

The official goals of Vietnam's agricultural policy in 1994 are food self-sufficiency, generation of foreign exchange earnings through surplus production, and repayment of foreign debt from exports of agricultural products and processed food.

Livestock

The livestock sector in 1991 made up approximately 21 percent of the total agricultural output. The rearing of livestock has been introduced at a basic industrial level with the adoption of some advanced technologies in genetics, veterinary science, and animal feed. Nevertheless, the industry is not adequate to produce enough animals for the protein-deficient Vietnamese.

Livestock and Poultry in Vietnam for 1993 (million head)

	1993
Buffalo	23.0
Cattle	3.3
Pigs	14.9
Poultry	125.5

Source: IMF - Vietnam - Recent Economic Developments June4, 1994

During the Vietnam War, the livestock industry developed quickly in response to the dietary demands of American personnel in south Vietnam. Investment and training were introduced in animal breeding farms and feed factories. In addition, local stock was improved by the introduction of foreign breeds and artificial insemination. Once the US withdrew from Vietnam, the livestock industry became stagnant.

Currently, the majority of livestock production is centred on swine and chicken, with limited production in dairy and beef cattle. A number of feed-manufacturing and livestock breeding companies specialize in raising pigs and growing plants for feed-processing factories.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

Due to Vietnam's vast marine resources, the fish and seafood industry is growing rapidly. Production for 1991 was 1,066,000 tonnes, a nine percent growth from 1990.

The waters off the coast of Vietnam contain over 30 species of commercial value, including such mainstays as shrimp, tuna and sardines. Most fish are currently caught off the coast of Vietnam. Large potential remains to harvest fish at 20 to 100 metres. The fishing industry consists of small boats that are not equipped for deep waters; therefore, improved fishing vessels and equipment are needed.

Opportunities for inland fisheries development have been adversely affected by the use of chemicals during the war, the use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture, and the expansion of irrigation and hydropower facilities. The main development potential in aquaculture exists in pond culture, cage and pen rearing, and brackish water culture.