

# JBS

Company Note: The year is 2024 and opportunity is knocking.

LatAm Meatpackers

## Main takeaways:

(i) We believe that the approval of the dual listing process could be an interesting short-term trigger, but it should only happen in the beginning of 2024; (ii) We see the cattle cycle in the US improving only in 2025; (iii) The company's geographical diversification should enable a gradual recovery of margins, despite the compressed margins at JBS Beef North America; (iv) We reiterate our **BUY rating** with a **12M Target Price** of **R\$30.00**, implying a **upside** of **+50,23%**.

We **spoke with Christiane Assis**, JBS's I.R. director, **in a round discussion with institutional investors**. The conversation was very fruitful and dealt with the progress of the dual listing of JBS shares and the **outlook for 2024 and on the long run**. In our view, although JBS is likely to face difficulties in the coming quarters in the JBS Beef North America segment, in others we should see sequentially better margins. In addition, we see the approval of the dual listing process as a trigger for stock appreciation in the short term.

We still see a considerable upside to be captured when we consider the current screen price of the company's shares. We therefore reiterate our **BUY rating**, with a **12M Target Price** of **R\$30.00**.

## Dual listing

**SEC approval.** In the coming weeks, the market should see a position from the SEC (Securities Exchange Commission), the regulator of the American capital markets, on the effectiveness of the transaction, which could be a "green light" for the company to call a meeting.

Between the convening of the meeting and its eventual occurrence, 45 days must pass, unlike the usual 30 days, given that the company's ADR holders can also vote and that there is a bureaucratic issue for foreign brokers to exercise their voting rights.

**We believe that the dual listing process should be approved.** We are optimistic that the dual listing process will be approved at the meeting, despite the great uncertainty surrounding the vote by BNDES, which holds ~21% of the shares. Around 70% of JBS's institutional investor base is made up of foreign investors, who usually exercise their voting rights at shareholders' meetings, and are generally looking favorably on the dual listing and its effects in the medium to long term.

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## Company

### JBSS3 BZ Equity

Buy

**Price:** R\$ 19.97 (25-Oct-2023)

**Target Price 12M:** R\$ 30.00

In addition, the company has also been talking to local investors in order to demonstrate the potential unlocking of value that dual listing should generate, which, in our view, is also interesting, given that listing abroad contributes to **(i)** an improvement in corporate governance, given that it is subject to two regulatory bodies, CVM and SEC; **(ii)** a broadening of the company's investor base, both institutional and retail; **(iii)** a reduction in the cost of capital; **(iv)** greater flexibility to use equity as funding and **(v)** the possibility of an eventual re-rating of the company with improved visibility.

**Doubts about liquidity have emerged.** Some doubts about liquidity have arisen on the part of certain investors, as the dual listing should lead to JBS being delisted from ~15 passive funds in Brazil. However, it should be noted that Pilgrim's Pride Corporation (PPC), a subsidiary of JBS in the US, is present in ~75 passive funds in the US. In our view, the same should happen with JBS when its shares are listed abroad. Thus, we don't see any potential for a lack of liquidity in the shares.

We could see a conclusion by the end of December. Finally, we believe that the dual listing process should be concluded by the end of this year, and we reinforce our assessment that listing abroad is very interesting in the medium to long term from a value unlocking perspective, in addition to the approval and eventual conclusion of the process being a trigger for the appreciation of the shares in the short term.

## JBS Beef North America

**Scenario still quite complicated.** The scenario in this segment continues to be difficult, with low cat availability implying very high costs. Both in 2H23 and throughout 2024, we should continue to see the unit delivering a low single digit margin, although next year we may see a slight expansion in margins.

**But it's not that bad.** On the positive side, we see demand for beef remaining quite resilient in the US, which leads us to see room for the cutout to rise in 2024, but even so, margins should remain compressed due to the low supply of cattle. Therefore, we see the inflection of the cattle supply curve in the country taking two years to occur.

We expect a gradual return to greater availability of cattle in the US, and consequently margins, only in 2025. Until then, we see the company focusing on applying operational improvements to its plants in the country and importing a larger volume of beef into the US from Brazil and Australia, countries where the cattle cycle is favorable.

Geographical diversification and the company's good financial health are helping it get through this difficult time in the US beef operation. Also on the positive side, we see the company well-prepared to get through this difficult time at JBS Beef North America, given that its other segments are facing more favorable winds and that the company is in good financial health.

