



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## FARM PRICES

The index of prices received by the Nation's farmers as of mid-July rose three points from mid-June to reach 295 percent of the 1910-14 average, according to the United States Department of Agriculture. This is one point higher than July 15, 1951, but 18 points lower than the record high reached in February 1951. Price increases for eggs, milk, hogs, and commercial truck crops more than offset declines in prices of beef cattle, potatoes, cotton, wheat, and calves.

The index of prices paid by farmers, including interest, taxes, and farm wages, remained unchanged at 286. This is four points higher than a year ago and three points below the record high reached in April and May 1952.

## COTTON

Cotton prices rose steadily during the week ended August 1 and on that date were 39.55 cents per pound for Middling 15/16-inch staple at Dallas and 39.85 at New Orleans. These prices represented an increase of 75 points at Dallas and 25 points at New Orleans. The general tone of the market was stronger, with mill inquiries numerous and movement of the new crop in south Texas relatively active. Current ginnings were being offered freely, and sales of medium and high-quality cotton for both nearby and deferred delivery were numerous. Export purchases were largely of lower white grades for prompt delivery, and most shipments were for Japan.

Some general improvement in the textile trade was noted during the week, with inventories being reduced to somewhat more desirable levels. This improvement in textiles, together with the prolonged drought throughout the Cotton Belt, has brought about an upward pressure on prices. Moreover, it now appears highly improbable that the national average yield of lint will be above average. Private forecasts of the 1952 crop now are in the neighborhood of 16,000,000 bales. A general rain throughout the Belt in August would improve prospects materially. Production in California is being jeopardized by severe damage to irrigation pipe lines and equipment by the recent earthquake.

In Texas, the cotton crop is making fair to good progress except in some southern Low Rolling Plains and adjacent High Plains counties, where the drought has damaged the crop severely. Harvest was becoming active in central Texas counties and was making rapid progress in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend areas. The pink bollworm has caused severe damage to the crop in the Valley and in scattered localities in the Coastal Bend.

The final average support price for 1952-crop cotton has been announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 30.91 cents per pound for Middling 7/8-inch upland cotton. The average rate for Middling 15/16-inch cotton is 31.96 cents per pound. This compares with 31.71 cents in effect for Middling 15/16-inch cotton in 1951. Price support rates will vary according to location, grade, and staple. Purchase agreements are available to producers through Production and Marketing Administration county committees.

## LIVESTOCK

Cattle prices on the Fort Worth Livestock Market continued to decline during the week ended August 1, according to the Production and Marketing Administration. The price weakness was attributed largely to heavy receipts, which were nearly

2,000 head higher than the previous week and 4,000 higher than the comparable week of 1951.

Good and Choice fed steers and yearlings held fairly steady at \$27 to \$30, with a top of \$32 per cwt., while lower grades were off as much as \$1 per cwt. Cows were generally \$2 lower, and thin, high-grade stockers were steady to weak, with a top of \$27.

In the calf market, slaughter calves were generally \$1 lower for the week, while stockers were off as much as \$2. The top price for slaughter calves was \$28, while the top for stockers was \$30.

Slaughter and feeder lambs were steady to 50 cents higher, with \$28 per cwt. the top for Good and Choice slaughter lambs.

Hogs were 50 to 75 cents higher per cwt., with a top of \$23.50.

The severe drought that is prevailing throughout the entire South is forcing heavy liquidation of grass cattle in many areas. Anticipation of the lifting of the embargo on Mexican cattle, scheduled for September 1, also has influenced some cattlemen to sell low-grade stock at this time.

#### GRAINS

Slight increases were recorded for all grain prices on the Fort Worth Grain and Cotton Exchange during the week ended August 1. The prolonged drought which is threatening the production of feed crops throughout the Nation was the most dominant factor in the market.

Closing prices on Friday, August 1, were: No. 1 hard wheat, \$2.57 per bushel; No. 2 barley, \$1.61; No. 2 white oats, \$1.08-1/2; No. 2 yellow corn, \$2.14; and No. 2 yellow grain sorghums, \$3.32 per hundredweight.

The rice crop continues to make generally satisfactory progress, and many mills are attempting to contract for new-crop rice. Growers, however, are showing little interest in that kind of sale. The American Rice Growers Cooperative Association reports that 50,000 barrels of Bluebonnet and 5,000 barrels of Century Patna sold recently at \$9.06-1/2 per barrel.

The final price support rate for 1952-crop rice has been announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at \$5.04 per hundredweight.

#### WOOL AND MOHAIR

Trading in the Boston Wool Market remained generally unchanged during the week ended August 1, and prices held about steady. Good French combing original bag 12-months Texas wool sold in Boston at \$1.65 to \$1.67 per pound, clean basis. Good 8-months Texas wool sold at an estimated clean price of \$1.60 per pound. A small amount of wool changed hands in Texas during the week.

The Production and Marketing Administration reported that some mohair was contracted in Texas at a price of 92 cents to \$1 per pound.

#### POULTRY AND EGGS

Prices were about steady on the Texas fryer and broiler markets for the week ended August 1. Demand continued slow at most dressing plants but was fair to good for truck movements. Closing prices: South Texas, 31 cents per pound; East Texas, mostly 30 cents; and Waco area, 28 to 30 cents.

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