

The Spanish meat sector: the strongest in the food processing industry

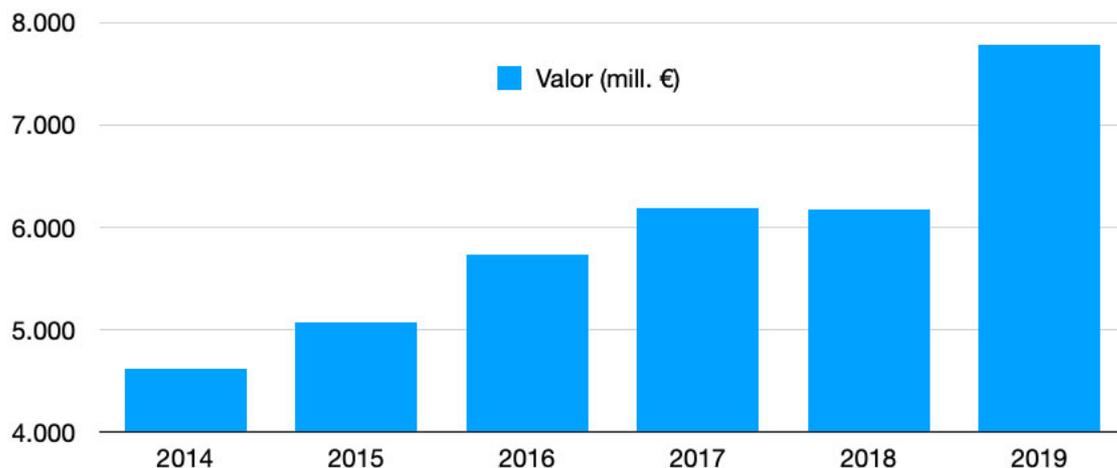
With an annual turnover of nearly 26.9 billion euros, the Spanish meat industry, which employs more than 97,000 people, boasts the strongest position in the Spanish food sector, and ranks fourth among the country's industrial activities.

More than 3,700 companies work in the Spanish meat sector including abattoirs, cutting plants, processing and packing industries, ham drying rooms, etc. By and large they are located in rural areas, helping to consolidate the population of small towns and villages. Their body of shareholders are often members of the same family, although there are also labels that are well known within the European meat industry.

Another point of interest regarding the Spanish meat sector is the extent of exports. In 2019 Spain exported 2.71 million t of meat, meat products and meat by-products for a turnover of 7.584 billion euros.

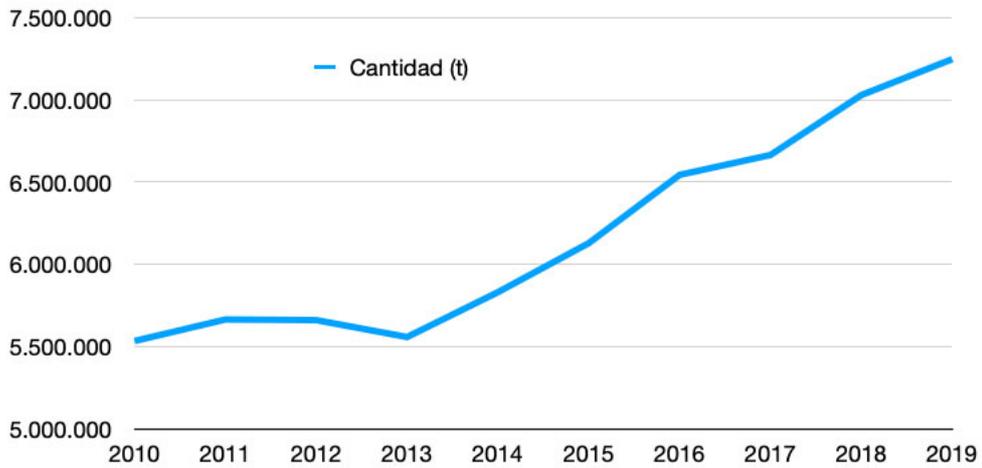
Pork exports accounted for the largest percentage of the total, with 1.72 million t and a value of 4.582 billion euros in 2019, for an increase of 34.4% in value and 13.1% in exported tons as compared to the previous year. The majority of Spanish meat sales remain within the European Union, with France, Germany, Portugal and Italy representing the top buyers of Spanish meat and meat products, although sales to third countries are increasing on a yearly basis.

To give a better idea of the growth of meat exports, we can say that the 2015 export value stood at 5.071 billion euros, for a 65% increase over the last five years.

