

U.S. beef and pork exports set new value records in 2012, according to end-of-year statistics released by USDA and compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF).

Pork exports set both volume and value records last year, reaching 2.26 million metric tons valued at \$6.3 billion, a 3.5 percent increase over the 2011 record.

The per-head export value of U.S. pork exports set another record in 2012, reaching \$55.87, up 1 percent from 2011. For the year, exports were 27 percent of total pork production and 23.4 percent of pork muscle cut production compared with 27.5 percent and 23 percent, respectively, in 2011.

The value of beef exports for the year rose 2 percent to a record-high \$5.51 billion on 12 percent lower volumes (1.13 million metric tons).

The per-head export value for beef hit \$216.73, a \$10.36 increase over 2011. Contributing to that was a new monthly record value of \$242.65 set in December.

For the year, U.S. beef exports accounted for 12.7 percent of total beef production and 9.8 percent of muscle cut production. This compares to 14.2 percent and 11 percent, respectively, in 2011.