



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## GRAINS

Grain prices fluctuated within fairly wide limits during the past week, with wheat showing the largest changes. On Monday, June 15, No. 1 hard wheat was quoted at \$2.23 per bushel - the lowest in more than 2 years. By Thursday the price had advanced to \$2.41 but lost 8 cents per bushel on Friday. The market on Monday, June 22, was also weak, with closing prices on wheat off around 3 cents per bushel. However, the market opened strong Tuesday, June 23, largely on news of increased buying of wheat by Germany, and gains of around 3 cents per bushel were recorded by midmorning. Farm prices in the Southwest continue generally below the loan rate, and most wheat is being placed under the loan as soon as storage facilities become available. A substantial portion of the oats harvested in Texas also is being placed under the loan.

Closing prices per bushel on the Fort Worth Grain and Cotton Exchange on June 22 and changes from a weak earlier (f.o.b. Gulf Ports): No. 1 hard wheat \$2.30, up 7 cents; No. 2 white oats 98-3/4 cents, up 3 cents; No. 2 yellow corn \$1.86-1/2, up 2-1/2 cents; No. 2 white corn \$2.88-1/2, up 8-1/4 cents; and No. 2 yellow grain sorghums \$2.75 per cwt., down 15 cents. The quoted price on grain sorghums was the lowest since October 1951.

Harvest of this year's wheat crop is virtually complete in northcentral Texas, and combining of the very short crop in northwest Texas is under way. The USDA has announced that emergency loans at 80 percent of the current loan rate will be made on wheat stored on the ground or in temporary structures. These loans are for a 90-day period, during which permanent storage facilities must be found for the wheat. The Texas State PMA Chairman has announced that these loans will be available only in counties south and west of Wichita Falls. It is felt that climatic conditions in other areas are not generally suitable for this type of temporary storage.

It appears virtually certain that the Secretary of Agriculture will announce acreage allotments on the 1954-crop wheat and that a referendum on the use of marketing quotas will be called prior to the July 25 deadline. Marketing quotas must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the wheat producers voting in a referendum if the quotas are to be in effect. If the vote is unfavorable, production controls will not be in effect, and the support price on the 1954 wheat crop will be at 50 percent of parity instead of 90 percent. The present acreage control law would indicate a reduction of around 25 percent from the 1953 acreage, but legislation currently is being considered that would limit the reduction to about 15 percent.

## COTTON

Spot cotton prices increased moderately during the past week, with Middling 15/16-inch staple selling at 32.90 cents per pound on the Dallas market on Thursday, June 18. On Monday, June 22, the market closed at 32.80 - 10 points below last week's high but 5 points above the previous Monday. October futures were quoted on Monday, June 22, at 33.04 cents per pound, asked - virtually unchanged from a week earlier. It is reported that cotton in the Lower Rio Grande Valley is selling at around 34 cents per pound, gin run, f.o.b. gin yard. Most of this cotton is Strict Middling, one inch and longer in staple. Mill interest in this cotton is not quite as active as usual.

Domestic demand for cotton continues on a hand-to-mouth basis. Consumption during May is reported at an average daily rate of 37,400 bales - up 700 bales per day from April and 2,200 bales per day more than in May a year ago. Indications are that total mill consumption during the 1952-53 season will be about 9.4 million bales - 200,000 larger than a year ago.

Exports continue to lag, with the total movement during the first 9 months of the season, 2,452,000 bales - only about one-half of the volume exported during the same period a year ago.

Stocks of cotton at mills were 1,770,000 bales on May 30, 1953 - slightly lower than a month earlier but about 350,000 more than a year ago. Public storage stocks on the same date were 4,737,000 bales - about 800,000 less than a month earlier but twice as large as a year ago. About 46 percent of public storage stocks were CCC loan and pooled cotton.

The USDA announced on June 22 that loans on 1952-crop cotton would be extended another 12 months from their scheduled maturity date of July 31, 1953. During this period the grower may sell his equity in cotton or redeem it by paying off the loan and selling cotton in the open market.

Continued hot, dry weather over the Southwest is causing serious deterioration of dry-land cotton in virtually all areas.

#### L I V E S T O C K

Receipts of cattle at the major markets were unusually large last week, reflecting heavy marketings of grass cattle, a moderate volume of animals from feed lots, and, in the Southwest, all types of cattle from the drought-stricken ranges of west Texas counties. Prices ruled generally steady on fed slaughter classes but were weak to lower on cows, calves, and stockers. Hog prices were stronger on light receipts, and lambs were generally steady at the recent declines.

Prices per cwt. on the Fort Worth livestock market, Monday, June 22: Good to Choice slaughter steers \$17.00 to \$22.00; Utility and Commercial steers \$9.00 to \$15.00; Utility and Commercial cows \$8.00 to \$12.00; Good to Choice slaughter calves \$13.00 to \$17.00, with a few at \$18.00; Utility and Commercial grade calves \$8.00 to \$13.00; Good and Choice stocker steers \$12.00 to \$14.00, with a few light weights at \$15.00; Good and Choice stocker calves \$12.00 to \$17.00; Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs \$17.00 to \$23.00; Good and Choice spring feeder lambs \$13.00 to \$14.50; and Choice butcher hogs \$25.50.

#### W O O L A N D M O H A I R

Some original bag 12-months Texas wool sold in Boston last week at a clean price of around \$1.80 per pound. It is reported that asking prices in Texas became so high during the week that Boston buyers were forced out of the market.

About a car of fall mohair was contracted in Texas at 91-1/2 cents per pound, delivered to the warehouse.

#### P O U L T R Y

Texas broiler markets were generally unchanged during the past week, with south Texas reporting most sales at 28 cents per pound and east Texas and the Waco-Corsicana areas, 27 cents. Prices were unchanged on Monday, June 22.

Prices a year ago were generally 1 cent per pound higher than closing prices last week.

Chick placements on Texas farms for the week ended June 13 were slightly higher than the previous week and about 17 percent above placements during the comparable week a year ago.

Carl H. Moore  
Agricultural Economist