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Report Highlights:

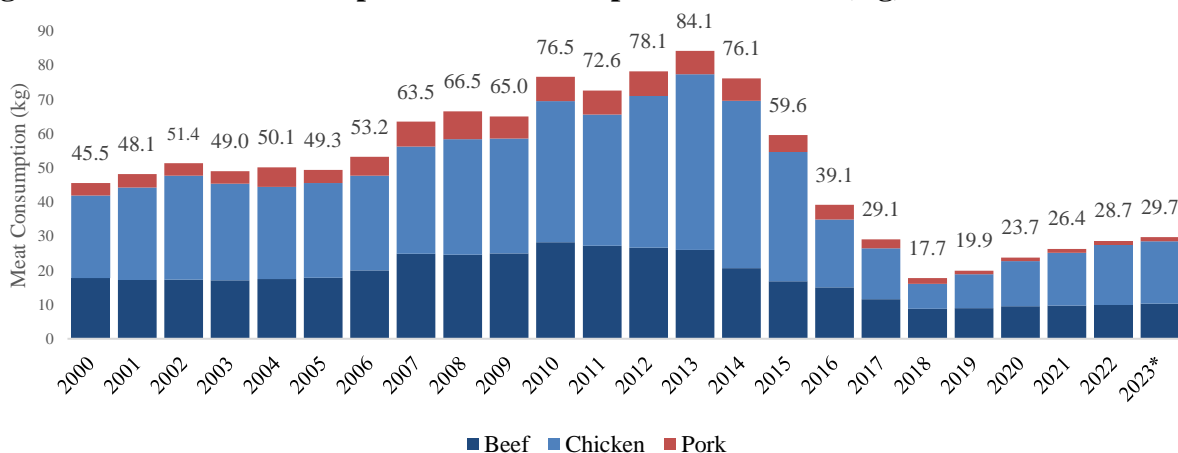
Since 2013, Venezuela's total meat consumption has declined 66 percent due to prolonged economic collapse. However, since 2019, an improved economic environment has led to stabilized beef production and significant growth in the poultry sector. For 2023, FAS Caracas (Post) estimates Venezuela's beef production to reach 273,000 metric tons (MT) a 2 percent growth year-on-year. Poultry meat production is forecast to grow 3 percent to 469,000 MT, the lowest growth rate since 2018. Pork production in the outyear is projected to reach 31,100 MT, a three percent year-on-year growth. Local production continues to supply most of Venezuela's meat supply, with chicken as the only major import category. For 2023, Post estimates poultry meat imports at 14,400 MT, a 21 percent decline from 2022.

Overview of Overall Meat Production and Consumption in Venezuela

Prior to the economic collapse in 2015, Venezuela maintained a modern meat industry that satisfied domestic demand through both local production and imports. According to Post sources, between 2000-2009, Venezuela’s average per capita meat consumption was 54.1 kilograms (kg), composed of chicken (29.1 kg, 53.7 percent share), beef (19.9 kg, 36.8 percent), and pork (5.2 kg, 9.5 percent) (Figure 1). By 2013, per capita meat consumption in Venezuela reached a record high of 84.1 kg, on account of increased imports and higher purchasing power (Table 1). The sector rapidly declined in 2014 due to the economic meltdown, which included a steady loss of purchasing power due to hyperinflation, and a precipitous drop in meat domestic meat production and imports. Between 2013-2022, Venezuela meat consumption decreased by 66 percent.¹

Since 2019, a slightly favorable economic environment stabilized domestic beef production and supported a significant increase in poultry production, albeit at moderately low levels. Pork production has remained stagnant. Lifting price controls in 2019 and reduced market distortions led to adjustments in meat prices based on market conditions. Between 2019 and 2023, the price of chicken increased by 56 percent, beef by 104 percent, and pork by 244 percent (Figure 2). In 2022, total per capita meat consumption reached approximately 28.7 kg, growing 62 percent from its record low in 2017. Chicken production is one of Venezuela's most affordable animal protein sources, as the industry assiduously invests in its operations, and has created an enabling environment for growth in response to domestic demand. Still, restoring Venezuelan meat consumption to its historical (pre-crisis) highs will require substantial and sustained economic growth, increased imports, expanded food subsidies, and major improvements in consumer purchasing power.²

Figure 1. Venezuela: Per Capita Meat Consumption 2000–2023 (Kg)



Data Source: Venezuelan livestock and poultry industry; not official USDA data. *Forecast

¹ In 2018, meat consumption would hit a historical low of 17.7 kg, a 79 percent decline from 2013.

