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Cattle and cow population in Ukraine

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The population of cattle and cows in Ukraine is decreasing due to the consequences of the war and an increase in the volume of exports of animals by live weight. In most cases, this concerns households. In the industrial sector of 15 regions of Central and Western Ukraine, on the contrary, there is an increase in cattle compared to last year.

This is reported by the analyst of the Association of Milk Producers Giorgii Kukhaleishvili.

According to preliminary estimates of the State Statistics Service, as of February 1, 2023, 2 million 323 thousand heads of cattle, including 1 million 339 thousand cows, are kept in the domestic and industrial sector of Ukraine. As a result of the full-scale invasion of Russia, Ukraine lost 375,200 head of cattle (-13.9%) and 209,100 cows (-15.62%), compared to last year's figures. According to the approximate estimates of AIRT, the reduction of livestock may be even greater - up to 1 million 979.8 thousand heads of cattle, as well as about 1 million cows.

According to preliminary data from the State Statistics Service (there are no data on the occupied and part of the front-line territories), there are 931.6 thousand cattle in the industrial sector (MTF), which is 7.84% less than last year. The number of cows at industrial enterprises is 388.2 thousand, which is 9.14% less compared to the beginning of February 2022. In fact, according to preliminary data, enterprises lost 73,000 cattle, including 35,500 cows, during the year. Although, compared to January 1, 2023, the number of cows at enterprises increased by 600 heads. A similar trend was characteristic of the previous period: from December 1 to January 1, the number of cows in the industrial sector increased by 1.6 thousand heads.

The number of cattle and cows continues to decrease in households. As of February 1, 1 million 391.4 thousand heads of cattle were kept there, which is 302.2 thousand heads or 21.72% less than in 2022. In the domestic sector, the number of cows decreased to 950.8 thousand, which is 173.6 thousand less than last year (-18.26%). Over the past month, households have lost 3,000 cows. As of January 1, 2023, they kept 953.8 thousand cows.

Due to systematic shelling by the Russian occupiers of populated areas of Ukraine, regular power outages, milking interruptions occur, which negatively affects the health of cows and causes an increase in diseases and culling rates. Livestock reduction is observed in all regions of Ukraine, with the exception of Khmelnytskyi region, where the number of cattle increased by 4.3 thousand heads or by 1.88% compared to the beginning of February 2022.

Some households and industrial enterprises from the occupied territories and the front-line zone are trying to relocate their livestock to the western and central regions of Ukraine, the sale of livestock by farms has increased. According to the preliminary estimates of the DSSU, in January, Ukraine exported live weight cattle worth \$3.23 million, which is 78.80% more than in the same period last year. In natural terms, this is approximately 1.86 million tons. So, based on the average weight of an adult cow (400-500 kg), Ukraine shipped about 3,800 head of cattle abroad last month.

It should be noted that the reduction of livestock occurs, first of all, at the expense of cows in households. Moderate positive dynamics are observed at industrial enterprises of the central and western regions. According to preliminary estimates of the State Statistics Service, the largest increase in the number of cattle is observed in the industrial sector in Zakarpattia Oblast - 18.75% (300 head), Ternopil Oblast - 9.92% (3.9 thousand), Odesa Oblast - 4.73% (700), Khmelnytskyi - 4.10% (2.7 thousand), Kyiv - 3.21% (2.7 thousand) and Kirovohrad - 3.10%

(800). To date, more than 4% of the cattle and cow population of Ukraine are now in the areas where hostilities are taking place.