

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS 2025

STATS BRIEF LIVESTOCK SECTOR



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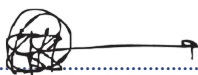
PREFACE

This Stats Brief presents preliminary results of the 2025 Agricultural Census for the livestock sub-sector. It should be noted that results are provisional and may be adjusted upon release of the main agricultural census report, after completion of data analysis for all census indicators. The Agricultural Census was conducted from March to December 2025 and the reference year for the census was October 2024 to September 2025.

The 2025 Agricultural Census was conducted by Statistics Botswana in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands & Agriculture. The main purpose of the census was to provide quality, relevant and reliable agricultural statistics to monitor the existing agricultural policies & programmes and to inform planning and decision making. These will also be used to measure the country's progress towards meeting national, international and regional obligations for the agricultural sector. Government has identified the agriculture sector as one of the key priority sectors for the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme (BETP). The indicators from the Agriculture Census will serve as a baseline for monitoring progress on the implementation of BETP.

The Brief focuses primarily on the main indicators in the livestock sub-sector, such as livestock population, births and deaths. The analysis shows that for the 2025 Agricultural Census the total number of cattle stood at 1, 638 543 compared to 1, 744, 166 recorded in the previous Agricultural Census in 2015, showing a 6.1 percent decline between the two censuses. The goat population was recorded at 1,271,407 in the 2025 Agricultural Census, compared to 1,205,238 recorded in 2015, presenting a 5.5 percent increase between the two census years. The sheep population also increased between the two censuses from 242, 432 in 2015 to 323, 279 in 2025, depicting an increase of 33.3 percent.

I sincerely thank all the farming households countrywide, in particular the farmers who made time to respond to the questionnaires. The District Commissioner's offices, especially District Agricultural Coordinators (DACs) across the country, who supported field work in their respective districts. I am also indebted to the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture for their unwavering support during this exercise and Ministry of Youth & Gender Affairs for providing field staff for the exercise. To all other organisations and individuals who contributed to the success of this Agricultural Census I thank you profusely



Dr. Khaufelo R. Lekobane
Statistician General
September 2026



I2015

1,744,166

CATTLE

I2025

1,638,543



I2015

1,205,238

GOATS

I2025

1,271,407



I2015

242,432

SHEEP

I2025

323,279

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Agricultural Census is conducted every ten (10) years to provide time-series basic information on crop and livestock production and to monitor the general performance of the sector. Agricultural indicators are important for monitoring national, regional and international frameworks as well as for policy development and decision making.

The 2025 National Agricultural Census was the sixth to be conducted since Botswana's independence in 1966. The project was carried out by Statistics Botswana in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (MoLA). Preparatory activities started in March 2024 and data collection was conducted for a period of nine (9) months, between the months of March to December 2025.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the 2025 agricultural census were the same as those of the previous Agricultural Census conducted in 2015, notably:

- To provide time series basic information on crop, livestock production and on other agricultural farming practices and farm labour;
- To utilize the results and experience from the Agricultural Census in planning for future annual agricultural surveys, and provide agricultural surveys sample frames.
- To produce new baseline data at the national and sub-national levels for use by MoLA and other Government departments for planning and decision-making purposes, as well as those in the private sector and other stakeholders.

3.0 SCOPE AND COVERAGE

The 2025 Agricultural Census covered among other things:

- Number of agricultural holdings and the principal characteristics of their members such as: age, sex, marital status, education level, economic activities as well as the size and fragmentation of holdings and land tenure;
- Land use for both pastoral and crop farming;
- Inventory of livestock by type;
- Farming practices, etc

4.0 CENSUS METHODOLOGY

The Agricultural Census forms a basis for review of statistical infrastructure for an appropriate food and agricultural information system for the next ten years.

Data collection for the 2025 Agricultural Census was based on the agricultural season covering the period from 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025. This period constituted the reference period for the census. Using a clearly defined reference period ensures consistency in the information reported by respondents and facilitates meaningful comparisons and analysis of agricultural activities across different areas and types of holdings.

