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## **Report Name:** Livestock and Products Annual

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**Post:** Caracas

**Report Category:** Livestock and Products

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### **Report Highlights:**

Since 2014, Venezuela's total meat consumption has declined 57 percent due to prolonged economic downfall. Nevertheless, since 2019, an improved economic environment has led to stabilized beef production and significant growth in the poultry sector. In 2024, total per capita meat consumption is forecast to be 32.4 kilograms, growing 83 percent from its 2018 record low. For 2024, FAS estimates Venezuela's beef production to reach 293,000 metric tons (MT) a 5 percent growth year-on-year. Poultry meat and pork production in the outyear are forecast at 501,823 and 33,300 MT, respectively, each a 5 percent year-on-year growth. Domestic production continues to supply most of Venezuela's meat supply, with chicken as the only major import category. For 2024, Post estimates poultry meat imports at 27,800 MT, a 43 percent rise from 2023.

## Overview – Meat Production and Consumption in Venezuela

Before the economic collapse in 2015, Venezuela had a modern meat industry that met domestic demand both through local production and imports. Between 2000-2009, Venezuela’s average per capita meat consumption was 54.1 kilograms (kg), consisting 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). In 2013, per capita meat consumption in Venezuela reached a record high of 84.1 kg due to increased imports and higher purchasing power (Table 1). However, beginning in 2014, the sector began to sharply decline due to the economic meltdown, and a steady loss of purchasing power owing to hyperinflation and a sharp drop in domestic meat production and imports. Between 2014 and 2024, meat consumption in Venezuela decreased by 57 percent.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1. Venezuela: Per Capita Meat Consumption, 2014 vs. 2024\* (kg)**

Year	Beef	Chicken	Pork	Total
2014	20.7	48.8	6.6	76.1
2024*	11.1	20.0	1.4	32.4
<b>Change (kg)</b>	(9.6)	(28.8)	(5.2)	(43.6)
<b>Change (%)</b>	(46.4)	(59.0)	(79.4)	(57.4)

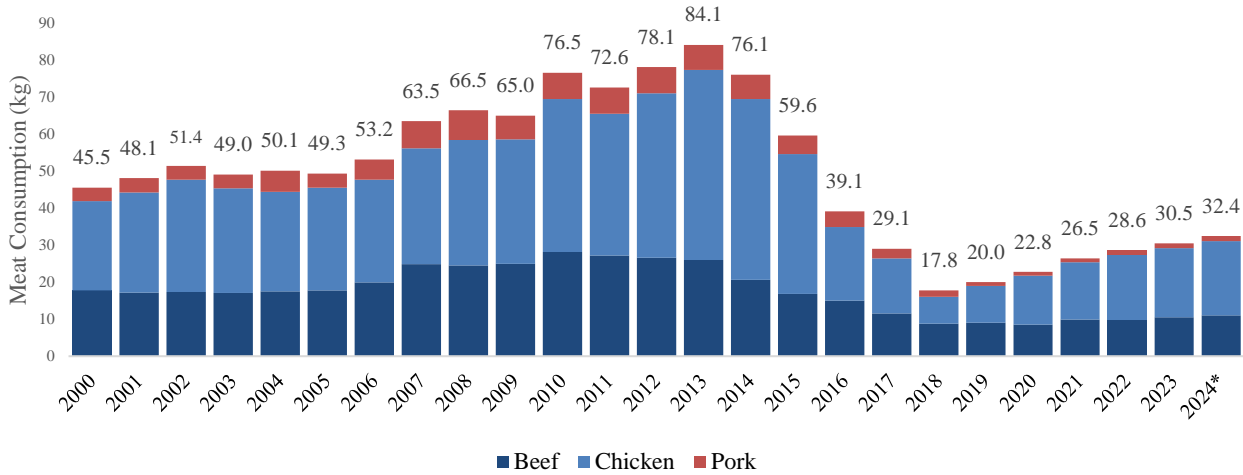
**Data Source:** Venezuelan livestock and poultry industry; not official USDA data. \*Forecast year