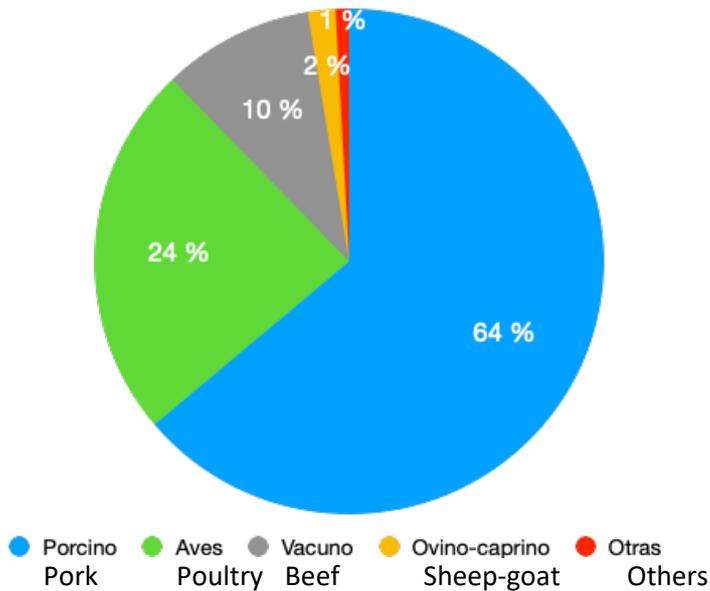


Recent years have registered a strong growth in pork exports to China following the outbreaks of African swine fever in the Asian country beginning in mid-2018.

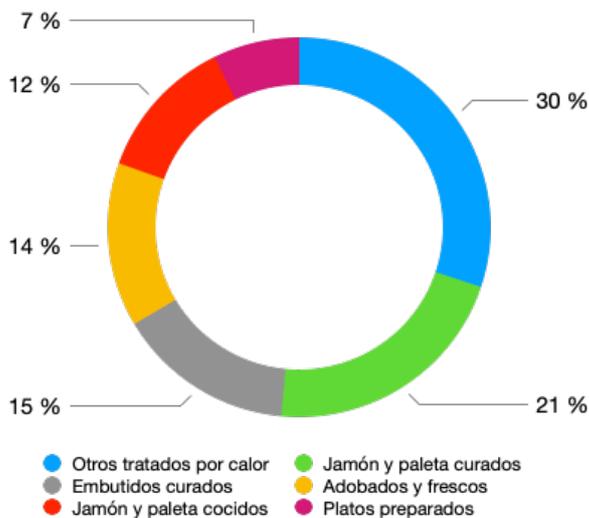
These foreign sales were accompanied by a 3.1% increase in production in 2019, for a total of 7,248,529 t, according to data from the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture.



Spanish meat production is predominantly pork, with 4.62 million t in 2019, an increase of 2.1% over the previous year. Poultry ranks second, with 1.73 million t, followed by beef with 695,939 t and sheep and goat meat with 128,806 t.



The production of Spanish meat products is also significant. With more than 1.4 million tons, Spain ranks as the fourth European producer. In terms of quantity, production is largely cooked/deli meats, while cured ham accounts for the greatest turnover.



Other heat-treated meat products

Cured sausages

Cooked ham

Cured ham

Marinated and fresh

Ready-to-eat

The increase in Spanish meat exports coincided with the creation of inter-professional organizations for the sector midway through the last decade. The mission of Interporc, Provacuno and Interovic is to promote domestic consumption as well as to facilitate the internationalization and diversification of export markets. The inter-professional organizations have promoted the sector at international fairs and launched numerous advertising and communication schemes to publicize the quality of Spanish products.

We can conclude by saying that the challenges faced by the Spanish meat sector are the following: promote domestic consumption, which has been on pause in recent years; achieve continued growth in sales, particularly to third countries; focus on exporting products with a greater added value as a differentiating feature of Spanish products; boost sales in categories such as beef and lamb, which could be present in markets where such products fetch a high price.

An example of this is the recent access to the Japanese market for beef and lamb. The Spanish meat sector is also taking advantage of free trade agreements such as those set in motion by the authorities of Canada and the EU, which will allow a greater contingent of pork exports from Canada to the EU.

In exchange, products in high gastronomical demand, such as Spanish sausages and cured hams, will have easier access to the Canadian market, which will undoubtedly lead to increased sales.

Source: Jesus Cruz, eurocarne

<https://eurocarne.com>

For more information please contact Ms. Paula Verano: paula.verano@eurocarne.com