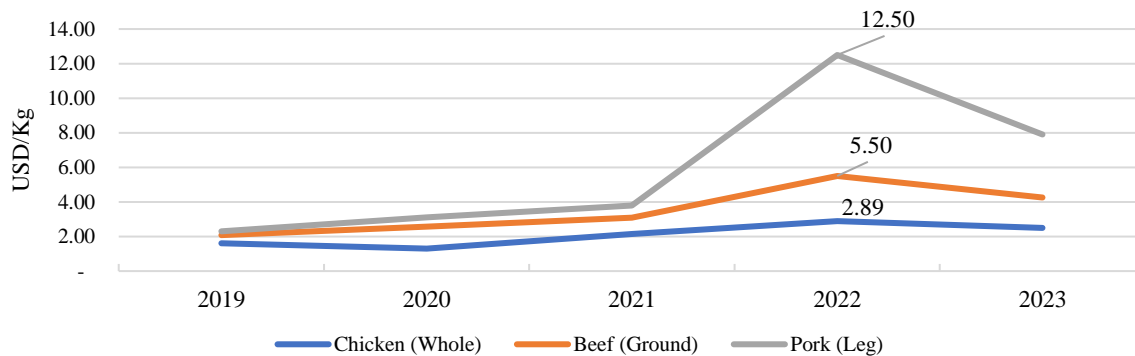
² Meat consumption could potentially increase through the Comité Local de Abastecimiento y Producción, (CLAP) food subsidy program or cash transfers. However, current economic conditions suggest that increased consumption is unlikely in the near term.

Table 1. Venezuela: Per Capita Meat Consumption, 2013 vs. 2023 (Kg)

Year	Beef	Chicken	Pork	Total
2013	26.0	51.4	6.8	84.1
2023	10.3	18.2	1.2	29.7
Change (kg)	(15.7)	(33.2)	(5.6)	(54.4)
Change (%)	(60.4)	(64.6)	(82.4)	(64.7)

Date Source: Venezuelan livestock and poultry industry; not official USDA data.

Figure 2. Average Chicken, Beef and Pork Prices, 2019 –2023 (USD \$/Kg)



Date Source: Venezuelan livestock and poultry industry; not official USDA data.

Beef

Industry Overview

Venezuela’s primary livestock production systems include non-specialized beef operations, dual-purpose operations (milk/cheese and beef), and a small, specialized milk production sector. All systems supply animals to the beef industry to varying degrees. Post estimates the 2022 herd size at around 12 million head, spread over approximately 100,000 farms.³ Total potential area for cattle production is about 30 million hectares, of which about 10 million hectares (33 percent) are currently utilized.

Production

Beef production in 2023 is forecast at 272,519 MT, a 2 percent year-on-year increase (Table 2). This low growth is in part attributed to the economic slowdown and accelerating inflation since the last quarter of 2022, and affected purchasing power and the loss of price competitiveness compared to other animal protein sources, particularly poultry meat.