Since 2019, an improved economic environment has stabilized domestic beef production and supported a significant increase in poultry production. However, pork production continues to decline. The lifting of price controls in 2019 and reduced market distortions have led to adjustments in meat prices based on market conditions. Between 2019 and 2024, the price of chicken increased by 113 percent, beef by 162 percent, and pork by 378 percent (Figure 2). For 2024, total per capita meat consumption is estimated at 32.4 kg, an 83 percent increase from its record low in 2018 (Table 2). Being one of Venezuela’s most affordable animal protein sources due to price competitiveness, the chicken meat category has grown the most in the last five years, second only to eggs. This advantage, combined with appealing profitability levels and an industry that continually invests in its operations, has created an enabling environment for market growth in response to domestic demand. Nevertheless, restoring Venezuelan meat consumption to its historical (pre-crisis) levels would require significant and sustained economic growth, increased imports, expanded food subsidies, and substantial improvements in consumer purchasing power.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2018, meat consumption would hit a historical low of 17.8 kg, a 79 percent decline from 2013.

**Figure 1. Venezuela: Per Capita Meat Consumption 2000–2024 (kg)**



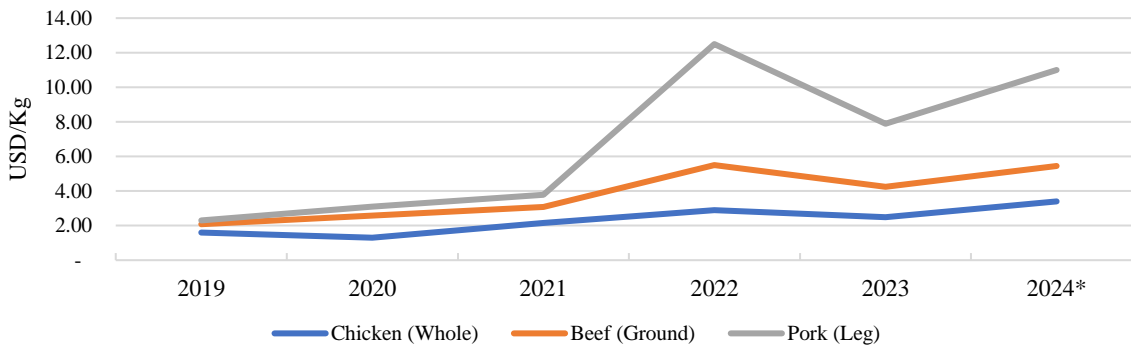
**Data Source:** Venezuelan livestock and poultry industry; not official USDA data. \*Forecast

**Table 2. Venezuela: Per Capita Meat Consumption, 2018 vs. 2024\* (kg)**

Year	Beef	Chicken	Pork	Total
<b>2018</b>	8.8	7.3	1.7	17.8
<b>2024*</b>	11.1	20.0	1.4	32.4
<b>Change (kg)</b>	2.3	12.7	(0.3)	14.7
<b>Change (%)</b>	26.0	174.2	(-19.4)	82.6

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

**Figure 2. Average Chicken, Beef and Pork Prices, 2019 – 2024\* (U.S. Dollar \$ [USD]/kg)**



**Data Source:** Venezuelan livestock and poultry industries; not official USDA data. \*2024 data for month of August.

## Beef

### Industry Overview

Venezuela has three primary livestock production systems, including non-specialized beef operations, dual-purpose operations (milk/cheese and beef), and a small, specialized milk production sector. Each of these systems supplies animals to the beef industry to varying degrees. Venezuela’s estimated herd size

in 2024<sup>2</sup> around 12 million head, spread over approximately 100,000 farms. The total potential area for cattle production is about 30 million hectares, of which about 10 million hectares (33 percent) are currently utilized. The Venezuelan livestock industry typically employs a range of modern production technologies and methods, especially in beef and specialized milk production systems. The sector routinely participates in national and international events such as local livestock shows, the Houston Brahman Show, and the World Dairy Expo (Wisconsin).