The company has extended its debt to ~11 years, postponed its first maturity to 2027 and maintains a solid balance sheet with high liquidity (~US\$6bn net of cash and revolvers). It should also be noted that, in 2022, JBS issued ~US\$16bn in bonds, and, in September 2023, it issued US\$2.5bn in additional bonds.

## Pilgrim's Pride Corporation (PPC)

**Gradual recovery in the United States driven by the drop in grains and better prices in big bird.** After seeing margins under pressure in 4Q22, we are seeing a gradual recovery, especially in the big bird operation, which accounts for ~33% of the segment's revenues in the US and is marked by greater margin volatility than the other PPC US operations (small bird and retail).

It should also be noted that grains are down -25-30% y/y and represent ~45% of the COGS of chicken production operations. Therefore, we should see sequentially better margins in 2H23. Over the last 9 months, we have already seen a gradual expansion, which should have intensified in August and September (especially due to the big bird operation).

In 4Q23, the cost reduction should be even more pronounced than in 3Q23, given the tailwind in relation to grains and a potentially better average price in big bird. Thus, we believe that the EBITDA margin in 4Q23 will be sequentially higher.

**Gradual recovery trend should continue in Europe driven by lower costs and expenses.** We expect to see a gradual recovery of margins in PPC Europe throughout 1H23 and we should see a continuation of this trend in 2H23, driven more by cost and expense reductions than by a recovery in demand in the region.

JBS has been improving operational efficiency in Europe over the last 2 years, taking measures such as closing 3 of its plants (produced pork, chicken and prepared meats), which has already taken place, and including new items that the company negotiates with retailers for better SG&A control (such as electricity and labor). It's worth noting that contracts in Europe are usually negotiated on a cost-plus basis, i.e. a margin negotiated with retailers is added to the costs of the operation.

**We should continue to see attractive margins in Mexico.** Mexico is a very commoditized region, which follows a similar dynamic to the big bird US, with considerably volatile margins. As in the US, there is an additional component of volatility in relation to Europe, which is the health issue related to cases of avian influenza due to migratory birds, especially in 2Qs. In 2Q23, in particular, there was no impact, and we saw attractive margins in Mexico. We project margins to remain interesting in the country in 3Q23.

**On a consolidated basis, we project sequentially better margins in 2H23.** Overall, on a PPP basis, we should see sequentially better margins in 3Q23, and given grain tailwind and possibly better big bird prices in 4Q23, we could see an even better 4Q23 than 3Q23.

## JBS Australia

**Calm after the storm.** After the segment spent the last ~2.5 years with tight margins in beef, which represents ~65% of the operation, the country has become one of JBS's most positive highlights, given the favorability of the cycle. In the year to date, the cost of cattle in Australia has already fallen by ~50%. As a result, margins in cattle have sought a high single digit, helping to offset the drop in EBITDA generation at JBS Beef North America.

**We are bullish about the segment.** We expect very attractive margins in all segments of Australia business unit (beef, Primo's prepared products and recovery of the pork business), and we project margins in the high single digit to double digit range for the next two years.

## JBS Brazil

Favorable cattle cycle, but still not delivering margins as good as those of JBS Australia. In Brazil, the cattle cycle is also at a favorable moment, with Friboi, the operation that accounts for ~70% of the segment's revenues, having reached high single digit, driven by the reduction in the cost of cattle in the country. However, even with the favorable cycle, JBS Brasil's EBITDA margin has been below that seen at JBS Australia (in 2Q23, JBS Brasil achieved an EBITDA margin of 4.8% vs. 9.5% at JBS Australia).

Some factors contribute to this. This is due to lower-than-expected Chinese demand, which led to lower export prices and somewhat damage Friboi's operations, and factors that hurt the remaining ~30% of the operation (JBS Brasil ex-Friboi), such as **(i)** Swift in Brazil, which is at a time of great expansion and has stores that are still maturing (at a breakeven stage in relation to EBITDA); **(ii)** and the leather business, which has been suffering from the weakening of the automotive industry and the Asian economy, and consequently delivering low margins.