In 2022, local beef production was estimated at 267,175 MT, declining 2.5 percent from the previous year. Although the Venezuelan economy grew by 8 percent that year, the increase in meat consumption was driven mainly by poultry due to its price competitiveness. In 2019, domestic beef production stabilized at around 260,000 MT per year after a decade of rapidly

³ In the absence of official data, figures derived from local industry sources.

declining output due to the scarcity of essential inputs, blackouts, fuel shortages, and hyperinflation.⁴

Table 2. Venezuela: Beef Production, Imports, and Per Capita Availability, 2010–2023 (Thousand Metric Tons [TMT], Carcass Weight Equivalent [CWE])

Year	Production	Imports #	Total	Per Capita Availability
2010	528	277	804	28.2
2011	567	220	787	27.2
2012	525	257	782	26.6
2013	501	273	773	26.0
2014	445	179	624	20.7
2015	370	144	514	16.8
2016	369	92	461	15.0
2017	338	16	353	11.6
2018	250	4	254	8.8
2019	252	0	252	9.0
2020	239	0	239	9.5
2021	274	0	274	9.7
2022	267	0	267	10.0
2023*	273	1	274	10.3

Data Sources: Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry, Trade Data Monitor; not Official USDA Data. * Projected # Includes beef and live cattle.

Table 3. Slaughter of National and Imported Live Cattle, 2010–2023 (Thousand Head)

Year	National Slaughter	Imported Live Cattle	Total
2010	2,224	669	2,894
2011	2,372	350	2,721
2012	2,254	498	2,751
2013	2,164	568	2,733
2014	1,962	479	2,441
2015	1,547	127	1,673
2016	1,601	20	1,621
2017	1,415	10	1,425
2018	1,131	0	1,131
2019	1,119	0	1,119
2020	1,110	0	1,110
2021	1,313	0	1,313
2022	1,266	0	1,266
2023*	1,285	0	1,285

Data Source: Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry; not Official USDA Data. *Forecast Year.

⁴ This stabilization corresponds to tacit, economic liberalization, allowing a slight recovery in prices and purchasing power. It was also influenced by Venezuela’s ban on subsidized live cattle and beef imports in 2016. See, USDA GAIN: Venezuela Livestock and Products Annual [VE2022-0028](#).

Price

Since the second half of 2019, a de facto dollarization of the Venezuelan economy has led to most live cattle sales and beef retail priced in dollars (or equivalent in local currency). By 2020, live cattle and beef carcass prices began to rise due to the deregulation of government price controls and price increases in other competing meats. From December 2020 to August 2023, the cost of beef carcasses increased by 69 percent (Table 4).

Table 4. Venezuela: Average Beef Carcass Price (CWE) 2013–2023 (USD/Kg)

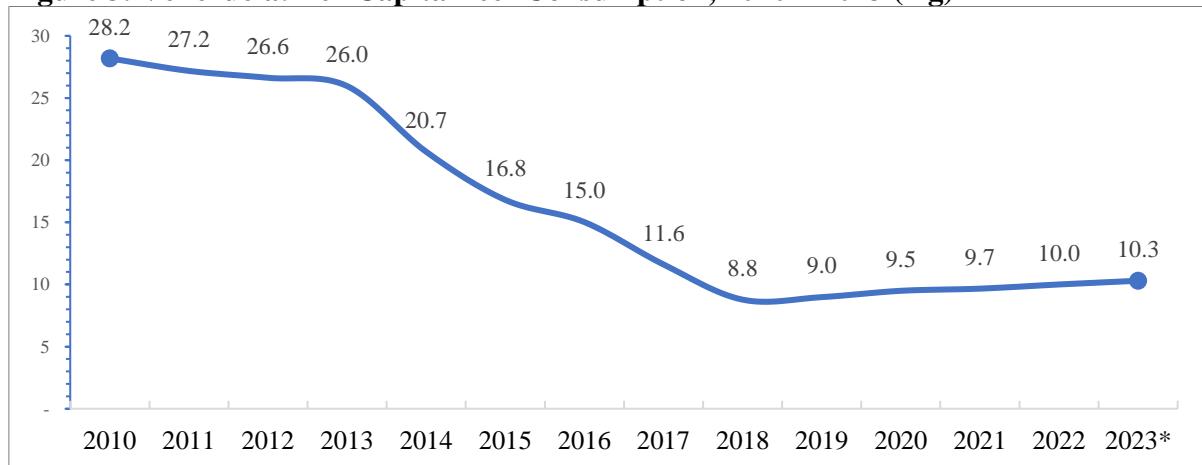
2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
0.86	1.10	0.91	1.03	0.90	0.75	1.04	1.82	2.47	3.20	3.08

