

A publication of the Market Information Service (MIS) - Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries  
"Linking the market and Primary producers"

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## Pig Production



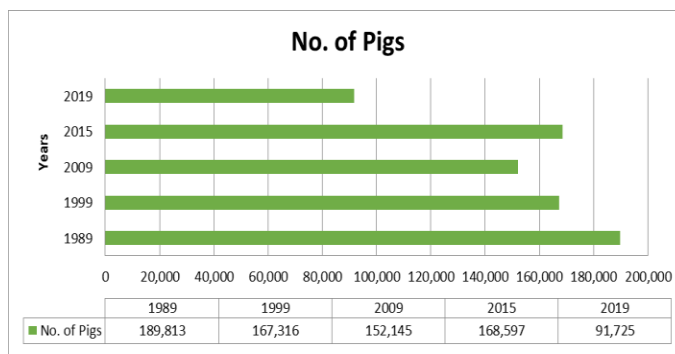
Pigs are considered as a reliable source of animal protein in households of the Pacific. In Samoa, pigs are important for high cultural and traditional values, being raised particularly for rituals and traditional obligations. Pig farming also serves as an additional source of income and consumption.

<sup>1</sup>In the Census 2019-2020, there were 91,725 pigs recorded in Samoa, it is a big decline of more than forty percent compared to 2015 Agriculture Survey.

<sup>1</sup> Samoa Agriculture Census 2019

Apia Urban Area, North West of Upolu and Rest of Upolu regions showed decreases in the number of pigs between 2015 and 2019, Savaii recorded an increase of 7 percent over this period. The number of pigs kept in the past census years show decreases in the number of pigs kept in all regions and consequently a decrease in the count of pigs nationally.

Figure 1: Number of Pigs recorded in Agriculture



Census 1989, 1999, 2009 & 2019 Agriculture Survey in 2015

**Source:** Samoa Agriculture Census 2019

Consumer preference of local over imported pork is largely due to the Samoan habit of roasting 25 kg weaned pigs (size 2), for which a strong demand exists, are profitable to produce at relatively low cost, and are widely available.

## Local Production

<sup>2</sup>The pig population in Samoa consists of 57 percent piglets, 19 percent male adults and 24 percent female adults. This composition is consistent in all four regions. A figure of more than a half for piglet numbers is a healthy sign and in the absence of any

<sup>2</sup> Samoa Agriculture Census 2019

major disease outbreak, pig farming is likely to be able to be sustained into the future.

<sup>3</sup>According to the Agriculture census 2019 recorded that majority of households raising pigs or pig farmers, have free range pigs of more than 60%, compared with 36% of households enclosed lands for their piggery farms. Savaii has greater access to customary land and is less populated, which provide more land for pig raising. In Census 2019, less than quarter of pig disposal involved sales. More than 60 percent were for customary purposes for the household or for household consumption. This reflects the importance of the pigs to the national diet. Of pigs' sales, 63 percent consists of sales of slaughtered animals and 37 percent was the sale of live animals.

The 24,653 pigs sold during the twelve months to October 2015 earned a total income of SAT\$ 3.3 million. Households selling pigs earned an average of SAT\$ 853 from these sales.<sup>4</sup>

Virtually all pigs in Samoa are of the indigenous breed and are kept under free range scavenging conditions. The average pig-owning household keeps 5-10 breeding sows supplemented by coconuts, cassava feed or household wastes for pig feeding.

Although no serious infectious pig diseases currently exist in Samoa, piglet mortality can still range up to almost 50 percent due to exposure and poor nutrition. This mortality could be lowered by constructing small enclosures that can only be entered by piglets so they can be fed small amounts of creep feed, out of bounds to adult pigs. If pig production was to be intensified and piglet mortality reduced, smallholder pig production could be quite profitable. The introduction of exotic breeds is also a good possibility, but should proceed gradually and would necessarily involve greatly improved feeding, including the use of compound feeds. The extra cost of feed must then be offset by improved productivity

and higher quality meat from improved slaughter and carcass chilling, in order to fetch higher prices.

## African Swine Fever (ASF)

African swine fever (ASF) is a highly contagious hemorrhagic viral disease of domestic and wild pigs, which is responsible for serious economic and production losses. Symptoms include fever, loss of appetite, lack of energy, abortions, internal bleeding, with hemorrhages visible on the ears and flanks.

ASF originally started in Africa in the 1920s but since 2007, the disease has steadily spread in Asia and Europe. The disease became viral around countries early this year and Samoa was cautious and vigilant to prevent entering in the country.

Although it's not a risk to human health but can be spread by live or dead pigs, domestic or wild, and pork product; furthermore, transmission can also occur via contaminated feed and fomites (non-living objects) such as shoes, clothes, knives and other equipment due to the high environmental resistance of ASF virus. Currently, there is no approved vaccine for the virus but the only way to stop spreading is to slaughter the infected animal.

