRASSLANDS

More than +80% of
Uruguay's agricultural
land consists of natural
grasslands.



GRASS-FED PRODUCTION

Most cattle are raised on
pasture under extensive
production systems.



CERTIFIED PROGRAMS

Natural Beef, Grass Fed,
Organic and Carbon
Neutral production
programs.

Traceability

- Mandatory by law for all cattle in Uruguay.
- Every animal is identified with a unique number and tracked throughout its entire life.
- All movements and records are registered in the national SNIG database.



BIRTH



IDENTIFICATION



FARM



MOVEMENT



PROCESSING
PLANT



EXPORT