### Production

Beef production in 2024 is forecast at 293,300 MT, a 5 percent year-on-year increase (Table 3). The limited growth is mainly due to weaker price competitiveness compared to poultry. In 2023, local beef production was estimated at 279,000 MT, increasing 4.5 percent from 2022. Production peaked in 2011 at 567,000 MT, but declined significantly from 2015 onward, owing to scarcity of essential inputs, blackouts, fuel shortages, and hyperinflation. Beginning in 2021, beef production began to gradually recover due to a more stable economic environment and suspended beef imports.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 3. 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	279	0	279	10.5
2024*	293	0	293	11.1

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

<sup>2</sup> All data in this report is stated in calendar year basis.

<sup>3</sup> Improved beef production corresponded to tacit, economic liberalization, allowing a slight recovery in prices, and purchasing power. The Maduro Authority had also stopped subsidizing live cattle and beef imports. See, USDA GAIN: Venezuela Livestock and Products Annual [VE2022-0028](#) and [VE2023-0016](#).

**Table 4. Slaughter of National and Imported Live Cattle, 2010–2024 (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	1,304	0	1,304
2024*	1,370	0	1,370

**Data Source:** Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry; not official USDA data. \*2024 Forecast Year.

### Price

Since the second half of 2019, a de facto dollarization of the Venezuelan economy led to sales of most live cattle and beef retail priced in dollars or their equivalent in local currency. By 2020, live cattle and beef carcass prices began to rise due to the deregulation of administrative price controls and sales increases in other competing meats. From December 2020 to August 2024, beef carcasses prices increased by 109 percent. Between January and August 2024, the cost of beef carcasses has increased 23 percent, due in part to the growing influence of Colombian cattle prices, which may provide an alternative market for Venezuelan cattle (Table 5).

**Table 5. Venezuela: Average Beef Carcass Price (CWE) 2013–2024 (USD/kg)**

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
0.86	1.10	0.91	1.03	0.90	0.75	1.04	1.82	2.47	3.20	3.10	3.80

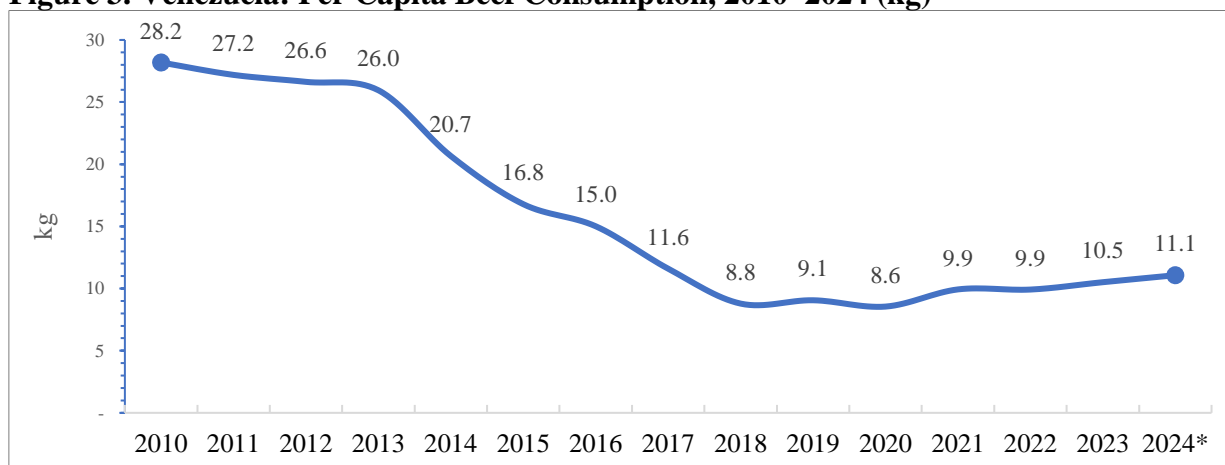
**Data Source:** Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry. \*2024 average prices through August.