Prevention in countries free of the disease depends on implementation of appropriate import policies and Biosecurity measures, ensuring that neither infected live pigs nor pork products are introduced into areas free of ASF. This includes ensuring proper disposal of waste food from aircraft, ships or vehicles coming from affected countries and policing illegal imports of live pigs and pork products from affected countries.

Despite Samoa being marked safe from the deadly virus, MAF has declared a temporary banning of the importation and sale of pork and pork products sourced from countries affected by ASF. PNG is the only infected Pacific country so far.

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<sup>3</sup> Agriculture survey 2015

<sup>4</sup> Samoa Agriculture Survey 2015

## Price

In the month of February 2020, the average farm gate price for local pork carcass sold at retailers is \$8.00 per kg accumulated total revenue of \$14,624SAT. Compared to February 2019, current farm gate price is higher while its total revenue also increases due to high number of carcasses selling.

Figure 2: Number of carcasses and farm gate price of pork sold to local retails from Feb-19 to Feb-20

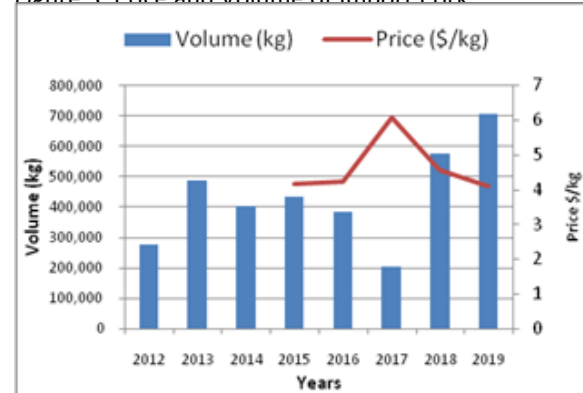


Source: MAF Statistics Unit

During the year 2019, October scored the highest total revenue earning \$17,198SAT due to White Sunday annual event.

Though Samoa pork imports fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to increase in 2018 and continues to rise further in 2019 as shown in Figure 3 below. Australia, USA and New Zealand are the major import countries of pork.

Figure 3: Price and Volume of Import Pork



Source: MAF Statistics Unit

With an increasing local supply of pigs of higher carcass merit compared to the current situation, consumers will have the option to purchase larger, more frequently available pork cuts and ground, lean pork incorporated in sausage. As is the case with beef, domestically produced pork would be fresh, more widely available, and hygienically slaughtered.

## Pork Value Chain

The vast majority of pork is produced locally, from scavenging pigs. These are slaughtered on farm and transported un-chilled to stores and supermarkets where they are hung with beef sides in chill rooms until cut up for sale. This meat is consumed almost entirely by Samoan consumers, with imported pork channeled to the tourist hotel and restaurant trade. Full-sized roasted pigs are still offered as *fa'alavelave* but their use for this cultural event has declined, in favor of the more prestigious beef. A direct marketing link exists between producers and consumers, involving the sale of 25 kg weaned pigs or locally known as size 2, which are pit-roasted for consumption at family occasions, weekend parties and other festivities. Size 2 pigs sell at high prices (\$8.00/kg), are in high demand, and therefore very profitable to produce.

