

Abstract

Objective: The purpose was to determine the profitability of pig butcher enterprises selling cooked and raw pork from butcher shops in two districts of Western Kenya.

Materials and methods: Butchers from two sublocations of each of Busia (16) and Kakamega (14) districts were included. Face-to-face interviews were used to determine the highest and lowest price each butcher would pay for a 30kg pig and to describe the input costs of their businesses. Median weight of 6-10 month old pigs in the area was 30kg. Student's t-tests were used to compare expenses, profits and pigs sold/week by butcher category. Profits were calculated using butcher's high and low pig and pork prices as follows; Profit=dressed weight*price/kg pork–(short run expenses/pig). Dressed weight=22.5kg (0.75*30) assuming all pork was sold.

Results: Short run expenses included employee costs (185Ksh±90.84), meat inspection (Ksh 73±27.7), slaughter slab (Ksh 89±24.8), transporting pig to slaughter (Ksh 101±41.9), wood (Ksh 51±28.22), water (Ksh 30±21.7), soap (Ksh 13±9.4) and salt (Ksh 9±3.3). Others included monthly rent (Ksh 1057±708.9), yearly scale inspection (Ksh 1367±775.1), license (Ksh 2782±793.6), personnel (Ksh 653±277.4) and purchase (repair) of scale (Ksh 3083±2875). Butchers from Busia (13/16) were 10.9 times more likely to sell cooked pork than butchers from Kakamega (4/14; p=0.004). Butchers selling cooked pork sold more pigs/week (5.1±1.4) than those selling only raw pork (3.6±1.6; p=0.03). Short run expenses were higher for butchers selling cooked pork (Ksh 497±72.2) than those selling raw pork (Ksh 442±133.9; p=0.02). The lowest pig price (2097Ksh±429.7) and subsequent high profit (346Ksh±558.3) resulted in negative profits for 9 butchers.

Conclusion: The prices butchers pay for pigs were quite variable and could exceed potential pork revenue. Short run costs equal approximately 3kg of pork. The highest possible pig price can be determined by subtracting 3kg from dressed weight and then multiplying the remaining kg by pork price. Costs incurred by different butchers also varied.