### Consumption

Post forecasts 2024 per capita beef consumption at 11.1 kg, growing 5.3 percent from last year (Figure 3). Local beef production in Venezuela has been stable since 2021, while a shrinking Venezuelan population from extensive migration has influenced a modest growth in beef availability. Beef is one of Venezuela’s traditional animal protein sources and is the second most-consumed type of meat after chicken. Beef consumption peaked in 2010 when it reached 28.2 kg per person but significantly declined from 2013 onward, reaching a record low in 2018 (8.8 kg/person). The main factor contributing to the reduction in beef consumption has been the accelerated loss of purchasing power.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Although beef consumption rebounded in 2021 due to a modest recovery of purchasing power and lower inflation, total consumption remains far from 2010 levels.

**Figure 3. Venezuela: Per Capita Beef Consumption, 2010–2024 (kg)**



**Data Source:** Venezuelan Livestock Industry; not official USDA data. \*Projected data for 2024.

### **Trade**

In 2015, close to 30 percent of the total available beef available in Venezuela was through imports. However, due to a sharp decline in domestic demand, beef imports almost completely ceased in 2019. There are no expectations of resuming beef imports in 2024.

Starting in 2013, U.S. beef and related products have not been eligible for export to Venezuela to the Maduro authority’s alleged regulatory concerns regarding bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). This ban continues, despite the World Organization for Animal Health’s negligible BSE risk classification given to the United States. Previously, in 2016, a bilateral trade protocol for importing U.S. live cattle for breeding was finalized, eliminating all BSE-related trade restrictions. The first shipment of U.S. cattle to Venezuela under this protocol occurred in 2017. In June 2024, 27 high-value American Brahman cattle arrived in Venezuela via airfreight from several Brahman ranches in Texas. According to industry figures, in 2023, Venezuela imported about 85,000 doses of bovine semen, of which 50,000 doses consisted of U.S. genetics including Holstein, Brown Swiss, Jersey, Brahman, and Angus breeds.<sup>5</sup>

Between September 2020 and November 2021, the Venezuelan private sector exported around 150,000 head of live cattle to Egypt, totaling \$75 million. However, at the end of 2021, the regime suspended live cattle exports, arguing that trade had caused significant beef price increases. Venezuelan live cattle exports have since remained prohibited.

### **Poultry Meat**

#### **Industry Overview**

The Venezuelan poultry industry consists of approximately 37 medium to large-scale private companies producing chicken meat and eggs. Most of these companies are affiliated with FENAVI (Federación Nacional de Avicultura de Venezuela), the national poultry federation. Most poultry operations are vertically integrated and manage all stages of the production process. This includes feed mill operations,

<sup>5</sup> For additional information in this sector, see USDA GAIN: The Bovine Genetics Market in Venezuela [VE2023-0014](#).

breeding farms, hatcheries, production sheds, slaughterhouses, processing plants, and product distribution. The industry maintains modern, high productivity standards comparable to other South American poultry industries.

While chickens (broiler meat) are produced nationwide, most 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, accounting for about 60 percent of broiler meat and egg production. Typically, broilers are slaughtered after a grow-out period of 40-42 days and reach a 2.1-kg average weight. The average daily weight gain is approximately 51.5 grams, with a 1.8 feed conversion ratio.<sup>6</sup>

For 2023, Venezuela's poultry industry (both broiler meat and egg production) required 1.02 million MT of yellow corn and 476,000 MT of soybean meal for its operations. Of these figures, the United States was the sole supplier of soybean meal, while 45-50 percent of yellow corn usage was derived from the United States, Brazil, and Argentina. In 2024, Post forecasts a 5.1 percent growth in broiler meat production and 36 percent growth in egg production (the latter driven by increased productivity due to largescale genetic improvements). Based on this production projection, the Venezuelan poultry industry will require approximately 1.18 million MT of yellow corn and 552,000 MT of soybean meal for its feeding operations.