For data collection and processing the Census and Survey Processing System (CSPPro) software was used to develop the Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) system. The enumerators visited all selected agricultural holdings to conduct interviews. The CAPI system enabled enumerators to collect

data electronically using digital questionnaires. The use of CAPI helped improve the efficiency of data collection, reduce errors associated with manual data entry, and facilitated the timely transfer of completed questionnaires for processing.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis and tabulation of the processed agricultural census data. The resulting tables and statistical outputs provide the basis for generating key indicators and interpreting the characteristics and performance of the agricultural sector during the reference period.

Botswana is divided into thirty-five Census Districts and the agricultural census was conducted in twenty-nine (29) census districts, excluding Lobatse, Orapa, Sowa, CKGR, Delta 1 and Delta 2, as there were no agricultural enumeration areas associated with these districts. Each district was divided into strata comprising of Villages, Lands and Cattle posts.

There are two types of farming practices in Botswana; the Traditional sector which entails agricultural operations on a communal land mainly for subsistence purposes and the Commercial sector where agricultural operations are either on a freehold, leasehold or Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP) ranches. The operations are solely for commercial purposes (Statistics Botswana, Botswana Compendium of Statistical Concepts and Definitions, 2016).

An agricultural census, like any other household survey, uses Enumeration Areas (EAs) demarcated during the Population and Housing Census (PHC). For the 2025 Agricultural Census, the 2022 Population and Housing Census enumeration areas provided the geographical framework for identifying areas with agricultural activities. All enumeration areas (1,634) with agricultural activities were covered under the traditional sub-sector during the 2025 Agricultural Census. These enumeration areas are predominantly located in rural areas, including cattle posts, lands areas, and some settlements where agricultural activities are undertaken. During the agricultural census, field teams visited these enumeration areas and carried out listing of all households found within them. The listing exercise was used to identify households with agricultural activities. Households with these economic units were classified as agricultural holdings for the purposes of the agricultural census.

The listing and identification of agricultural holdings is a critical component of the agricultural census because it provides information on the number and distribution of agricultural holdings within each enumeration area. This information is particularly important for determining the size and structure of the agricultural population and for the development of an appropriate sampling and estimation procedure. Although all agricultural holdings were listed, it was neither practical nor cost-effective to interview every holding in every enumeration area, particularly in the traditional/subsistence agricultural sector, where the number of holdings is very large. The listing exercise therefore provided a sampling frame from which holdings could be selected for detailed enumeration at the household level. Guided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation World Programme for Census of Agriculture, Vol. 1, a sample of 20 traditional holdings were randomly selected from the sampling frame provided. However, all holders with 100 or more cattle were automatically selected into the sample. The information obtained through the listing exercise also supports the development of appropriate estimation procedures and statistical inferences. By identifying the total number of agricultural holdings and their distribution across enumeration areas, it becomes possible to design an appropriate sample and produce reliable estimates for the agricultural sector.

A different approach was adopted for the commercial agricultural sub-sector. Complete enumeration was used because the number of commercial agricultural holdings was relatively small compared with holdings in the traditional/subsistence sector. There were approximately 2,500 commercial holdings, including farms and ranches. Thus, the census methodology involved complete enumeration of commercial holdings, while an appropriate sampling approach at holdings level was applied to the much larger traditional/subsistence sector.

5.0. KEY FINDINGS

The analysis shows that for the 2025 Agricultural Census, the total number of cattle stood at 1, 638, 543 compared to the 1, 744,166 recorded in the previous Agricultural Census in 2015, showing a 6.1 percent decline between the two censuses. The goat population was recorded at 1, 271,407 in the 2025 Agricultural Census, compared to the 1, 205,238 recorded in 2015 showing a 5.5 percent increase between the two census years. The sheep population also increased between the two censuses from 242, 432 in 2015 to 323 279 in 2025, depicting an increase of 33.3 percent.

The 2025 Agriculture Census results further indicates that cattle births declined by 14.3 percent, while deaths increased by 30.7 percent compared to the 2015 results. However, the goat data showed an increase of 5.2 percent in births and 27.7 percent in deaths. As for the sheep, the births increased by 35.7 percent while deaths increased sharply by 65.8 percent. Cattle population decreased while both goats and sheep population increased in comparison with the 2015 census results.

