Wool production, shorn and pulled, in the United States in 1953 totaled 271 million pounds, according to the USDA. This is 2% above the 1952 production and the largest total wool production since 1948. Less shorn wool was produced in 1953 than in 1952, but the production of pulled wool was larger.

Shorn wool production in Texas in 1953 totaled 42,511,000 pounds, compared with 46,277,000 in 1952. This decline reflects the smaller number of sheep shorn.

Wool production in New Mexico and Oklahoma also declined in 1953, but production in Louisiana and Arizona increased. New Mexico and Arizona produced 11,349,000 pounds and 2,808,000 pounds, respectively, in 1953.

The annual average price per pound received by U.S. growers for shorn wool in 1953 was 54.7¢ per pound, compared with 54.2¢ in 1952. Texas growers received an average of 63¢, the highest for any state.

Texas sheep raisers last year received $26,782,000 from the sale of wool, compared with $26,911,000 in 1952. Cash receipts from sale of wool in other District states: Louisiana, $204,000; Oklahoma, $397,000; New Mexico, $5,901,000; and Arizona, $1,320,000.

The USDA reports that a small lot of greasy fall Texas wool was sold locally last week at around $1.57 per pound, clean basis. Greasy 10-months Texas lambs wool brought 63½¢ F.O.B. and is estimated to cost $1.58 to $1.62, clean, delivered to Boston, while other Texas lambs wool sold at 65¢ and 66¢.

The Boston office of CCC announced last week the sale of 2.3 million pounds of wool in January to domestic commercial purchasers, leaving CCC holdings of 93.7 million pounds at the end of January.

In the February issue of the Wool Situation, which was released last week, the USDA says that production of wool in the United States this year probably will be less than in 1953. Output of shorn wool probably will decline since the number of stock sheep at the beginning of the year was down slightly. Fewer sheep and lambs are expected to be slaughtered this year which would result in reduced production of pulled wool.

Quotations at Boston for most imported wools in February were up slightly from a year earlier, while quotations for most domestic wools were about the same. Wool prices in world markets generally have been relatively stable since early 1953.

Loans made under the Government support program were outstanding on about 31 million pounds of shorn wool at the beginning of this year, compared with 77 million pounds a year earlier.

The rate of mill consumption of apparel wool in the United States began to decline during the third quarter of last year. During the last 2 months it was over one-third below a year earlier and the lowest since 1940. The average weekly rate of consumption during the fourth quarter was the lowest for that quarter since 1937. However, since the rate of consumption during January-August was well above a year earlier, total mill consumption in 1953 was about the same as in 1952.

United States imports of dutiable wool for consumption last year were substantially below 1952. The low imports reflect the larger quantity of domestic wool used last year, and the heavier use of trade stocks to meet requirements.
midmonth average of prices received by growers for shorn wool averaged 58.9¢ on February 15, 1954, compared with 58.8¢ a year earlier.

It was announced sometime earlier that the average support price for 1954 wool will be not less than 52.1¢ per pound, greasy basis, compared with 53.1¢ for 1953. If the parity price for wool as of March 15 is higher than that used in establishing the minimum support level, the support price will be increased to reflect 90% of parity at that time. Advance and nonrecourse loans will be available to producers on both shorn and pulled wool from May 1, 1954 through March 31, 1955.

It also has been announced that the national average support level for 1954 mohair production will be at 83% of parity price for mohair as of March 15, 1954. The Agricultural Act of 1949, which made support for mohair mandatory, requires that the mohair support level be established at a proper relationship to the level set for wool. However, mohair prices have been above support levels since passing of the Agricultural Act of 1949.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Livestock prices moved within very narrow range on the Fort Worth market last week. Ups and downs in prices were largely of a minor nature.

Texas broiler markets were steady to weak last week, some areas losing 1¢ per pound. The week closed with prices mostly 24¢ to 24½¢ per pound for 2½- to 3-pound broilers.

The Secretary of Agriculture told turkey growers last week that unless they cut their production this year well below numbers that now seem likely they can expect much lower prices. Some idea of the size of production this year is given in a report by the USDA which shows that the number of heavy-breed poultse hatched in commercial hatcheries during January was 41% larger than a year earlier; the increase for light breeds was 90%.

The Index of Prices Received by U. S. Farmers at mid-February was 258 (1910-14 = 100), down 1 point from January and 6 points from February 1953. The parity index (which measures prices of things farmers buy) stood unchanged at 282 from January to February and was 1 point above February 1953.

The Secretary of Agriculture said last week that continued big production, encouraged by high price supports, has built up tremendous supplies of major commodities. Storage facilities had to be stretched to the limit, and supplemented in many cases, in order to handle the 1953 crops. With normal weather this spring and summer, the storage problem can be even more acute in 1954. The Secretary urges farmers to plan early for storage requirements.

The USDA says that lowering of price supports on milk and butterfat to 75% of parity for the year starting April 1 will result in lower prices for manufactured dairy products at all levels including retail. Some decline also is likely for fluid milk in many city markets.

The large quantities of 1953-crop wheat placed under support programs, together with quantities acquired by CCC from previous crops, have greatly reduced the supplies of wheat available in regular marketing channels. As a result, wheat prices have advanced since early October and are expected to strengthen further before the new crop starts to market, according to the USDA.

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