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

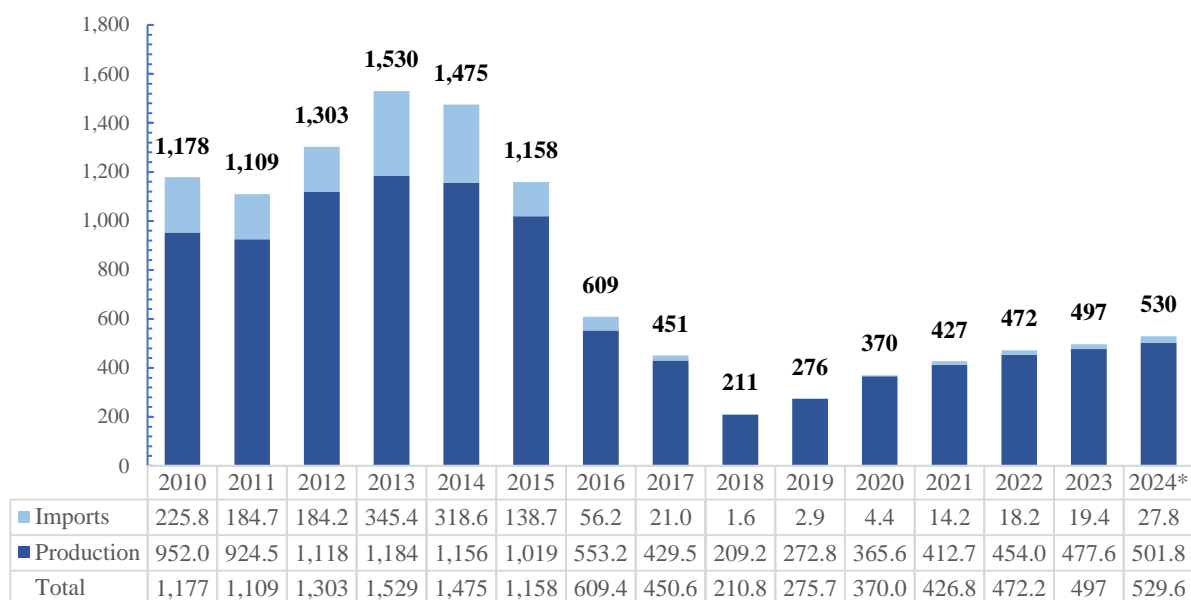
### **Production**

Post estimates Venezuela's poultry meat production in 2024 at 501,823 MT, a 5.1 percent rise from 2023 (Figure 4). After growing more than 30 percent in both 2019 and 2020, production decelerated to 5.2 percent in 2023 due to economic downturn, rebounding inflation, and stagnated consumer purchasing power. From January to June 2024, average monthly chicken meat production reached 41,819 MT, 5 percent higher year-on-year. According to the industry sources, 2023 chicken meat production totaled 477,627 MT, 5.2 percent higher year-on-year and 128 percent higher than the 2018 historical low. Despite substantial contraction between 2015-2018, the poultry industry has recovered a large part of its previous capacity, due to significant consumption recovery. With a somewhat stable economy, major Venezuelan poultry companies are now investing in new facilities and equipment and improving operational management. In addition, the industry routinely participates in national and international events related to the sector in search of better suppliers and technology. Industry sources expect that poultry meat and eggs will remain Venezuela's most affordable animal protein sources in the next few years.

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<sup>6</sup> The weight of feed intake divided by weight gained by the animal.

**Figure 4. Venezuela Poultry Meat Production and Imports, 2010-2024 (TMT)**



**Data Source:** Venezuelan Poultry Industry, Trade Data Monitor; not official USDA data. \*2024 Projected

### Price

Since 2019, there has been a shift in the price competitiveness between poultry meat and beef. Prior to 2018, a shortage of poultry meat and the removal of import subsidies for raw materials for animal feed led to an atypical market scenario where beef was priced higher than poultry.<sup>7</sup> However, with implicit economic liberalization and reduced market distortions, beef prices have since increased and poultry prices have stabilized to their current form. As a result, chicken is currently the most affordable meat available in the market. (Tables 6 and 7).

