Big meat & protein - IN A NUTSHELL -



Big Meat/Protein The corporate meatpacking industry involves the slaughtering, processing, packaging and distribution of animal protein from cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, fish and other livestock. Increasingly, the industrial meat sector is also linked to the production of "alternative proteins" – i.e., high protein foods processed from plants, insects, fungi, or via cell-culture or fermentation (synthetic biology) techniques – aimed at replacing or co-existing with conventional animal- and fish-based proteins on the market.

RANK	COMPANY (HEADQUARTERS)	2020 Food Sales, US\$ Millions	2019 Food Sales, US\$ Millions
1	JBS (BRAZIL)	\$ 50,690	\$ 48,795 (DEC 2019)
2	TYSON FOODS (USA)	\$ 43,185	\$ 42,405 (DEC. 2019)
3	CARGILL (USA)	\$ 32,375	\$ 31,700 (May 2019)
4	SMITHFIELD FOODS / WH GROUP (CHIN	NA) \$24,463	\$ 23,346 (Dec. 2019)
5	MARFRIG (BRAZIL)	\$ 13,107	\$ 12,658 (DEC. 2019)
6	NH FOODS (JAPAN)	\$ 10,655	\$ 10,878 (Mar. 2020)
7	HORMEL FOODS GROUP (USA)	\$ 9,608	\$ 9,497 (Oct. 2019)
8	DANISH GROWN (NETHERLANDS)	\$ 9,294	\$ 8,472 (SEP. 2019)
9	BRF (BRAZIL)	\$ 7,664	\$ 8,490 (DEC. 2019)
10	VION (NETHERLANDS)	\$ 5,588	\$ 5,629 (DEC. 2019)

WORLD'S LEADING MEAT COMPANIES, 2020



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Highlights from the full report:

Big Meat is still a dirty business. Instances of contamination (e.g., pathogens in meat products, groundwater contamination), corruption and worker illness, injury and death persist. Drought in North America, avian flu outbreaks across the globe, African Swine Fever in Asia, slaughterhouse backlogs, and a high-profile ransomware hack are just some of the sector's recent challenges.

Despite the pandemic, the biggest meat-exporting countries – Brazil, USA, Canada, Russia, the European Union countries and Mexico – shipped more meat in 2020 than they had in 2019.



Chew on this

Big Meat companies are generally open to the growing global interest in plant-based and other alternative proteins: if there is money to be made, they're in. Each of the top 10 meat companies has its own line of alternative protein products, and they are optimistic that alt-protein investment could contribute to "net zero" climate credibility and provide an additional revenue stream.

But the explosion of alt-protein products on the market isn't making a dent in the demand for animal protein, which means the environmental, health and climate costs of plentiful and cheap industrial meat aren't going away. FAO predicts global consumption of animal protein will continue to increase, estimating 14% growth by 2030.