Data Source: Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry. *January-August

Consumption

Post forecasts 2023 per capita beef consumption at 10.3 kg, largely unchanged from last year (Figure 3). Although local production has been relatively stable since 2021, the shrinking Venezuelan population due to wholesale migration is influencing a modest growth in beef availability. As one of Venezuela's traditional animal protein sources, beef is the second most-consumed type of meat after chicken. Beef consumption peaked in 2010 when it reached 28.2 kg per person but began to decline significantly from 2013 onward while reaching a record low in 2018 (8.8 kg/person). The accelerated loss of purchasing power has been the main factor in the reduction in beef consumption.⁵

Figure 3. Venezuela: Per Capita Beef Consumption, 2010 – 2023 (Kg)



Data Source: Venezuelan Livestock Industry; not Official USDA Data. *Projected

⁵ While beef consumption has recently grown due to a modest recovery of purchasing power and lower inflation, it remains near historic lows.

Trade

After beef imports accounted for close to 30 percent of total availability in 2015, Venezuela almost completely stopped importing beef in 2019 due to collapsing domestic demand and is not expected to resume imports in the short term.

U.S. beef and products are not eligible for export to Venezuela (beginning in 2013) due to the regime's stated regulatory concerns about bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). The ban continues despite the World Organization for Animal Health's negligible BSE risk classification for the United States. Previously, in 2016, a bilateral trade protocol for importing U.S. live cattle for breeding was finalized, eliminating all BSE trade restrictions for U.S. live cattle. The last shipment of U.S. cattle to Venezuela occurred in 2017.⁶ In 2022, Venezuela imported 73,000 doses of bovine semen, of which 60,000 doses consisted of American genetics of Holstein, Brown Swiss, Jersey, Brahman, and Angus breeds.⁷

Beginning September 2020, the Venezuelan private sector began exporting live cattle to Egypt, totaling around 150,000 head valued at \$75 million. In November 2021, the regime suspended live cattle exports, arguing that exports caused beef prices to increase by more than 77 percent. Live cattle exports have since remained prohibited.

Poultry Meat

Industry Overview

The Venezuelan poultry industry is comprised of around 30 medium- to large-scale private companies producing both chicken meat and eggs. Most companies are associated with the national poultry federation, (Federación Nacional de Avicultura de Venezuela, or FENAVI). In general, poultry operations are vertically integrated and control all phases of the production chain, including feed mills, breeding farms, hatcheries, production sheds or poultry farms, slaughterhouses, processing plants, and product distribution. The industry maintains productivity standards that compare to other South American poultry industries.

While broilers are grown nationwide, production is clustered in Venezuela's central and western regions, located near primary consumer regions. The largest poultry-producing states include Aragua, Carabobo, and Zulia, representing about 60 percent of the country's broiler and egg production. Typically, broilers are slaughtered after a grow-out period of 40-42 days and reach a 2.1-kilogram average weight. The average daily weight gain is approximately 51.5 grams, with a 1.8 feed conversation ratio.⁸

For 2022, Post estimates that Venezuela's poultry industry (both meat and egg production) required 962,000 MT of yellow corn and 450,000 MT of soybean meal for its operations. Of

⁶ Due to their high relative cost compared to the importation of bovine semen and embryos of high genetic value, live cattle imports for reproduction purposes are only economically viable in Venezuela. See, GAIN VE2022-0028.

⁷ See, GAIN: The Bovine Genetics Market in Venezuela [VE2023-0014](#).

⁸ The weight of feed intake divided by weight gained by the animal.

these figures, the United States was the sole supplier of soybean meal, while approximately 45-50 percent of yellow corn was derived from the United States, Brazil, and Argentina. Predicting a 3.4 percent growth in chicken meat production and an 11 percent growth in egg production, Post forecasts that the Venezuelan poultry industry in 2023 will require approximately 994,000 MT of yellow corn and 465,000 MT of soybean meal for feed operations.