**Table 6. August 2024 Average Retail Price of Select Meats in Venezuela (USD/kg)**

Chicken (Whole)	Chicken (Breast)	Beef (High Quality)	Beef (Ground)	Pork (Chops)	Pork (Leg)
3.40	6.40	11.80	5.45	9.85	11.00

**Data Source:** Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industry, Post Research; not official USDA data.

**Table 7. Average Retail Price of Chicken (Whole), 2017-2024 (USD/kg)**

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
1.40	2.20	1.60	1.30	2.15	2.89	2.49	3.40

**Data Source:** Post Research; not official USDA data. \*2024 data for month of August.

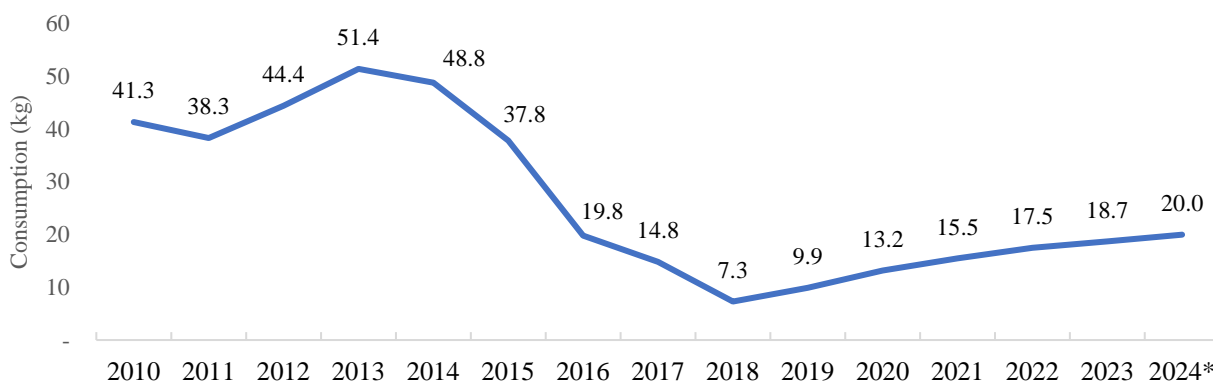
<sup>7</sup> In 2018, the Maduro authority eliminated all subsidies on raw material imports, which drove up the cost of chicken meat, as the sector is more than 70 percent dependent on imported inputs to sustain production.



## Consumption

Post forecasts 2023 per capita poultry consumption to reach 18.2 kg, a 4 percent increase from 2022 (Figure 5). Consumption bottomed out in 2018 (7.3 kg) but has since experienced significant market improvement. This recovery is attributable to increased 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 quarters, and wings).

**Figure 5. Per Capita Poultry Meat Consumption 2010–2024 (Kg)**



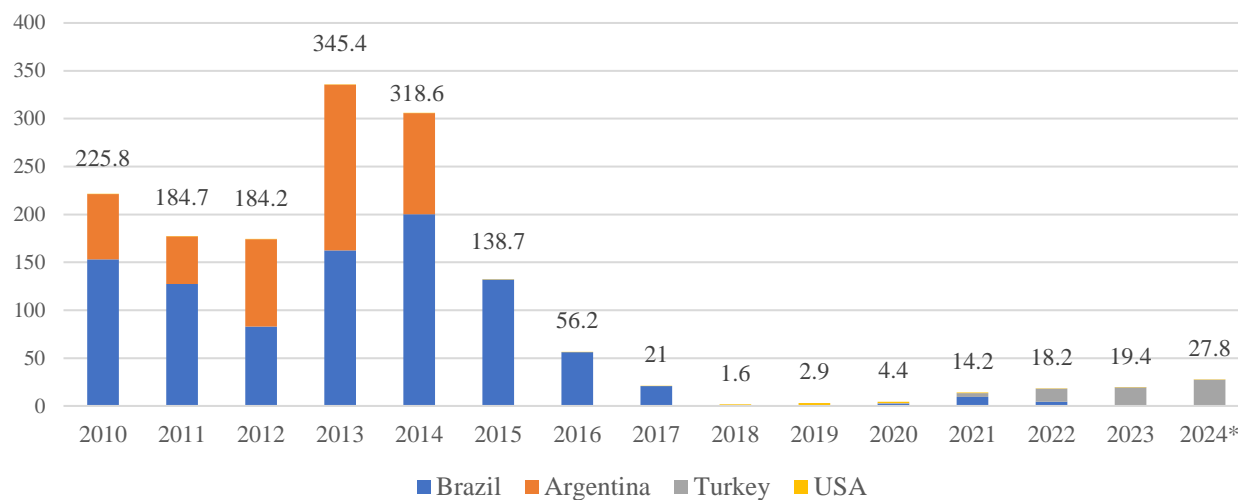
**Data Source:** Venezuelan Poultry Industry; not official USDA data. \*Projected