Birth rate is defined as the number of animals born alive as a percentage of the number of females actually reproducing (FAO, 2011). According to the 2015 Agricultural Census results, the cattle birth rate stood at 56.7 percent and increased to 68.5 percent in the 2025 Agricultural Census, an increase of 11.8 percentage points. The death rate, calculated as total deaths divided by the total cattle population, also increased by 2.4 percentage points, from 6.3 percent in 2015 to 8.7 percent in 2025 as shown in the cross-species comparison table below. Meanwhile, the natural growth rate, which is the difference between the birth rate and death rate, explains the speed at which a population changes in size, taking into consideration only the natural effects of birth and death. A natural growth rate of 50.4 percent is observed in 2015, compared with 59.8 percent in 2025, an increase of 9.4 percentage points over ten years, translating to an annual natural growth rate of 0.9 percent. This signifies slow growth over the two time periods. A natural growth rate, which is less than 1 percent annually, means a population is failing to reach replacement level, making it difficult to sustain growth without external support.

For goats, the birth rate increased substantially (38.1 percentage points), from 43.4 percent in 2015 to 81.5 percent in 2025. Concurrent with the high birth rate, the goat death rate increased, from 16.7 percent in 2015 to 20.2 percent in 2025, an increase of 3.5 percentage points. This yields a natural growth rate of 26.7 percent in 2015 against 61.3 percent in 2025. A trend analysis reveals an increase of 34.6 percentage points over the same period, or a population growth multiplier of 3.46 annually, which sustains the overall growth in the population of goats.

The sheep birth rate, increased substantially by 39.1 percentage points, from 36.4 percent in 2015 to 75.5 percent in 2025 whilst the death rate increased from 11.8 percent in 2015 to 14.6 percent in the 2025 Agricultural Census, a change of 2.8 percentage points. This yields a natural growth rate of 24.6 percent in 2015 against 60.9 percent in 2025, an increase of 36.3 percentage points over the ten years. With a population growth multiplier above 1, this allows for replacement-level growth in the sheep population.

Overall, the increase in natural growth rates among smallstock is more pronounced than that of cattle.

Agricultural Census Livestock Cross-Species Comparison

Indicator	Cattle		Goats		Sheep	
	2015	2025	2015	2025	2015	2025
Population	1,744,166	1,638,543	1,205,238	1,271,407	242,432	323,279
Population change (%)	-	-6.1	-	5.5	-	33.3
Births	436,283	373,807	522,936	550,066	88,186	119,686
Birth rate (%)	56.7	68.5	43.4	81.5	36.4	75.5
Deaths	109,453	143,076	201,110	256,861	28,503	47,260
Death rate (%)	6.3	8.7	16.7	20.2	11.8	14.6

6.0. LIVESTOCK STATISTICS

Livestock statistics for both the traditional and commercial sectors are presented in tables and will be discussed below. These include the total number of farms or agricultural holdings for major livestock species such as cattle, goats, and sheep, as well their inventories which include population, births, and deaths. The reference period for the 2025 National Agricultural Census was October 2024 to September 2025. The livestock population, births and deaths reported in this brief therefore relate to the census reference period and should be interpreted within that period when comparing the results with the 2015 Agricultural Census.

6.1 Cattle Holdings, Population, Births & Deaths.

Table 1 shows results of cattle holdings, population, births & deaths. Of the total cattle holdings recorded (36,788), Mahalapye district had the highest number of holdings (3,244), followed by Kweneng district (3,001) and Letlhakeng district (2,935). Although Letlhakeng district ranked third in terms of the number of cattle holdings, it recorded the largest cattle population (134,395), followed by Mahalapye district, with 108,244 cattle, and Kgatleng district, with 83,247 cattle.

The national average cattle herd size was 45 cattle per holding. Twenty-three (23) districts recorded average herd sizes below the national average, while six (6) recorded averages above the national average. Selibe-Phikwe, Francistown, Ramotswa, Mogoditshane, North East, Tlokweng, Moshupa, Gaborone and Kweneng recorded average herd sizes of less than half the national average. Letlhakeng, Mabutsane, Ghanzi, Tsabong, Charleshill and Hukuntsi recorded averages above the national average. The commercial subsector recorded an average cattle herd size above the national average.

The cities and towns recorded the lowest numbers of cattle holdings and cattle populations. The results therefore show substantial variation in cattle holdings and populations across districts and between urban and rural areas.

Table 1: Distribution of Cattle Holdings, Population, Births & Deaths by District and Gender of Holder.

Districts	Cattle Holdings			Cattle Population				Cattle Inventory		Cattle Averages
	Male owned	Female owned	Total	Male owned	Female owned	Company owned	Total cattle	Births	Deaths	Average per Holding
Gaborone	24	5	29	529	66	-	595	102	68	21
Francistown	1	-	1	12	-	-	12	1	-	12
Selibe Phikwe	7	6	13	94	17	-	111	40	26	9
Jwaneng	3	-	3	73	-	-	73	30	-	24
Kanye	1,020	321	1,341	27,940	6,231	-	34,171	8,906	2,867	25
Goodhope	1,663	622	2,285	43,311	10,431	-	53,742	13,119	2,986	24
Mabutsane	665	120	785	42,163	3,899	-	46,062	11,072	2,385	59
Moshupa	802	228	1,030	16,228	3,453	-	19,681	4,374	2,004	19
Ramotswa	199	55	254	2,559	577	-	3,136	698	473	12
Tlokweng	100	9	109	1,831	108	-	1,939	321	51	18
Kweneng	2,287	714	3,001	51,021	10,870	-	61,891	14,280	8,409	21
Letlhakeng	2,351	584	2,935	119,214	15,181	-	134,395	33,573	10,011	46
Mogoditshane	741	354	1,095	9,792	4,085	-	13,877	3,365	2,481	13
Kgatleng	2,197	551	2,748	70,942	12,305	-	83,247	20,340	7,300	30
Serowe	979	249	1,228	42,018	5,974	-	47,992	11,878	6,842	39
Mahalapye	2,663	581	3,244	91,846	16,398	-	108,244	24,271	11,057	33
Bobirwa	1,669	540	2,209	50,450	11,938	-	62,388	13,156	7,662	28
Boteti	1,332	387	1,719	63,954	12,035	-	75,989	16,358	11,766	44
Tutume	1,013	312	1,325	38,712	7,112	-	45,824	9,553	4,606	35
Tonota	1,053	291	1,344	37,580	6,553	-	44,133	9,440	4,370	33
Palapye	774	234	1,008	27,929	5,587	-	33,516	7,541	2,005	33
North East	1,044	869	1,913	16,896	8,334	-	25,230	4,443	2,312	13
North West	971	360	1,331	34,006	8,294	-	42,300	11,446	11,129	32
Okavango	1,266	419	1,685	45,943	7,190	-	53,133	15,144	6,344	32
Chobe	203	126	329	9,520	2,965	-	12,485	2,208	768	38
Ghanzi	471	148	619	33,598	3,174	-	36,772	9,066	3,171	59
Charleshill	660	123	783	53,739	12,197	-	65,936	15,654	6,887	84
Tsabong	466	99	565	35,035	5,221	-	40,256	7,988	2,838	71
Hukuntsi	348	48	396	31,701	3,973	-	35,674	8,812	3,194	90
TOTAL Traditional	26,972	8,355	35,327	998,636	184,168	-	1,182,804	277,179	124,012	33
TOTAL Commercial	1,278	183	1,461	235,395	23,773	196,571	455,739	96,628	19,064	312
TOTAL	28,250	8,538	36,788	1,234,031	207,941	196,571	1,638,543	373,807	143,076	45

6.2: Cattle Population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

This section shows a comparison of the 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses of cattle population and inventory. **Table 2** results show that, nationally, cattle holdings and cattle population declined by 6.4 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively. In the commercial subsector, cattle holdings and cattle population increased by 12.3 percent and 18.8 percent, respectively. Furthermore, the commercial holdings increased the average carrying capacity of their holdings from 295 cattle per holding in 2015 to 312 cattle per holding in 2025. This suggests that, despite an apparent decline in the national cattle population, the commercial sub-sector managed to expand in both cattle holdings carrying capacity and population. Meanwhile, the glaring reduction in cattle population in the traditional holdings can partly be attributed to the following: a declining average carrying capacity from 36 cattle per holding to 33, exacerbated by a decline in the total number of traditional holdings over the two periods.

The decline in the national cattle population occurred alongside a 14.3 percent reduction in cattle births and a 30.7 percent increase in cattle deaths, compared with 2015. These changes provide important indicators for monitoring cattle population dynamics; however, the census data presented in this brief do not establish the causes of these changes.