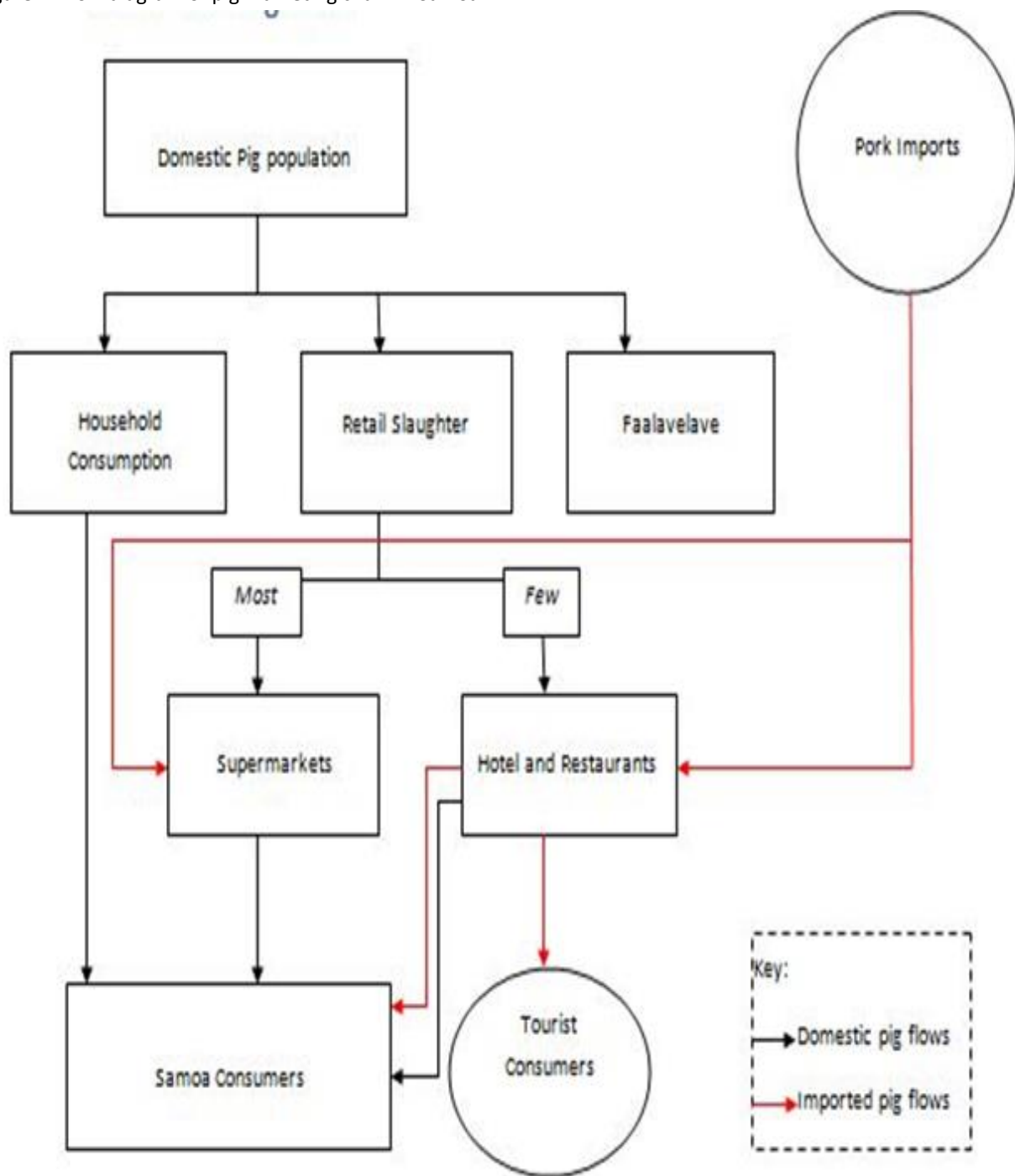
Even though local pork is popular with local consumers, the productivity of indigenous pigs remains low. Adult weights are small (60-70 kg) and growth rates are slow, resulting from the energy

expended in scavenging for low-quality forage, plant materials and breadfruit. Pigs are easily rounded up for transportation to the abattoir, and the transportation logistics encountered with cattle should not pose a problem. However, since pigs are kept by rural households often without transportation, and since the marketing of indigenous pigs is mostly a direct consumer-to-producer transaction, getting indigenous pigs to enter the slaughter chain would be difficult. This should change once the number of crossbred, housed pigs increases.

## Pig Marketing Chain

Figure 4 shows the flow diagram of pig marketing chain from suppliers to consumers. The flows demonstrate the dual tracks for imported and domestically produced product.

Figure 4: Flow diagram of pig marketing chain in Samoa



## Average Prices at the Fugalei Market

Commodities (SAT\$/kg)	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Lowest Price for 2020 to date	Highest Price for 2020 to date
Taro	2.60	2.41	2.41	2.60
Banana	1.05	1.11	1.05	1.11
Ta'amu	8.78	6.91	6.91	8.78
Coconut	0.98	0.89	0.89	0.98
Breadfruit	1.12	0.90	0.90	1.12
Yam	5.30	4.28	4.28	5.30
Head Cabbage	9.02	12.11	9.02	12.11
Tomato	14.82	19.92	14.82	19.92
Chinese Cabbage	7.67	8.91	7.67	8.91
Cucumber	4.45	5.55	4.45	5.55
Pumpkin	3.56	4.43	3.56	4.43

*Source: Samoa Bureau of Statistics-Local market survey*

## Foreign Currency per Tala (SAT\$)

Jan-Feb 2020	USD\$	NZD\$	AUD\$	YEN\$	FJD\$	EURO
1 Samoan Tala SAT\$=	0.3601	0.5665	0.5472	39.0600	0.7870	0.3215

*Source: Bank of South Pacific*

## Market Link Newsletter

This newsletter is published bi-monthly and it seeks to assist stakeholders (farmers, consumers, wholesalers, policymakers) make informed market and marketing decisions based on credible, relevant price and supply information. Help us help you by providing constructive feedback on market information issues that will improve the service which will lead to growing a healthy and wealthy Samoa. For more information, contact the Policy, Planning and Communication Division and ask for Losan Madar.

## Disclaimer

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