



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

Number 172

Wednesday, April 15, 1953

## L I V E S T O C K

Receipts of cattle last week at the major markets were substantially larger than during the comparable period a year ago. On Monday of this week the 12 markets had the largest supply of cattle for any day during the past 3 months, and Chicago, with 29,000 head, had the largest run for any day since 1946 and the largest for any day in April since 1926.

The heavy receipts forced cattle prices down slightly, despite a continued strong demand for large quantities of beef at current prices. Cattle prices had strengthened early last week, with some Choice yearling steers selling at Fort Worth for \$23 and one load at \$23.25 per cwt. Price declines on Monday of this week ranged up to \$1 per cwt. and affected virtually all classes of cattle and calves.

Hog prices remained strong to slightly higher, with relatively light receipts. Marketing of spring lambs increased and on Monday of this week, Fort Worth received 7,300 head of sheep and lambs, about half of which were shorn, slaughter, and feeder lambs and about 40 percent spring lambs. Trade was slow and prices declined 25 to 50 cents per cwt.

Prices per cwt. at the Fort Worth market on Monday, April 13: Good and Choice steers and yearlings \$18 to \$21.50, with two lots of light weight yearlings at \$22.25; Utility and Commercial steers \$13 to \$18; beef cows \$12 to \$14; Medium and Good stocker steers \$15 to \$18.50; Good and Choice slaughter calves \$19 to \$22; Medium to Choice stocker calves \$15 to \$21, a few head to \$22; Choice butcher hogs \$22.25; Good and Choice spring lambs \$22.50 to \$23.50, and Prime kinds \$24.50; and Utility to Choice shorn slaughter lambs \$18 to \$19.25.

## G R A I N S

Winter wheat production in the United States is forecast at 714,154,000 bushels, compared with 1952 production of 1,052,801,000 bushels and the 1942-51 average of 797,237,000. This forecast, based on conditions as of April 1 and issued by the BAE, estimates wheat production in Texas at 30,126,000 bushels, compared with 34,626,000 in 1952 and the 1942-51 average of 59,088,000 bushels. The Oklahoma crop, forecast at 63,118,000 bushels, is sharply lower than the 107,115,000 bushels produced in 1952 and slightly lower than the 1942-51 average. Wheat production in New Mexico in 1953 is estimated at 2,444,000 bushels - about 4-times the 1952 crop but about 1,000,000 bushels less than the 1942-51 average.

During February considerable wheat acreage was lost in northwest Texas, western Oklahoma, and Kansas because of high winds. However, since April 1 snow has been received in western Kansas and light to moderately heavy rains in northwest Texas and western Oklahoma; this probably will improve wheat prospects in those areas.

Wheat prices declined moderately on Monday of this week in response to the Government's report of estimated wheat production, which was substantially higher than the December 1 report. Price losses were small, however, as the trade apparently had anticipated a forecast of higher production.

Closing prices per bushel on the Fort Worth Grain and Cotton Exchange on Monday, April 13: No. 1 hard wheat \$2.62; No. 2 white oats \$1.02-1/4; No. 2 yellow corn \$1.85; and No. 2 yellow grain sorghums \$2.94 per cwt.

Planting of the 1953 rice crop is making satisfactory progress in the Texas-Louisiana rice belt.



## C O T T O N

Cotton prices fluctuated within narrow limits during the past week, and on Monday, April 13, Middling 15/16-inch staple sold on the Dallas market at 32.50 cents per pound, the same as a week earlier. Trading was generally quiet, and demand from both domestic and export buyers was limited. Trading in the cotton gray goods market also was in limited volume.

CCC loan entries during the week ended April 3 were only 21,500 bales, and loan repayments were 10,800 bales. Through April 3, loans were outstanding on about 1,915,000 bales. April 30 is the last date for placing 1952-crop cotton under the CCC loan.

The world supply of cotton (exclusive of communistic nations) in the 1952-53 season is estimated at 41.6 million bales, a new postwar record high. In the 1951-52 season the total supply was 39.2 million bales and from 1947 to 1951 averaged 38.2 million. The carry-over of world cotton at the end of the current season (August 1, 1953) is forecast at about 15.6 million bales, 2-1/4 million bales larger than a year earlier and about 2-1/2 million bales larger than the 1948-52 average.

The cotton crop is reported to be making fair to rapid growth in south Texas, with insect damage light to date. Planting is becoming general in north central, east, and north Texas.

## W O O L   A N D   M O H A I R

Trading in Texas wools and mohair was generally inactive during the past week. One large lot of mohair was being held at \$1.06-1/2 per pound.

The USDA announced last week that the support price for mohair during the 1953-54 marketing year, which began April 1, 1953, will be 60.7 cents per pound, national average price. Last year's support price was 57.2 cents per pound.

## P O U L T R Y

Texas broiler markets were generally steady last week, with supplies adequate to meet a good demand. Prices in all areas were quoted at 29 cents per pound. The report for Monday of this week indicated no change in the market.

During the week ended April 4, 1,532,000 chicks were placed on Texas farms, according to the BAE. This was 9 percent more than the previous week and the first time in 15 weeks that placements were above the corresponding week a year ago.

## C O M M E R C I A L   V E G E T A B L E S

Commercial vegetable production in Texas in 1953 is expected to exceed that of a year ago. Tomato harvest is in progress in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and early snap beans, cantaloupes, cucumbers, sweet corn, and watermelons are making excellent growth in south Texas. The Rio Grande Valley expects to begin harvest of watermelons in early May, and a light harvest of sweet corn is now being marketed from that area. Indications are that the Yoakum tomato crop will be harvested a little earlier than usual this year. Transplanting of the east Texas tomato acreage is making good progress.

## M I S C E L L A N E O U S

According to the USDA, prices received by the Nation's farmers in the first 3 months of 1953 averaged 9 percent below the comparable period in 1952 but 10 percent higher than the first half of 1950. Prices paid by farmers for commodities and services used in production averaged 3 percent below the same quarter a year ago but were 14 percent above the average for the first half of 1950.

Carl H. Moore  
Agricultural Economist