The census results show changes in cattle births and deaths over the intercensal period. The data presented in this brief do not permit further interpretation on the effect of drought, disease, exports or other factors to be separately quantified or identified as causes of the observed changes.

Changes in the national cattle population reflect the combined effect of several population and production processes, including births, deaths, slaughter, imports and exports. The census data presented in this brief should therefore be considered alongside these factors when assessing changes in cattle numbers.

Table 2: Comparison - Cattle Population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

	Cattle holdings		Population		Total	Inventory	
	Traditional	Commercial	Traditional	Commercial		Births	Deaths
2015	37,753	1,301	1,360,467	383,699	1,744,166	436,283	109,453
2025	35,327	1,461	1,182,804	455,739	1,638,543	373,807	143,076
% change	-6.4	12.3	-13.1	18.8	-6.1	-14.3	30.7

6.3 Goat Holdings, Population, Births & Deaths.

Table 3 shows goat holdings, population, births and deaths. The results show that the national average goat herd size stands at 25 goats per holding, which is similar to that of the traditional subsector. Fifteen (15) districts recorded average herd sizes below the national average, while fourteen (14) recorded averages equal to or above the national average. The commercial subsector recorded an average goat herd size almost three times the national average. Chobe district recorded the lowest average herd size at 11 goats per holding, while Hukuntsi, Tsabong and Charleshill recorded averages of 38, 42 and 44 goats per holding, respectively.

Kweneng district recorded the highest number of goat births (54,670) and also recorded a high number of goat deaths (27,073). Kgatleng district recorded 22,099 goat deaths.

Table 3: Distribution of Goat Holdings, Population, Births & Deaths by District and Gender of Holder

Districts	Goats Holdings			Goats Population				Goats Inventory		Goats Averages
	Male Owned	Female Owned	Total Holdings	Male Owned	Female Owned	Company Owned	Total goats	Births	Deaths	Average per Holding
Gaborone	56	17	73	1,823	320	-	2,143	914	324	29
Francistown	2	-	2	40	-	-	40	12	-	20
Selibe Phikwe	24	25	49	539	500	-	1,039	314	192	21
Jwaneng	10	-	10	127	-	-	127	59	27	13
Kanye	1,231	626	1,857	31,862	12,229	-	44,091	19,969	11,906	24
Goodhope	2,298	1,749	4,047	45,974	19,671	-	65,645	28,270	14,267	16
Mabutsane	705	256	961	20,334	4,891	-	25,225	11,724	6,291	26
Moshupa	1,128	485	1,613	34,845	11,304	-	46,149	19,212	8,725	29
Ramotswa	375	125	500	8,866	2,515	-	11,381	3,814	1,664	23
Tlokweng	182	23	205	4,317	506	-	4,823	1,318	413	24
Kweneng	3,342	1,737	5,079	86,918	35,206	-	122,124	54,670	27,073	24
Letlhakeng	2,326	1,106	3,432	65,834	19,940	-	85,774	38,264	18,866	25
Mogoditshane	1,085	643	1,728	27,996	14,312	-	42,308	18,837	7,930	24
Kgatleng	2,617	982	3,599	72,424	24,226	-	96,650	43,355	22,099	27
Serowe	1,049	450	1,499	26,774	8,162	-	34,936	14,975	6,308	23
Mahalapye	3,290	1,279	4,569	89,765	26,369	-	116,134	49,812	19,641	25
Bobirwa	1,944	945	2,889	52,229	21,855	-	74,084	33,460	17,931	26
Boteti	1,506	680	2,186	55,671	17,555	-	73,226	32,061	14,950	33
Tutume	1,145	586	1,731	35,207	11,319	-	46,526	17,102	6,435	27
Tonota	1,316	520	1,836	37,001	13,069	-	50,070	20,835	8,776	27
Palapye	1,014	577	1,591	26,206	11,187	-	37,393	16,003	6,811	24
North East	1,492	1,708	3,200	24,025	19,562	-	43,587	17,163	7,318	14
North West	1,066	787	1,853	30,805	16,051	-	46,856	22,463	12,304	25
Okavango	964	512	1,476	23,888	7,864	-	31,752	14,339	6,284	22
Chobe	176	168	344	2,339	1,523	-	3,862	1,349	805	11
Ghanzi	450	220	670	12,833	3,348	-	16,181	8,001	3,954	24
Charleshill	528	135	663	22,572	6,417	-	28,989	14,042	6,066	44
Tsabong	654	329	983	31,293	9,700	-	40,993	16,952	5,840	42
Hukuntsi	386	112	498	15,383	3,330	-	18,713	8,149	4,338	38
TOTAL Traditional	32,361	16,782	49,143	887,890	322,931	-	1,210,821	527,438	247,538	25
TOTAL Commercial	835	117	952	44,129	5,768	10,689	60,586	22,628	9,323	64
TOTAL	33,196	16,899	50,095	932,019	328,699	10,689	1,271,407	550,066	256,861	25

