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**Report Highlights:**

Paraguayan beef exports in 2026 are forecast at 490,000 tons carcass weight equivalent (cwe), down six percent due to smaller slaughter and lower beef output. Chile is expected to remain the leading destination, though shipments are projected to decline, while demand from the United States, Taiwan, and Israel is anticipated to remain strong. Average FOB prices have risen sharply over the past year, boosting producer returns but adding pressure to domestic retail prices. As a result, beef consumption is forecast to contract further, with consumers increasingly shifting toward more affordable poultry and pork.

## Production

Paraguayan beef production in 2026 is forecast down at 590,000 tons carcass weight equivalent (cwe), a drop of almost 8 percent from 2025. A smaller cattle herd, normal weather and strong cattle prices are expected to encourage producers to retain cattle in their herds, limiting the total number available for slaughter. Higher average carcass weights are forecast to partially offset the overall nationwide production loss.

After four straight years of dry conditions, rain returned in February-March 2025, noticeably improving pasture conditions. At the same time, a renewed strong export demand positively impacted cattle prices and cattlemen's outlook. Contacts estimate that national cattle slaughter in 2026 could decline by 200,000–300,000 head, to around 2.35 million head. The reduction is attributed to fewer calves born in recent years, higher-than-anticipated slaughter volumes in 2024 and 2025, and a limited supply of females for slaughter as producers gradually rebuild their herds.

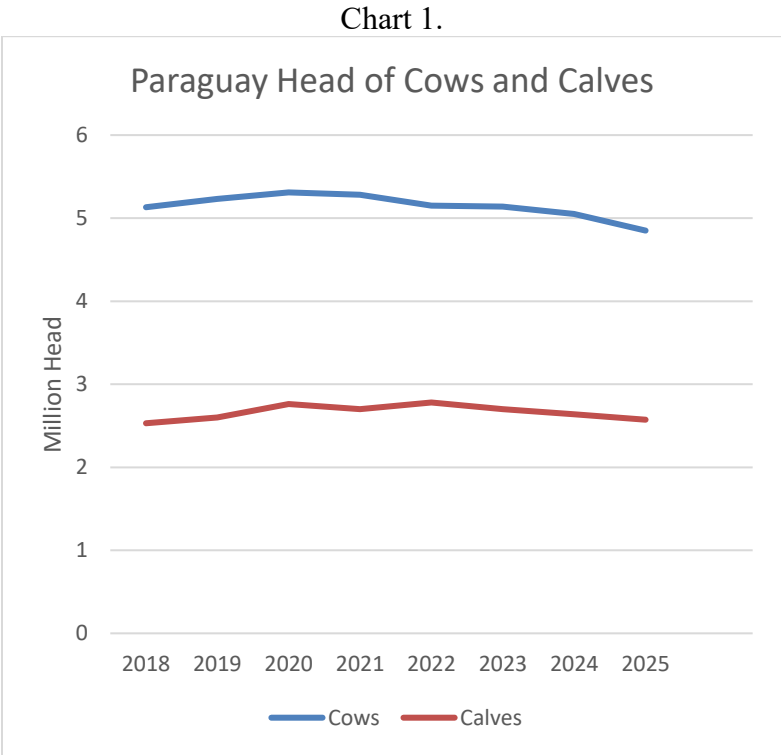
The average carcass weight in 2026 is projected at nearly 250 kilograms, continuing the upward trend of the past two years. Heavier weights are expected due to a smaller overall slaughter, which typically raises average carcass size, reduced slaughter of lighter cows and heifers, and greater use of grain finishing. Meat packers already report an increase of 3–5 kilograms per head in 2025.

From 2021-2025, many producers were forced to source supplemental feed to maintain their herd's productivity in midst of dry conditions. Many cow calf operations purchased forage, bales, and whatever feed was available. Additionally, some producers were forced to move cattle to other areas. The lack of drinking water for cattle was a serious problem which led to many cattlemen culling open and unproductive cows, reducing the country's cow herd by approximately 400,000 head during this period. Official data show that the number of calves weaned fell, but at a lower rate than the reduction in the cow herd. This indicates that the calf crop percentage (weaning rate) was maintained or even improved, demonstrating that producers sustained reproductive efficiency despite adverse environmental conditions. Weaning rates increased to an average 52 percent, 2-3 percentage points higher than the average of the period 2016-2020. Despite higher productivity, the total number of calves in 2024 and 2025 dropped to about 2.6 million head, which is forecast to have a negative impact on the number of cattle slaughtered in 2026.