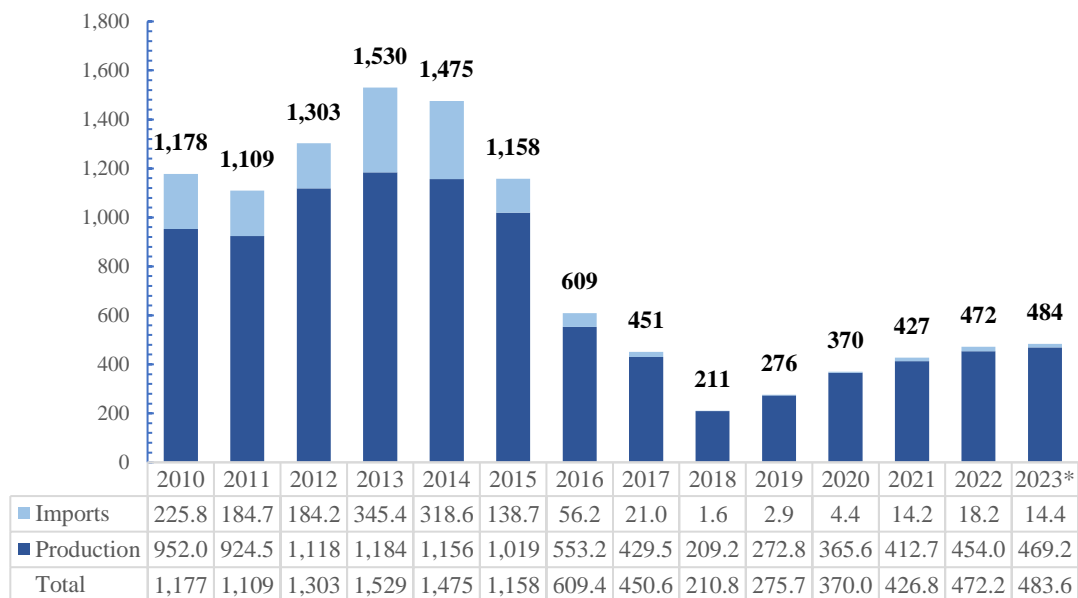
In December 2022, the Venezuelan regime declared a sanitary alert due to the confirmation of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in wild birds (pelicans) in five coastal states. To date, no cases of HPAI have been reported in Venezuelan commercial poultry farms.

Production

Venezuela poultry production in 2023 is forecast at 469,262 MT, a 3.4 percent increase from 2022 (Figure 4). Despite the industry’s growth of more than 30 percent in 2019-2020, and more than 10 percent in 2021-2022, the sector in the outyear will instead decelerate due to economic downturn, rebounding inflation, and reduced consumer purchasing power. From January-June 2023, average monthly chicken meat production reached 39,105 MT, a 3.1 percent increase year-on-year. According to the Venezuelan poultry industry, chicken meat production in 2022 was 453,979 MT, 10 percent higher year-on-year, and 117 percent greater than historical lows in 2018.

Despite a substantial contraction between 2015-2018, the poultry industry has maintained a relatively quick recovery capacity, given recover in production from 2018 onward. Major poultry companies are investing in new facilities and equipment, with the expectation of a more stable economic environment. Industry sources expect that poultry meat and eggs will remain the most affordable animal protein sources in Venezuela.