6.4: Goat population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

Table 4 below presents the changes in goat population, births, and deaths recorded during the 2015 and 2025 Agricultural censuses. A comparison of the two census periods shows that goat holdings, population, and inventory generally increased across the country. The only exception was the goat population for the commercial sub-sector, which declined by 2.3 percent. Overall, the positive growth in most goat production indicators reflect improved performance of the goats farming sector and has contributed to a national increase of 5.5 percent in the goat population between the two agricultural censuses.

The goat births increased by 5.2 percent while the goat deaths increased by 27.7 percent between the 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses. The national goat population also increased by 5.5 percent over the same period. The census data show population growth alongside increases in both births and deaths, but do not establish the factors underlying these changes.

Table 4: Comparison - Goat population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

	Goats Holdings		Goats Population		Total	Inventory	
	Traditional	Commercial	Traditional	Commercial		Births	Deaths
2015	43,853	898	1,143,251	61,987	1,205,238	522,936	201,110
2025	49,143	952	1,210,821	60,586	1,271,407	550,066	256,861
% change	12.1	6.0	5.9	-2.3	5.5	5.2	27.7

6.5: Sheep Population, Birth & Deaths.

The figures in **Table 5** reveal that Kweneng district recorded the largest number of sheep holdings (1,857) and the highest sheep population (31,318) among the districts. The national average sheep herd size stands at 20 sheep per holding. The commercial subsector recorded an average herd size of 70 sheep per farm. Twenty-one (21) districts recorded average herd sizes below the national average, while eight (8) recorded averages equal to or above the national average.

The lowest numbers of sheep holdings and sheep population were recorded in the cities and towns. The results show a concentration of sheep holdings and populations in rural districts.

Table 5: Distribution of Sheep Population, Birth & Deaths by District and Gender of Holder

Districts	Sheep Holdings			Sheep Population				Sheep Inventory		Goats Averages
	Male owned	Female owned	Total Holdings	Male owned	Female owned	Company owned	Total sheep	Births	Deaths	Average per Holding
Gaborone	23	5	28	574	62	-	636	255	65	23
Francistown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Selibe Phikwe	7	3	10	107	4	-	111	35	17	11
Jwaneng	3	-	3	26	-	-	26	9	3	9
Kanye	635	276	911	11,378	4,318	-	15,696	5,863	3,198	17
Goodhope	981	434	1,415	19,401	4,324	-	23,725	8,650	3,303	17
Mabutsane	370	70	440	10,582	1,021	-	11,603	4,228	1,611	26
Moshupa	538	147	685	10,133	2,187	-	12,319	4,270	1,713	18
Ramotswa	93	26	119	1,277	217	-	1,494	442	97	13
Tlokweng	90	7	97	1,143	73	-	1,216	246	30	13
Kweneng	1,322	535	1,857	24,268	7,049	-	31,318	11,458	4,330	17
Letlhakeng	886	269	1,155	17,807	3,927	-	21,733	7,975	3,566	19
Mogoditshane	546	261	807	7,439	3,375	-	10,814	4,177	1,657	13
Kgatleng	948	294	1,242	17,308	3,876	-	21,183	8,099	4,002	17
Serowe	355	105	460	5,350	1,352	-	6,702	2,215	1,150	15
Mahalapye	1,231	368	1,599	19,186	5,535	-	24,720	8,459	3,173	15
Bobirwa	691	264	955	10,343	3,214	-	13,558	5,345	2,722	14
Boteti	433	96	529	8,374	1,168	-	9,542	4,051	2,057	18
Tutume	282	73	355	5,559	1,011	-	6,569	2,037	565	19
Tonota	479	155	634	7,276	1,767	-	9,043	3,137	1,299	14
Palapye	277	95	372	4,335	1,210	-	5,546	2,063	753	15
North East	266	106	372	3,661	1,115	-	4,776	1,417	480	13
North West	318	117	435	6,947	1,564	-	8,511	3,429	1,795	20
Okavango	113	12	125	2,380	435	-	2,815	1,108	547	23
Chobe	3	-	3	15	-	-	15	2	2	5
Ghanzi	137	26	163	3,076	284	-	3,360	1,127	399	21
Charleshill	313	42	355	8,971	2,598	-	11,569	4,937	1,715	33
Tsabong	448	133	581	20,661	3,367	-	24,029	9,403	2,444	41
Hukuntsi	209	48	257	5,337	1,055	-	6,392	2,402	843	25
TOTAL Traditional	11,997	3,967	15,964	232,913	56,108	-	289,020	106,839	43,536	18
TOTAL Commercial	437	54	491	20,965	2,541	10,753	34,259	12,847	3,724	70
TOTAL	12,434	4,021	16,455	253,878	58,649	10,753	323,279	119,686	47,260	20