Beef production in 2025 is projected at 640,000 tons cwe, about 40,000 tons above USDA's official estimate. The upward revision reflects a larger than anticipated slaughter, which during the first seven months of the year ran seven percent higher than the same period in 2024. The increase was driven by prolonged dry conditions that forced many producers to market cattle earlier than planned, as well as by strong cattle prices that incentivized additional sales. While most industry contacts expect slaughter to moderate during the final four months of the year, total slaughter is still forecast to exceed the previous year at approximately 2.6 million head.

Paraguay's beef sector is experiencing a significant change in the way cattle are finished, as the use of grains and by-products expands and consolidates. Until recent years, the feedlot business was mostly feed yards of producers with their own cattle and only operated during winter when finishing cattle on pasture is difficult. The long, dry period of recent years forced many cattlemen to "discover" grain finishing, though in many cases this was only the result of lack of alternatives. The shift toward feedlot

production was initially driven by necessity, but today many operations provide custom feeding services year-round. According to official data, there are about 210 registered feed yards with a combined instant capacity of 300,000 head. Actual annual throughput is significantly higher, as most yards cycle cattle multiple times per year. The sector continues to expand, with new feed yards being established and existing operations increasing capacity. Industry sources also indicate that local meat packers are expected to place a growing share of their own cattle in feedlots.



Source: Post with Paraguay’s SENACSA data

Contacts estimate that in 2025 about 35-40 percent of the total slaughter will be finished on grain, either in commercial feed yards or ranches on pastures with grain supplemented. This share is projected to increase in 2026 as contacts in the sector expect strong cattle prices and a continued favorable price relation between the costs of feed and cattle prices. Grain feeding in Paraguay will continue to escalate as local meat packers increase the demand of grain-fed beef for foreign customers wanting beef with higher marbling. Paraguay’s beef production is accelerating, with higher extraction rates supported by greater adoption of intensive feeding practices. Steers, bulls, and heifers now reach slaughter weight much faster than under the traditional system of finishing older animals primarily on pasture. Grain-fed cattle currently receive a price premium of about 5 percent over pasture-finished cattle.

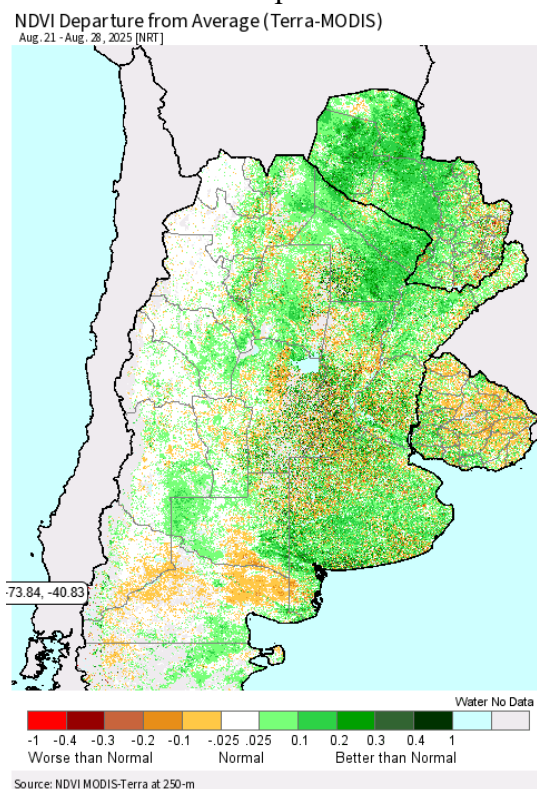
Paraguay’s corn production continues to expand, with USDA estimating output for marketing year (MY) 2024/25 at 5.4 million tons. Domestic consumption is projected at 2.1 million tons, with the surplus exported primarily to Brazil. The bioethanol industry is the largest single consumer, utilizing more than 1 million tons of corn annually. This sector also generates substantial volumes of wet and dry distillers’ grains (DDGS), which are marketed locally as a high-value livestock feed ingredient.

According to official data from SENACSA, Paraguay's cattle herd in 2025 totaled 12.83 million head, managed across 116,000 operations. Approximately 89 percent of these operations are located in the eastern region (Región Oriental) and 11 percent in the western region (Región Occidental). Over the past decade, the national herd has declined by about 10 percent, while the number of cattle operations fell by 23 percent. The sharpest reduction occurred in the eastern region, where crop production competes for land, and where the herd now stands at about 7 million head. By contrast, the western Chaco region experienced only a minimal decline and currently supports 5.8 million head. Industry contacts estimate that roughly 2,000 large-scale operations control about half of the national herd.

The Chaco region is currently the focus of significant new investment in cattle operations. Subtropical pastures provide abundant forage, making the area highly productive for livestock. However, basic infrastructure including roads, communications, and energy remains underdeveloped. Investments are therefore concentrated on core ranch improvements such as fencing, pasture development, water systems for livestock, upgraded genetics, and overall ranch infrastructure.

In Paraguay, the calving season typically extends from August to December, with weaning taking place between March and June at an average weight of 170–180 kilograms. Most male calves are left intact and finished as bulls. For the 2025 breeding season, favorable rainfall has supported strong pasture recovery, improving body condition scores across much of the cow herd, although localized flooding persists. As a result, pregnancy rates are expected to be above average. Consequently, despite a smaller cow inventory, the number of calves born in 2026 is forecast to be relatively high.

Map 1.



Paraguay's national weaning rate averages only 50 percent, although progressive producers achieve significantly higher levels. Industry contacts report that losses between conception and weaning can reach 10–20 percent. Key areas for improving herd efficiency include maintaining adequate cow body condition throughout the production cycle, implementing rigorous reproductive health programs, and strengthening management practices during calving and the early stages of calf development.

Paraguay traditionally develops cattle through stocker programs, in which weaned calves and young bulls are grown out to add weight and condition before entering the finishing phase. Stocker production typically occurs on improved subtropical pastures planted with perennial grasses. Calves generally enter these programs at around 180 kilograms. Heifers are transferred to finishing once they reach approximately 270 kilograms, while bulls enter finishing at 300–340 kilograms. From there, cattle follow one of two common finishing paths: (1) supplementation with grains and distillers' grains while remaining on pasture, reaching slaughter weights of about 400 kilograms; or (2) transfer to feedlots on a full grain diet for roughly 120 days, where heifers are finished at about 420 kilograms and steers/bulls at 450–480 kilograms.

By the end of 2025, Paraguay will operate 12 large export-oriented meat packing plants with a combined slaughter capacity of roughly 3 million head annually. One new facility began operations in mid-2024, and a second will come online in late 2025. Both plants, financed with local capital, together expanded national slaughter capacity by about 20 percent, slightly reducing the dominance of two Brazilian firms that accounted for 36 percent and 24 percent of slaughter, respectively, during the first seven months of 2025. Over the same period, Mennonite cooperatives, which own three plants, represented 25 percent of slaughter, while the remaining volume was handled by two local companies. The Paraguayan packing industry is generally in solid financial condition, operating with modern facilities that are routinely audited by sanitary authorities from major export destinations. In addition, Paraguay maintains about 120 officially inspected small slaughterhouses with an aggregate capacity of roughly 500,000 head per year, which supply only the domestic market.

Paraguay is engaged in an active debate over whether to end Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination in the near term or continue with the current policy. The country is presently recognized as "FMD-free with vaccination," which allows access to most international markets, though high-value destinations such as Japan and South Korea remain closed. China also remains closed, though for political reasons due to Paraguay's recognition of Taiwan. The government has indicated its intention to cease vaccination in 2027 in order to obtain "FMD-free without vaccination" status by 2028, aligning with the status currently held by Bolivia and Brazil. Officials argue that this shift would expand market access for Paraguayan beef. However, nearly all cattle producer associations strongly oppose such a rapid timeline, citing significant risks and the need for greater preparation. Their concerns are rooted in the devastating FMD outbreak of 2011, which had severe consequences for the sector, particularly for producers. In contrast, the meat packing industry supports ending vaccination. The issue remains under discussion, though most industry contacts believe Paraguay is likely to suspend vaccination, but only after a longer transition period than currently envisioned.

In January 2025, Paraguay implemented a national animal identification system to ensure full cattle traceability, strengthening the credibility of its livestock sector. The system requires mandatory registration and individual identification of all animals using a card-type ear tag with a unique number, paired with an electronic button containing a radio-frequency chip. The National Animal Health Service

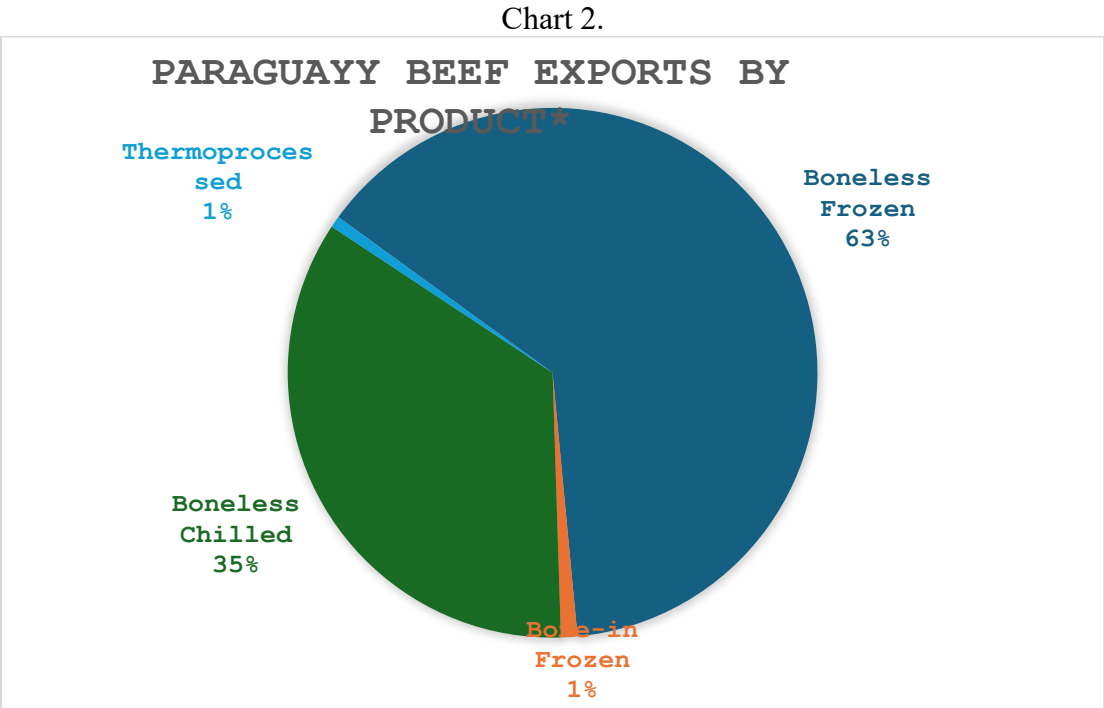
(SENACSA) will be able to access detailed records, including owner information, place of origin, health status, medical treatments, veterinary checks, and animal movements. Implementation began with calves born in the second half of 2024 and the first half of 2025. Both producers and industry stakeholders have expressed strong support for the program.

**Trade**

Paraguay beef exports in 2026 are projected at 490,000 tons cwe, a drop of 6 percent from Post’s 2025 projection as result of expected lower beef production. Projected larger beef imports and lower domestic consumption would partially offset an even bigger drop in exports.

Paraguayan beef exports in 2026 are forecast at 490,000 tons carcass weight equivalent (cwe), a decline of six percent from Post’s 2025 projection, reflecting lower expected beef production. The contraction in exportable supplies is driven by tighter cattle availability following heavy marketings in recent years. Higher projected beef imports and a modest decline in domestic consumption are expected to partially cushion what would otherwise be a sharper drop in exports. Despite this adjustment, growth of Paraguay’s beef exports will continue to hinge on herd rebuilding dynamics, feed availability, and access to key international markets.

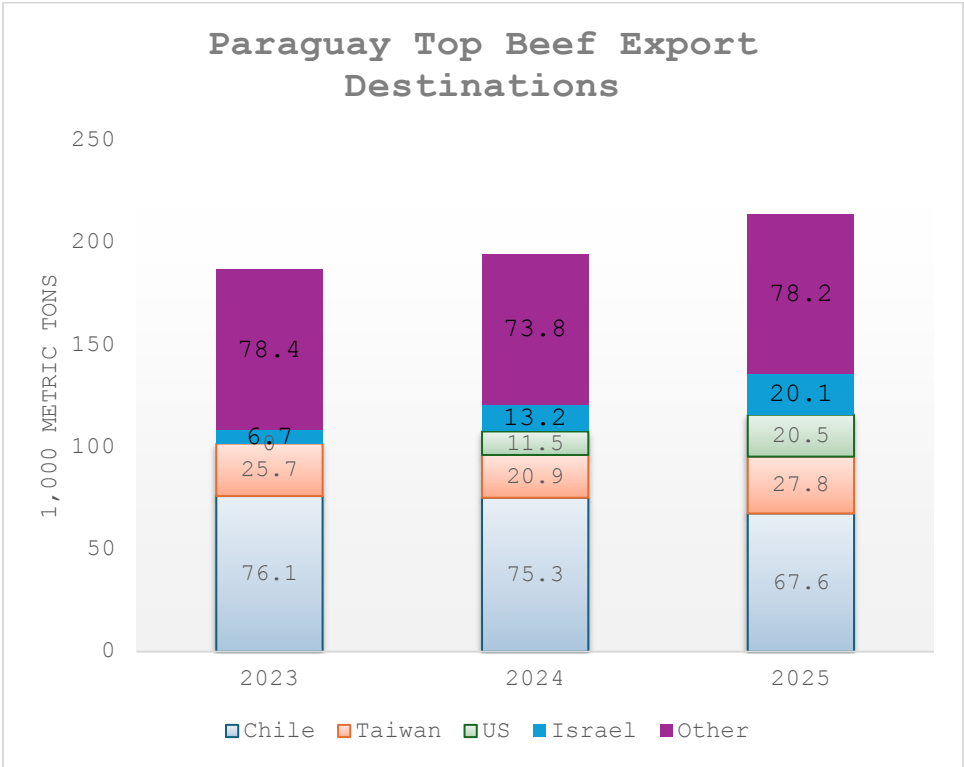
Paraguay is a key exporter of frozen beef for processing to multiple international markets, while also supplying boneless chilled beef primarily to neighboring countries. Chart 2 below illustrates the composition of Paraguay’s beef exports during January–July 2025, expressed as a percentage share by product weight:



Source: Post FAS Buenos Aires with TDM – January-July 2025

Despite lower overall export volumes, Chile is expected to remain Paraguay’s leading beef market in 2026, with demand concentrated in boneless chilled cuts. The second-largest destination will likely be between Taiwan and the United States. Taiwan has consistently ranked as Paraguay’s number two market in 2023, 2024, and the first half of 2025; however, exports to the United States have strengthened considerably, and most traders anticipate continued robust shipments in 2026. Exports to Israel also expanded significantly in 2024 and 2025 and are projected to maintain this upward trend. By contrast, exports to the Russian Federation, historically a co-leading market alongside Chile during 2004–2022— have continued to contract, dropping to sixth place in the first seven months of 2025, with only 11,100 tons shipped on a product weight basis.

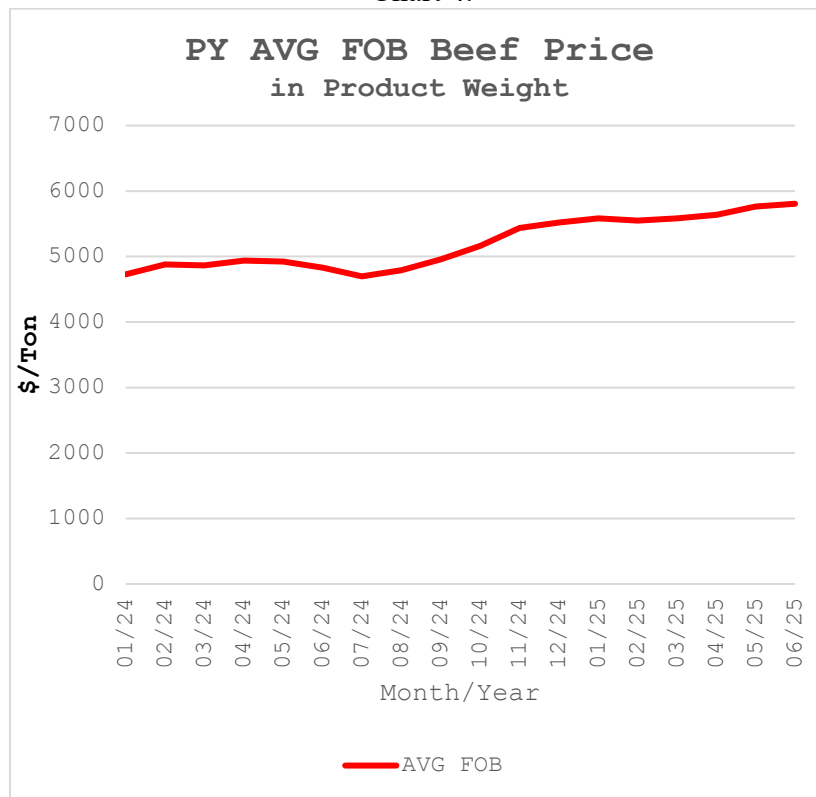
Chart 3.



Source: Post with TDM – In product Weight  
\* January-July each year

Chart 4 below presents Paraguay’s average FOB beef export prices (\$/ton, product weight) since January 2024, highlighting a clear upward trend beginning in late 2024 across most markets. However, in recent months of 2025, prices to the United States, Chile, and Taiwan have leveled off or declined slightly, while prices to the European Union, Israel, and the Russian Federation have risen sharply.

Chart 4.



Source: Post FAS Buenos Aires with Trade Data Monitor, Inc. Data

Beef exports to Chile are projected to remain a key outlet for Paraguay in 2026, though competition from Brazil is expected to intensify. Because Brazilian beef currently faces a 50 percent duty when entering the U.S. market, Brazil is actively seeking to expand shipments to alternative destinations, including Chile. Paraguay has been Chile’s leading beef supplier since 2020, followed by Brazil; however, during the first seven months of 2025, Brazil surpassed Paraguay by 5,000 tons, an 8 percent margin. Paraguay typically supplies Chile with a full range of 20 boneless chilled cuts, which are marketed directly to both retail and industrial buyers.

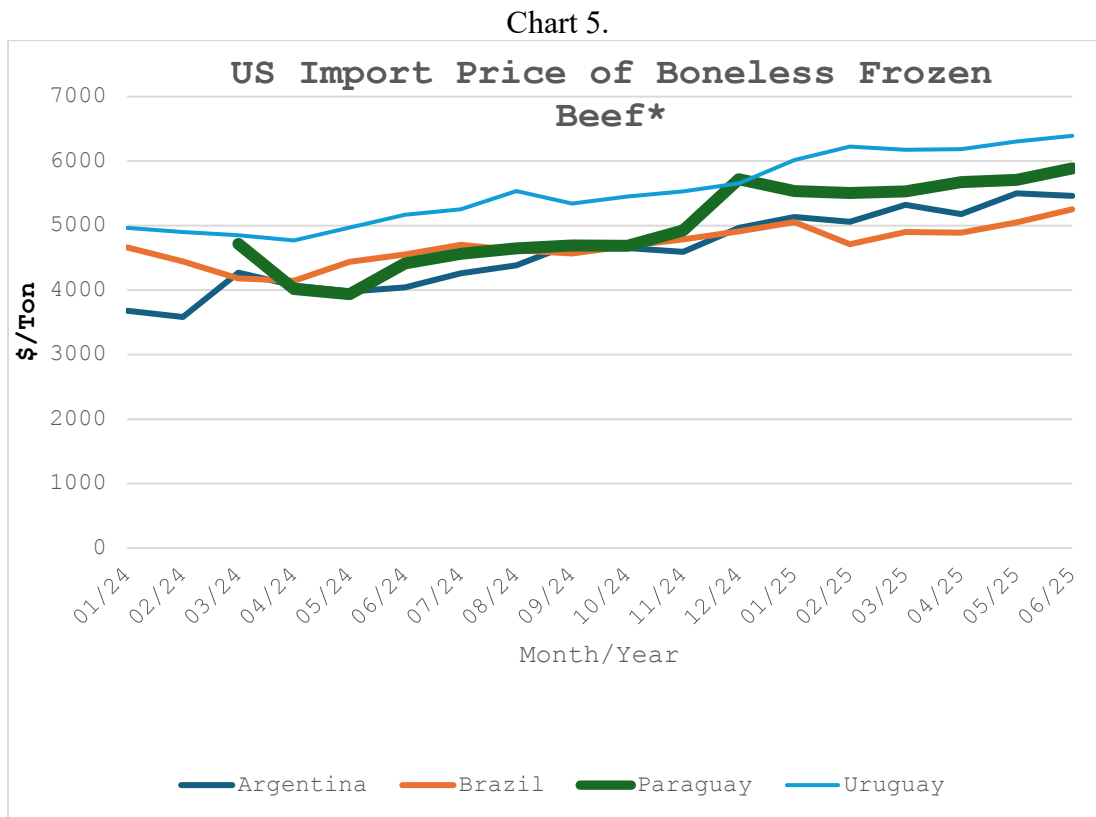
Meanwhile, the U.S. market is forecast to be Paraguay’s second or third main destination in 2026. Most beef exporters believe demand will continue to be strong as U.S. supplies continue to contract, especially as and especially, if the U.S.-Brazil trade dispute continues. Based on Paraguayan official trade data, beef exports to the US in 2023 (the first shipment was in December after USDA’s approval) were only 75 tons (product weight), and 28,526 tons in 2024. Exports in the first 7 months of 2025 totaled 20,502 tons, an increase of 78 percent in volume and 24 percent in average value, comparing the same period a year ago.

Meanwhile, the United States is forecast to be Paraguay’s second or third-largest beef market in 2026. Exporters anticipate continued strong demand, given the ongoing tightness of U.S. beef supplies and the potential continuation of the U.S.–Brazil trade dispute. According to official Paraguayan trade data, exports to the United States began in December 2023 following USDA market access approval, totaling just 75 tons (product weight) that year. Shipments expanded sharply to 28,526 tons in 2024, and during



the first seven months of 2025 reached 20,502 tons, up 78 percent in volume and 24 percent in average value compared with the same period in 2024.

Chart 5 below shows the price of U.S. imports of boneless frozen beef for industry use from the four major suppliers from South America. In the past 12 months, it illustrates that Paraguay’s average beef price increased almost 30 percent, surpassing the import price of Brazilian and Argentine beef.



Source: Post FAS Buenos Aires with Trade Data Monitor, Inc. Data  
 \* Commodity HTS 0202308000, Meat of Bovines, Boneless, Frozen, NESOI

Like Brazil, Paraguay does not have a dedicated country-specific tariff rate quota (TRQ) for beef exports to the United States. Instead, shipments enter under the “other countries” TRQ of 65,005 tons annually, which carries a low duty of \$44 per ton. Exports above the quota face a tariff of 26.4 percent. In addition, the U.S. government recently imposed an extra 10 percent duty on all Paraguayan imports. At the same time, in early August, the United States raised Brazil’s import duty on most products by 50 percent, directly impacting Brazil’s substantial beef exports. As long as these tariffs remain in place, U.S. imports of Brazilian beef are expected to decline sharply, creating opportunities for Paraguay and other suppliers to expand their share of the “other countries” quota. Until 2025, Brazil had been the dominant supplier under this quota, leaving little room for competitors. In 2026, however, Paraguay is expected to capture a significant share, with local packers already finalizing contracts with U.S. importers to ship beef in-bond by December 2025 for entry at the start of the new quota year.

Paraguay’s exports to the United States consist primarily of frozen, boneless forequarter beef blocks for processing, with chemical lean (CL) levels typically ranging from 80 to 90. Only limited volumes of

frozen boneless cuts are shipped, though local exporters see potential to expand this market segment. In February 2025, Paraguay also made its first shipment of kosher-certified beef to the United States, marking some market diversification.

Taiwan is forecast to remain a major customer for Paraguayan beef in 2026. Exports totaled about 40,000 tons during 2022–2024, and shipments in the first seven months of 2025 reached 28,000 tons up 33 percent in volume and 25 percent in average value compared with the same period in 2024. Nearly all exports to Taiwan consist of frozen boneless beef blocks, along with certain cuts such as shin shank. Exporters describe Taiwan as a highly price-sensitive market with demand for a wide variety of beef cuts.

