

Useful livestock terms

Livestock are animals that are kept for production or lifestyle, such as cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, horses or poultry.

General terms for all livestock types

- Dam – female parent
- Sire – male parent
- Entire – a male animal that has not been castrated and is capable of breeding
- Weaning – the process of separation of young animals from their mothers when they are no longer dependent upon them for survival

Cattle

Cattle are mainly farmed for meat and milk.

- Bovine – refers to cattle or buffalo
- Cow – a female bovine that has had a calf, or is more than three years old
- Bull – an entire male bovine
- Calf – a young bovine from birth to weaning (six–nine months old)
 - Bull calf – a male calf
 - Heifer calf – a female calf
- Steer – a castrated male bovine more than one year old
- Heifer – a female bovine that has not had a calf, or is aged between six months and three years old
- Calving – giving birth
- Herd – a group of cattle

Sheep

Sheep are farmed for meat and fibre (wool) and sometimes milk.

- Ovine – refers to sheep
- Ram – entire male sheep that is more than one year old
- Ewe – a female sheep more than one year old
- Lamb – a young sheep less than one year old
 - NOTE – When referring to meat, lamb is meat from a sheep that is 12–14 months old or less
 - Ewe lamb – is a female sheep less than one year old
 - Ram lamb – is a male sheep less than one year old
- Weaner – a lamb that has been recently weaned from its mother
- Hogget – a young sheep before it reaches sexual maturity – aged between nine months and one year
- Wether – a castrated male sheep
- Lambing – giving birth
- Flock / Mob – a group of sheep

Pigs

Pigs are mainly farmed for meat.

- Porcine – refers to pigs
- Boar – an entire adult male pig
- Sow – an adult female pig
- Piglet – a baby or young pig before it is weaned
- Barrow – a male pig that has been castrated before sexual maturity
- Stag – a male pig that has been castrated after sexual maturity
- Gilt – a young female pig that has not yet had piglets
- Farrowing – birth of piglets

Goats

Goats are mainly farmed for meat, milk and fibre (hair or fleece).

- Caprine – refers to goats
- Buck – a male goat more than one year old
- Doe – a female goat more than one year old
- Kid – a young male or female goat
- Wether – a castrated male goat
- Kidding – giving birth

Horses

Horses are mainly bred for riding.

- Equine – refers to horses
- Stallion – an entire adult male horse
- Mare – an adult female horse
- Foal – a male or female horse before it is weaned
- Colt – a male horse less than three years old
- Filly – a female horse less than three years old
- Gelding – a castrated male horse
- Foaling – giving birth

Poultry

Poultry are domesticated birds that are farmed for meat or eggs — such as chicken, turkey, duck and goose.

Chickens

- Rooster / Cock – a male chicken more than one year old
- Hen – a female chicken more than one year old
- Chick – a newly hatched or a very young chicken
- Cockerel – a male chicken less than one year old
- Pullet – a young female in her first laying season, or prior to her first lay
- Egg laying – the production of eggs
- Hatching – when the chick emerges from the egg