

Pork price on the uptrend

Meat costs 15% more than last year with further hike expected

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PETALING JAYA: The price of pork in the market has gone up by as much as 15% compared with about a year ago.

Currently, 100kg of pork costs an average of RM850, in comparison with between RM700 and RM800 last year.

With the upcoming Hungry Ghost Festival, demand is expected to shoot up, raising concerns of a further price hike.

The price of pork already reached an all-time high early this year.

Giving Johor as an example, Malaysia Butcher Association president Chan Nyen Loong said 100kg of the meat was going for RM920 there.

"With the festival starting on Aug 3, it could hit RM1,000 throughout the celebration period.

"We are expecting a surge in demand with more stalls set up near stage performance sites," he said.

At present, about 6,000 to 7,000 pigs are slaughtered every day and judging from past years, the numbers are going to increase from early next month.

However, Chan noted a peculiar trend this year.

He said apart from a spike in demand during Chinese New Year and the Dumpling Festival, sales of pork have been sluggish.

"We sold between 20% and 30% less pork this year," he said, adding that the cost of rearing pigs was increasing yearly.

Despite this, Chan urged farmers against raising prices for fear that the demand might drop.

"My advice is to slaughter fewer pigs and sell off all the parts first before slaughtering another to manage cost," he said.

Southern Johor Pork Sellers Association chairman Foo Ow Chek said the high pork price in Johor last week was due to an abrupt drop in supply.

Foo said the Johor Veterinary Services Department had issued an order against bringing in hooved livestock from other states due to an unspecified disease.

"Movement of pigs and cows in and out of the state was banned. This has caused a sudden shortage which led to a surge in prices to as high as RM930 for every 100kg," he said.