Figure 4. Venezuela Poultry Meat Production and Imports, 2010-2023 (TMT)



Source: Venezuelan Poultry Industry, Trade Data Monitor; not Official USDA Data. *Projected

Price

Since 2019, poultry meat has improved its price competitiveness against beef, the primary alternative animal protein category in Venezuela. Up to 2018, the shortage of poultry meat and the removal of import subsidies in raw materials for animal feed created an atypical market scenario where beef was priced higher than poultry. Implicit economic liberalization and reduced market distortions have since supported higher beef prices and stabilized poultry prices, to which chicken is presently the cheapest animal protein available in the market (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. August 2023 Average Retail Price of Meats (USD/Kg)

Chicken (Whole)	Chicken (Breast)	Beef (High Quality)	Beef (Ground)	Pork (Chops)	Pork (Leg)
2.49	4.35	9.85	4.25	6.90	7.90

Data Source: Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry, FAS Research; not Official USDA Data.

Table 6. Average Retail Price of Chicken (Whole), 2017-2023 (USD/Kg)

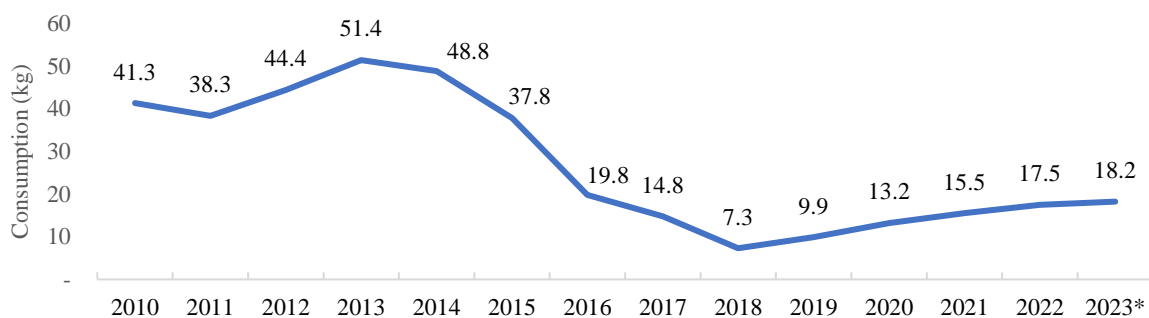
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023*
1.40	2.20	1.60	1.30	2.15	2.89	2.49

Data Source: FAS Research; not Official USDA Data. *January-August.

Consumption

Post forecasts 2023 poultry per capita consumption to reach 18.2 kg, a 4 percent increase from 2022 (Figure 5). Consumption bottomed out in 2018 (7.3 kg) but with significant market improvement five years later. Consumption recovery is attributable to the increase in domestic supply, improved purchasing power, and competitive prices compared to other meats. For poultry, Venezuela's consumption ratio consists of 80 percent whole chicken and 20 percent for cuts (i.e., breast, leg and quarters, and wings).

Figure 5. Per Capita Poultry Meat Consumption 2010–2023 (Kg)



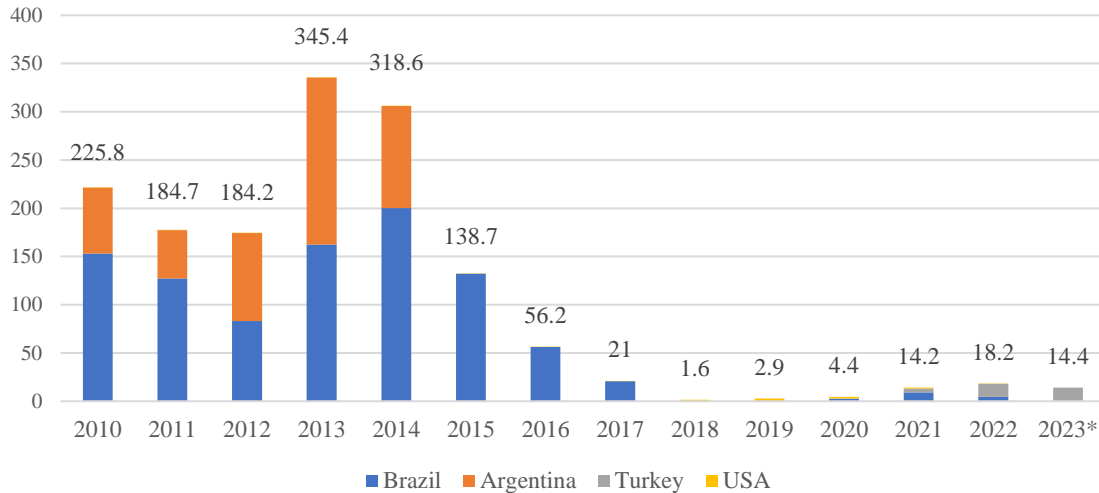
Data Source: Venezuelan Poultry Industry; not Official USDA Data. *Projected

