

300-400 kg within 2-4 years also for internal and urban consumption with some exports.

The intensive type, on the other hand, utilizes high technology and raises pure breeds, both zebu and European breeds on balanced feeds, fodder and grain. The average final weight is between 350 kg and 440 kg. Herds are from 200 to 500 animals but can be as high as 1,000. All producers within this segment are organized under local unions and associations and within the National Livestock Confederation.

The semi-intensive type raises dual purpose, zebu and crossbreed cattle in pasturelands. Herds tend to be small, from 35 to 50 head. Calves are sold locally and to large cities, while the milk is for local use only.

Mexico's beef meat production in thousands of metric tons between 1986 and 1990 was as follows:

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991p
Beef	1,248	1,273	1,217	1,162	1,114	935

p=projected

Source: Boletín Mensual de Información Básica del Sector Agropecuario y Forestal, SARH

Approximately 53% of animals slaughtered are females, 42% steers and 5% bulls. This is basically so because a large proportion of the male calves are exported to the U.S. after being weaned. Of the meat sold in Mexico, a large proportion corresponds to females and it therefore tends to be harder and drier.

There is a total of 1,529 slaughterhouses in Mexico, 95% of which are municipal and have a low sanitary quality, while only 5% are what is called TIF (tipo inspección federal or federally inspected) plants or have TIF features, which include very strict sanitary measures. Close to 40% of all slaughterhouses are in the Central zone of Mexico, around Mexico City; 34% are located in the Gulf and Southeast zones; and 26% in the North. There are a total of 31 TIF plants and 35 plants with TIF features, most of which are located in the North, basically to process export meats. The installed capacity of the 28 TIF plants is of 6.5 million head annually or 7085 head per shift, although much of it is not presently being used. Additionally, there are three TIF processing and packing plants in the states of Chiapas, Guerrero and Tabasco. These 31 plants also have the capacity to refrigerate and freeze 15,460 head.

The distribution system for domestic meat is usually rather long. A series of intermediaries intervene in the process, often increasing the final price on the product. The following diagram illustrates the distribution chain: