Consumption of red meat in South Africa

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Red meat, as an animal source protein, is consumed by all the different income groups in South Africa. The high income groups consist of 16.5% of the population, upper middle and middle income 72.8% and low incomes 10.7%.

Red meat is internationally classified as: all mammalian muscle meat, including, beef, veal, pork, lamb, mutton, horse, and goat (FAO - IARC, 2015).

The annual per capita consumption of red meat in South Africa over the different species is as follows:

Beef: 13.39kg
Chicken: 37.18kg
Pork: 4.23kg
Sheep: 2.41kg

Over the past decade, meat consumption in South Africa expanded rapidly as a result of growing income levels, continued urbanisation, rising living standards and ever increasing dietary diversity. As the most affordable source of animal protein, poultry consumption in particular increased by almost 50%, compared to a 19% and 33% increase in beef and pork consumption respectively. Particularly in the short term, the outlook for income growth is much more reserved, resulting in significantly slower meat consumption growth in the coming decade relative to the past. This slowdown is already evident in the post-recession period and since 2010, consumption growth for chicken and beef has slowed considerably, with pork being the only meat type where consumption growth accelerated in the past five years relative to the 2005 to 2010 period.

Affordability being an important consideration in a slower income growth environment, chicken and pork consumption is also expected to outpace that of beef and sheep meat over the next ten years. Whilst slowing from the past decade, chicken consumption is projected to expand by 29% in the outlook period, equating to more than 500 thousand tons of additional chicken meat and almost 70% of additional meat consumed by 2025 relative to a 2013-2015 base period. Albeit from a small base, pork consumption growth in the coming decade accelerates from the past, expanding 37% by 2025 relative to the base period. By contrast, growth in beef consumption slows to 6% in the coming decade, from almost 19% over the past ten years. Much of this slowdown is attributed to the rapid decline in beef consumption over the next three years. Given the cautious outlook for income growth, consumer spending is expected to be under pressure, while at the same time supply limitations arising from herd liquidation through the current drought has pushed prices to record levels. Following this initial decline and as income growth recovers, beef consumption is projected to rise once more over the second half of the outlook period, to reach 13.5 kg per capita by 2025. This makes it the second most consumed animal protein following chicken (42kg per capita), with pork and sheep meat significantly lower at 5.2kg and 2.6kg per capita respectively. Eggs represent an important, affordable alternative protein source and domestic egg consumption is projected to expand by 17% over the coming decade, to exceed 8.5kg per capita by 2025 (BFAP, 2016).

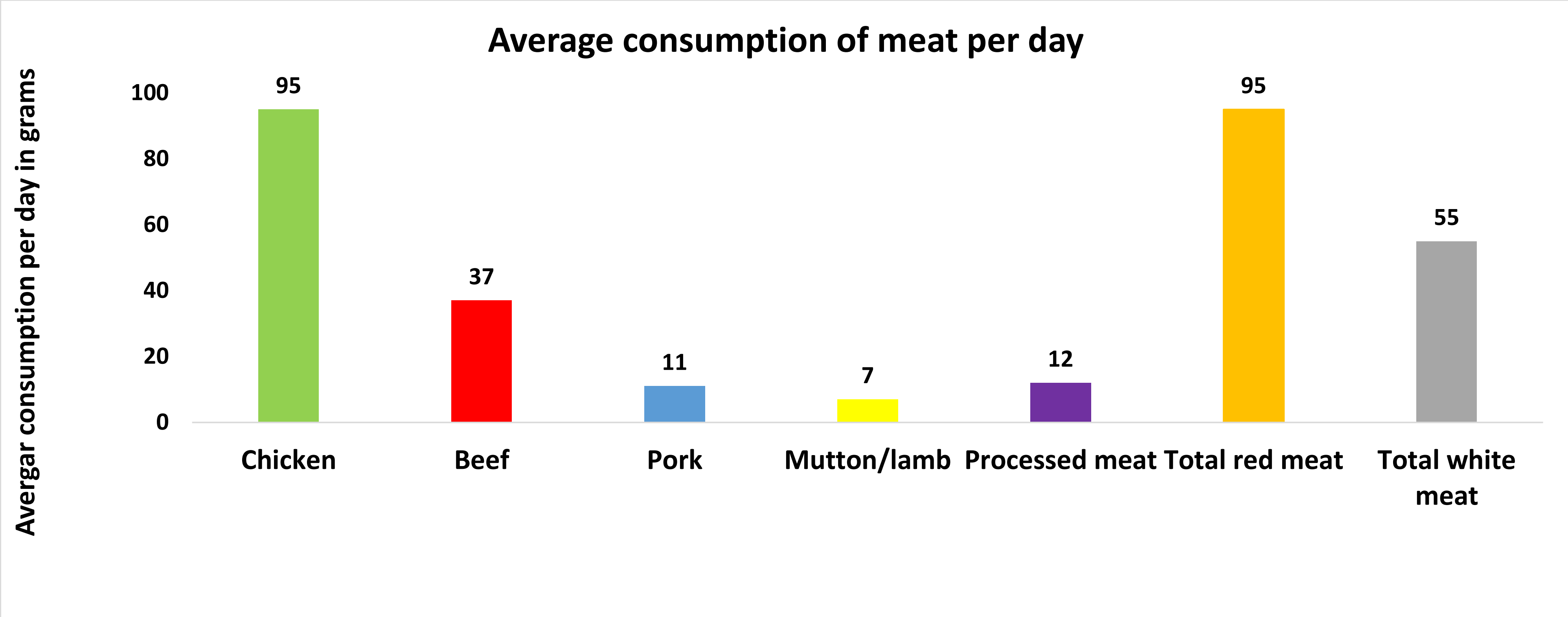

Figure 1: Average consumption of meat per day in grams (BFAP, 2016).

References

BFAP, 2016. *BFAP Baseline Agricultural Outlook 2016 - 2025.* 1 ed. Pretoria: BFAP.

FAO - IARC, 2015. *Q&A on the carcinogenicity of the consumption of red meat and processed meat,* France: FAO.