Trade

For 2023, Venezuela poultry meat imports are forecast at 14,400 MT, a 21 percent decline year-on-year due to flat consumer demand and competitive domestic production prices. Imports of poultry and products account for 3 percent of total availability, as Venezuela will

still primarily rely on local production. Poultry meat imports peaked in 2013 at 345,413 MT, but the 2015 economic collapse drastically reduced trade, where imports would bottom out at 1,600 MT in 2018 (Figure 6).⁹

Figure 6. Venezuela Poultry Meat Imports by Origin, 2015-2023 (TMT)



Data Source: Trade Data Monitor. *Projected

Since December 2021, U.S. chilled/frozen poultry has been eligible for export to Venezuela. Cooked U.S. poultry products to Venezuela remain eligible for export.

Pork

Industry Overview

The Venezuelan pork industry is comprised of approximately ten medium-scale to large-scale private companies producing pork and pork products using modern production methods. Some of these companies maintain both pork and poultry production, and utilize similar, vertically integrated operating standards which controls all phases of production and marketing. Products such as hams, sausages, and cured meats are the chief produced cuts. Most commercial swine operations and processing industries are clustered in the states of Carabobo, Aragua, Cojedes, and Zulia, although numerous informal operations are dispersed throughout the country.

Production

Post forecasts 2023 Venezuelan pork production at 31,100 MT, a 3 percent increase over 2022. This lower production growth is mostly attributed to weak price competitiveness compared against other animal protein sources, particularly poultry. According to the Venezuelan livestock industry, 2022 pork production totaled about 30,200 MT, an 84 percent decline from the 193,966 MT achieved in 2010. Pork production reached an all-time low in

⁹ Despite a general trade recovery in 2022 (18,200 MT), Venezuela’s poultry imports are still significantly distant from the 2013 highs.

2019 (27,144 MT); although the sector has since stabilized, its recovery has been insignificant compared to the growth in poultry production.