## Seara

**Lower costs and better volumes should contribute to a sequential recovery.** We expect a sequential recovery in margins, driven by lower costs and better export volumes, with a normalization of the global chicken oversupply scenario, which had been hurting Seara (as well as affecting PPC) and its margins. We already saw this normalization in August and September. In 4Q23, we should have a tailwind in relation to grains, combined with stronger seasonality, which should contribute to a quarter with even better margins.

## Our Take on JBS

We expect a sequential recovery in consolidated margins in 3Q23 and 4Q23, driven by **(i)** normalization of global chicken supply and demand; **(ii)** improvements in margins driven by better dynamics on US pork supply; **(iii)** resilient US beef demand and **(iv)** a favorable cattle cycle in Brazil and Australia.

**It's 2024 and opportunity is knocking.** Considering that we are at the end of October, given the procedures we have mentioned, and the 45 days after the SEC's green light for the meeting between ADR shareholders, we believe it is possible that the dual listing will only become a reality in 2024. We noticed that the shares also gave back part of their gains after the announcement to the market that the company was in the process of making the dual listing possible.

So, there is still upside to be captured in this regard. Investors seem to be counting down the next few steps, but those who take too long to go long on the shares could miss out on a good opportunity. Our take is that the process of dual listing of the company's shares is interesting for unlocking value in the medium and long term, and its approval is a potential trigger for the appreciation of the shares in the short term. We see the company trading at **5.1x EBITDA 24E**, below the historical average of 5.5x, and we continue to see a high upside. We therefore reiterate our **BUY rating** with a **12M Target Price** of **R\$30.00**.

## Appendix: JBS

**Figure 1. JBS – Income Statement in R\$ Millions (Genial Est. 2023-2028)**

Income Statement	2023E	2024E	2025E	2026E	2027E	2028E
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>366.791</b>	<b>374.002</b>	<b>394.316</b>	<b>455.465</b>	<b>463.609</b>	<b>481.169</b>
(-) COGS	(324.608)	(317.344)	(333.332)	(384.967)	(388.460)	(400.258)
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>42.183</b>	<b>56.658</b>	<b>60.984</b>	<b>70.498</b>	<b>75.149</b>	<b>80.911</b>
(-) Expenses	(22.197)	(29.491)	(33.647)	(41.007)	(46.155)	(45.672)
<b>Adjusted EBITDA</b>	<b>19.986</b>	<b>27.167</b>	<b>27.336</b>	<b>29.492</b>	<b>28.994</b>	<b>35.238</b>
(-) D&A	(10.817)	(9.770)	(7.816)	(6.595)	(2.443)	(2.443)
<b>EBIT</b>	<b>9.169</b>	<b>17.397</b>	<b>19.520</b>	<b>22.897</b>	<b>26.551</b>	<b>32.796</b>
(+/-) Financial Result	2.698	5.758	5.863	7.837	7.896	7.983
(-) Taxes	(4.160)	(7.873)	(8.630)	(10.450)	(11.712)	(13.865)
<b>Net income</b>	<b>7.708</b>	<b>15.282</b>	<b>16.753</b>	<b>20.284</b>	<b>22.735</b>	<b>26.914</b>
<b>Profitability</b>						
Net margin (%)	2,10%	4,09%	4,25%	4,45%	4,90%	5,59%

**Figure 2. JBS– Cash Flow in R\$ Million (Genial Est. 2023-2028)**

Cash Flow (FCFF)	2023E	2024E	2025E	2026E	2027E	2028E
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>366.791</b>	<b>374.002</b>	<b>394.316</b>	<b>455.465</b>	<b>463.609</b>	<b>481.169</b>
(-) COGS	(324.608)	(317.344)	(333.332)	(384.967)	(388.460)	(400.258)
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(-) Taxes	(4.160)	(7.873)	(8.630)	(10.450)	(11.712)	(13.865)
(+) D&A	10.817	9.770	7.816	6.595	2.443	2.443
(+/-) Δ WK	178	(418)	(2.200)	(2.657)	(363)	(794)
(-) Capex	(8.814)	(9.770)	(7.816)	(6.595)	(2.443)	(2.443)
<b>FCFF</b>	<b>7.190</b>	<b>9.106</b>	<b>8.690</b>	<b>9.790</b>	<b>14.476</b>	<b>18.137</b>

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Buy	Expected return above +10% in relation to the Company's sector average	49%
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under Review	Under review	5%

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