



## In favour of the class system

Meat prices should reflect the quality of each carcass delivered to the buyer.

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Meat prices should reflect the quality of the meat.

Farmers selling their meat to abattoirs are bound by a previously agreed contract that prices all their meat at the same price, no matter what class the meat is. While the abattoirs price and sell meat according to different classes, the farmers receive a set amount per carcass.

During the apartheid era, the South African Livestock and Meat Board controlled the access of specific areas and abattoirs to red meat. Access to markets was based

on a quota system that influenced the price of red meat sold on auction at abattoirs. After the abolishment of the apartheid policies, the controlled markets were radically deregulated.

Meat is now sold by farmers directly to abattoirs, and some farmers own their own abattoirs. There is even increased trading in beef, mutton and lamb carcasses on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE).

"Contractual arrangements and trading on the JSE provide producers

and sellers of red meat with more control in selling prices," says Elsabe Janse van Rensburg.

However, for farmers to receive fair prices, the interaction between the different carcass classes and the price of a specific meat type needs to be taken into consideration.

"For the farmer to receive the best price, the agreed amount per carcass must be accurately calculated according to the different contributions of each carcass class to the final price that they receive."



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