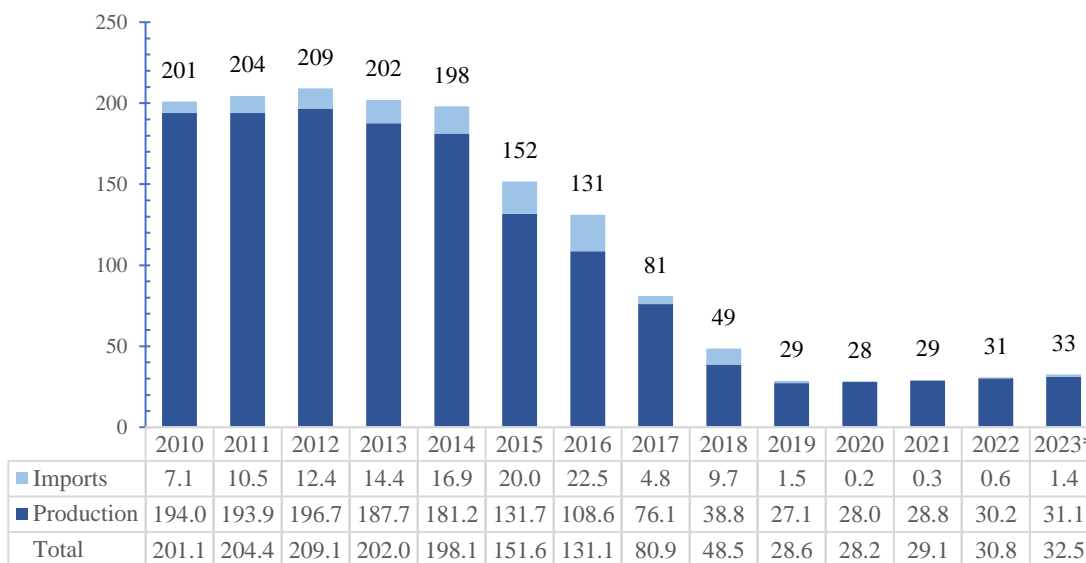
Consumption

Per capita pork consumption for 2023 is forecast at 1.2 kg, mostly unchanged from last year, and no significant recovery is expected in the short term. Although growth in production and imports have been weak since 2019, the shrinking Venezuelan population is influencing a slight growth in average product availability. Pork consumption last peaked in 2008 at 8.1 kg per person. The primary constraint to pork consumption growth remains the high price relative to chicken and beef.¹⁰

Trade

For 2023, pork imports are forecast at 1,368 MT, a 147 percent increase from 2022 (Figure 7). From January-July 2023, the United States has exported 165 MT of pork products, valued at \$920,000. Pork imports consist mainly of high-value products such as ribs, hams, and deli meats, mostly targeted to higher-income consumers. Pork product imports peaked in 2016 at 22,541 MT, accounting for 21 percent of total availability. Since that period, imports have notably declined, totaling only 555 MT in 2022, which accounted for less than 2 percent of total availability. U.S. chilled/frozen pork meat is eligible for export to Venezuela.

Figure 7. Venezuela Pork Production and Imports 2010–2023 (TMT CWE)

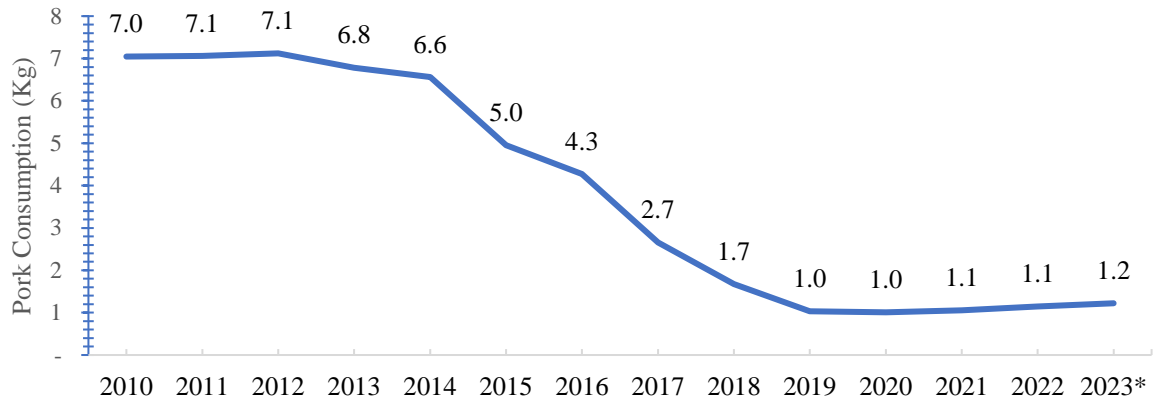


Data Sources: Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry, Trade Data Monitor; not Official USDA Data.

*Projected

¹⁰ In August 2023, pork chops (\$6.90/kg) were 62 percent more expensive than ground beef (\$4.25/kg) and 177 percent more expensive than whole chicken (\$2.49/kg) (Average prices in major metropolitan areas).

Figure 8. Venezuela Per Capita Pork Consumption 2010–2023 (Kg)



Data Source: Venezuelan Livestock Industry; not Official USDA Data. *Projected

For more information on how to export U.S. pork or poultry to Venezuela, see: [USDA-FSIS Export Library](#), [FAS 2023 Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Report](#), and [2023 FAIRS Certificate Report](#).

Attachments:

No Attachments