## Trade

For 2024, Venezuela’s poultry meat imports are forecast at 27,800 MT, a 43 percent rise year-on-year. This rise is attributed to increased imports of processed chicken products from Turkey, which supply the Maduro authority’s food aid program.<sup>8</sup> In 2023, poultry and related product imports accounted for 4 percent of total availability, as Venezuela still relies on local production. Poultry meat imports peaked in 2013 at 345,413 MT, but the 2015 economic collapse drastically reduced trade, where imports bottomed out in 2018 at 1,600 MT (Figure 6).

<sup>8</sup> Known as the Local Committees for Supply and Production (CLAP in Spanish), Venezuela’s primary food aid program occasionally provides poultry products to food insecure persons, which are imported by importers allied with the Maduro Authority.

**Figure 6. Venezuela Poultry Meat Imports by Origin, 2010-2024 (TMT)**



**Data Source:** Trade Data Monitor. \*2024 Projected

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

## Pork

### **Industry Overview**

The Venezuelan pork industry consists of about ten medium to large-scale private enterprises. These companies use modern production methods to produce pork meat and various pork products. Some also engage in poultry production and follow similar, vertically integrated operating standards that control all phases of production and marketing. The main cuts produced include fresh pork meat, hams, sausages, and cured meats. Most commercial swine operations and processing industries are in the states of Guárico, Carabobo, Aragua, Cojedes, and Zulia, although numerous informal and small operations are dispersed throughout the country.

### **Production**

Post forecasts 2024 Venezuelan pork production at 33,300 MT, a 5 percent increase over 2023. This slower production growth is due to weaker price competitiveness compared to other animal protein sources, especially poultry. According to industry sources, 2023 pork production totaled about 31,700 MT, representing an 84 percent decline from the 193,966 MT achieved in 2010. In 2019, pork production hit an all-time low at 27,144 metric tons. Although the pork industry has since stabilized, its recovery has been minimal compared to the growth in other protein sectors.