6.6: Sheep population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

Table 6 shows that the sheep population increased from 242,432 in 2015 to 323,279 in 2025, representing a 33.3 percent increase. Sheep births increased by 35.7 percent over the same period. Although sheep deaths increased by 65.8 percent over the same period, the increase in sheep births was accompanied by an overall increase in the national sheep population. The census results therefore show population growth alongside increases in both births and deaths.

Table 6: Comparison - Sheep population and Inventory between 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses

	Sheep holdings		Population		Total	Inventory	
	Traditional	Commercial	Traditional	Commercial		Births	Deaths
2015	12,362	502	214,234	28,198	242,432	88,186	28,503
2025	15,964	491	289,020	34,259	323,279	119,686	47,260
% change	29.1	-2.2	34.9	21.5	33.3	35.7	65.8

7.0. CONCLUSION

The 2025 Agricultural Census shows differing population trends across the three major livestock species. The national cattle population declined by 6.1 percent, from 1,744,166 in 2015 to 1,638,543 in 2025. In contrast, the goat population increased by 5.5 percent, from 1,205,238 to 1,271,407, while the sheep population increased substantially by 33.3 percent, from 242,432 to 323,279 over the same period.

The census also recorded changes in livestock births and deaths between the two census periods. Cattle births declined by 14.3 percent while cattle deaths increased by 30.7 percent. For goats, births increased by 5.2 percent and deaths by 27.7 percent, while sheep births increased by 35.7 percent and deaths by 65.8 percent. These changes occurred alongside different population outcomes across the three livestock species.

All the three species realized an increase in birth rates between the two census periods of 2015 and 2025. The cattle birth rates increased by 11.8 percentage points, while the goat and sheep birth rates realized a significant increase by 38.1 and 39.1 percentage points respectively. The death rates increased for all the three species, between the 2015 and 2025 censuses. The cattle death rate increased by 2.4 percentage points, the goat death rate by 3.5 percentage points and the sheep death rate by 2.8 percentage points.

The results further demonstrate substantial variation in the distribution of livestock holdings, populations and average herd sizes across districts. Differences are also evident between the traditional and commercial subsectors. For example, Letlhakeng recorded the largest cattle population among the districts, while Kweneng recorded the largest number of goat and sheep holdings and the highest goat and sheep populations among the districts reported.

The findings provide an important statistical baseline for monitoring livestock population trends, births, deaths, holdings and herd sizes in Botswana. The availability of comparable statistics across the 2015 and 2025 Agricultural Censuses also provides a basis for assessing changes in the livestock subsector over time and for identifying areas requiring further statistical and analytical investigation. The findings provide an important statistical baseline for monitoring changes in the livestock subsector and for informing future agricultural surveys, planning and policy development.



373,807

BIRTHS

143,076

DEATHS

BIRTH AND DEATHS BY HEAD COUNT



550,066

BIRTHS

256,861

DEATHS



119,686

BIRTHS

47,260

DEATHS



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