Israel has also emerged as a strong and growing destination, and exporters expect demand to remain firm in 2026. Exports reached a record 27,000 tons (product weight) in 2024, and shipments in the first seven months of 2025 rose 52 percent in volume and 25 percent in average value year-over-year. Israel typically imports kosher frozen forequarter boneless cuts from Paraguay, but exports of boneless chilled cuts, often vacuum-packed and branded for retail, are expanding from a small base. Shipments of frozen bone-in cuts remain limited but are gradually increasing.

Exports to Brazil remain significant but are expected to continue their downward trend, following declines in 2024 and 2025. Brazilian imports are concentrated in just a few high-demand items, particularly rump cap and tri-tip. Most of this trade consists of chilled cuts, supplemented by smaller volumes of frozen product.

Paraguay is also actively working to diversify and expand its export markets. Singapore opened to Paraguayan beef in early 2025, while the Philippines is expected to open in late 2025, followed by Mexico in late 2025 or early 2026. Industry contacts further anticipate that South Korea and Japan could open their markets to Paraguayan beef by 2027 or 2028, representing major opportunities for future growth.

Beef imports in 2026 are forecast to rise to a record 35,000 tons cwe, as Paraguay increasingly prioritizes higher-value exports while sourcing lower-cost cuts for the domestic market. Imports consist primarily of chilled and frozen beef, with a growing share of bone-in rib cuts, which are highly popular among local consumers. Purchases are concentrated among supermarket chains and meat packers. Brazil supplies nearly 90 percent of total imports, followed by Argentina.

## **Domestic Consumption**

Beef consumption in 2026 is forecast at 135,000 tons carcass weight equivalent (cwe), a decline of 7 percent from the previous year. The reduction reflects tighter domestic supplies and strong foreign demand, with exporters capturing high prices in international markets. These factors are expected to keep upward pressure on retail beef prices, constraining household demand. As a result, per capita beef consumption is projected to fall further, continuing the long-term trend of gradual decline.

Paraguayan consumer habits are shifting, with beef consumption declining in favor of poultry and pork. Demand for lower-priced beef offal has also increased. Per capita poultry consumption is estimated at 25 kilograms, while pork consumption has climbed to 12 kilograms, up sharply from only 4 kilograms a

decade ago. The steady expansion of domestic pork production has supported this growth, ensuring greater availability in the local market. Rising demand for poultry and pork is helping to ease pressure on beef supplies and prices.

Supermarkets are the primary retail channel for beef sales in Paraguay. Most stores feature refrigerated displays with pre-packaged cuts in trays, as well as branded vacuum-packed products targeting higher-income consumers. In addition, supermarkets typically maintain an in-store butchery counter where staff cut and serve meat to individual customer preferences, preserving the tradition of personalized service alongside the growth of modern retail formats. Independent butcher shops also remain present, particularly in smaller cities and rural areas, but their share of sales has steadily declined as supermarkets consolidate their role in beef distribution. Ribs remain the most popular beef cut in Paraguay, particularly for the traditional weekend barbecue or “asado”, while stewing cuts also enjoy strong demand. Higher-income consumers increasingly seek branded, vacuum-packed cuts such as rump cap, tri-tip, flank, and ribs. Retail prices for these premium cuts have been rising, as they compete directly with export demand.

## Statistical Table

Meat, Beef and Veal Market Year Begins	2024		2025		2026	
	Jan 2024		Jan 2025		Jan 2026	
Paraguay	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
<b>Slaughter (Reference)</b> (1000 HEAD)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Beginning Stocks</b> (1000 MT CWE)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Production</b> (1000 MT CWE)	590	615	600	640	0	590
<b>Total Imports</b> (1000 MT CWE)	12	12	20	26	0	35
<b>Total Supply</b> (1000 MT CWE)	602	627	620	666	0	625
<b>Total Exports</b> (1000 MT CWE)	472	472	500	520	0	490
<b>Human Dom. Consumption</b> (1000 MT CWE)	130	155	120	146	0	135
<b>Other Use, Losses</b> (1000 MT CWE)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Dom. Consumption</b> (1000 MT CWE)	130	155	120	146	0	135
<b>Ending Stocks</b> (1000 MT CWE)	0	0	0	0	0	0

<b>Total Distribution</b> (1000 MT CWE)	602	627	620	666	0	625
(1000 HEAD) ,(1000 MT CWE)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: <a href="#">PSD Online Advanced Query</a>						

**Attachments:**

No Attachments