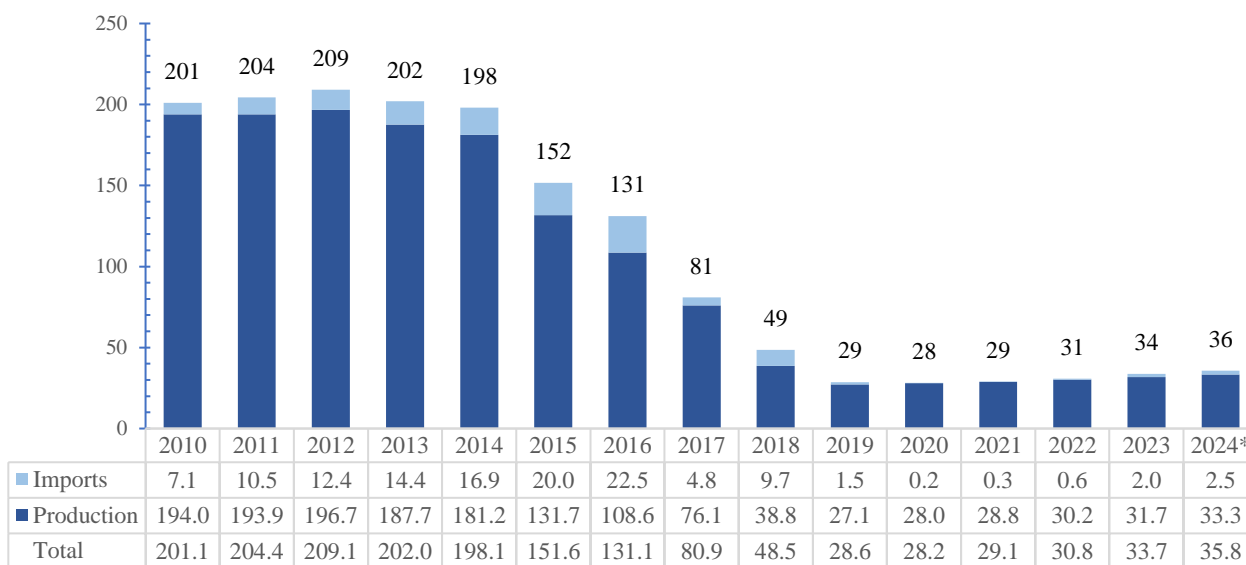
## Consumption

Per capita pork consumption for 2024 is forecast at 1.4 kg, mostly unchanged from last year, and no significant recovery is expected in the short term. Although there has been minimal growth in both production and imports since 2019, the declining population<sup>9</sup> of Venezuela is contributing to a slight increase in the average availability of pork products. Pork consumption last peaked in 2008 at 8.1 kg per person, but it has been the category of meat whose consumption has fallen proportionally the most. The main factor hindering pork consumption growth is its higher price compared to chicken and beef.<sup>10</sup>

## Trade

For 2024, pork imports are forecast at 2,500 MT, a 22 percent increase from 2023 (Figure 7). From January to June 2024, the United States exported 97 MT of pork products, valued at \$418,173. Pork imports consist mostly of high-value products such as ribs, hams, and deli meats, mostly targeted at higher-income consumers. Pork product imports peaked in 2016 at 22,541 MT, accounting for 21 percent of total availability. Since then, imports have notably declined, totaling only 2,043 MT in 2023, which accounted for almost 7 percent of total availability. U.S. chilled/frozen pork meat is eligible for export to Venezuela.

**Figure 7. Venezuela Pork Production and Imports 2010–2024 (TMT CWE)**

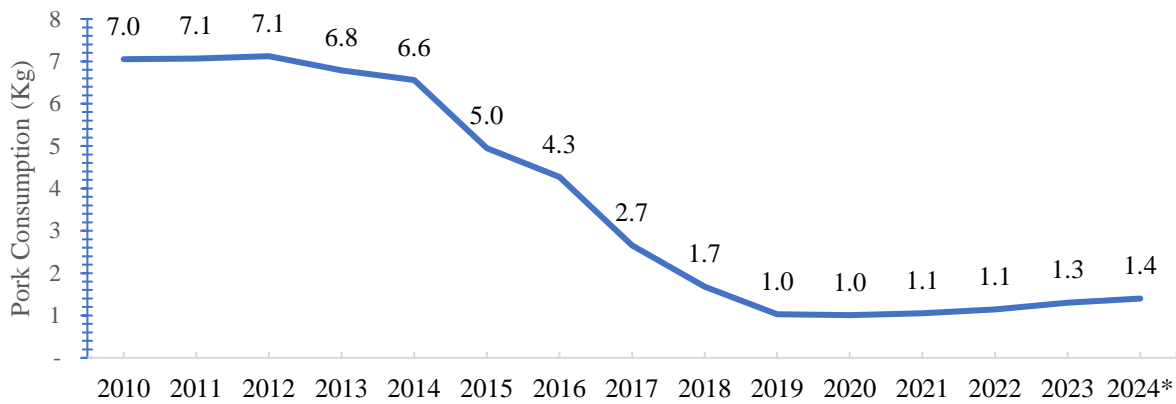


**Data Sources:** Venezuelan Livestock and Meat Industries, Trade Data Monitor; not official USDA data. \*2024 Projected

<sup>9</sup> The significant decline of population has impacted food demand and consumption in Venezuela. In 2023 there were over 7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants with 6.5 million located in Latin America and the Caribbean (2.8 million in Colombia), according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

<sup>10</sup> In August 2024, pork chops (\$9.85/kg) were 80 percent more expensive than ground beef (\$5.45/kg) and 190 percent more expensive than whole chicken (\$3.40/kg) (Average prices in major metropolitan areas).

**Figure 8. Venezuela Per Capita Pork Consumption 2010–2024 (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 2024 Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards \(FAIRS\) Report](#), and [2024 FAIRS Certificate Report](#).

**Attachments:**

No Attachments