



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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COTTON

Spot cotton prices were generally steady during the past week. Middling 15/16-inch staple at Dallas was quoted at 33.95¢ per pound on Monday, June 7, 5 points below a week earlier and 20 points below a month ago. However, current prices are about 1½¢ per pound above those prevailing in June 1953.

The May 15 parity price of cotton as reported by the USDA was 35.09¢ per pound, unchanged from a month earlier but 99 points higher than May 1953.

Cotton trading during the past week was rather slow although inquiries from both domestic and export sources were fairly numerous. Most farmers are reported to be offering loan equities more freely, with prices paid for equities ranging from about \$2 to \$8 per bale. CCC loan repayments in the week ended May 28 were 107,500 bales.

World consumption of cotton this season is expected to approximate 34.6 million bales, the largest of record. At this level, world consumption would be close to the prewar per capita rate and would exceed consumption last season by 1.1 million bales. Despite the high level of consumption, world carry-over of upland cotton on August 1, 1954, is expected to be nearly 20 million bales, with stocks in the United States accounting for about one-half of the total.

The first bale of the 1954 cotton crop was ginned in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas during the last week in May. However, active movement of the Valley crop is not expected before late June. The cotton crop is in excellent condition in south Texas and in most of the irrigated valleys of west Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Elsewhere in the Cotton Belt, cool weather and rain have retarded development of the crop and permitted some build-up of cotton insects.

LIVESTOCK

Livestock prices during the past week were erratic but generally lower on most grades and classes. On the Fort Worth livestock market Monday, June 7, the following prices per cwt. prevailed: Good to Choice fed steers sold from \$18.50 to \$23, most beef cows sold at \$10 to \$13, Good to Choice stocker steers \$20 to \$21, Good and Choice slaughter calves \$17 to \$22, a few Choice stocker steer calves \$21 to \$23, Good and Choice spring lambs \$21 to \$23, spring feeder lambs \$13 to \$16, Choice butcher hogs \$26.50.

Receipts of cattle and calves on Monday of this week at Fort Worth and other livestock markets were substantially lower than on the comparable date a year ago. The lower prices during the past week for most cattle and calves appear to stem from an unsettled wholesale market, particularly in New York, and the psychological effect of the sharp break in cattle prices that occurred just a year ago. The basic factors of demand, as indicated by consumer incomes and their willingness to buy beef at current prices, appear to be unchanged. Slaughter of beef and veal during the first 4 months of 1954 has been about 15% higher than during the same months of 1953. Sharp declines in the number of hogs slaughtered resulted in a total production of red meats only slightly more than during the corresponding period in 1953. An increasing proportion of cattle slaughter has been made up of cows and heifers.

Contracting of west Texas and New Mexico calves for fall delivery is becoming increasingly active at prices of \$18.50 to \$21 per cwt.

W O O L

Buying of Texas wool has become more active during the past week or two. Two cars of original bag, Good French Combing, 12-months wool were sold last week at \$1.80 per pound, clean basis. Some 8-months Texas wool was purchased at 70¢ to 72¢, grease basis, estimated to cost \$1.65 to \$1.75, delivered to Boston, clean basis.

The Commodity Stabilization Service announced on June 2 that the CCC acquired title to 36,413,223 pounds of shorn and pulled wool under the 1953 wool price support program.

G R A I N S

Harvest of the 1954 crop of wheat, oats, and barley is active with yields much better than had been anticipated. Scattered reports indicate that a substantial proportion of harvested grains is going into the CCC loan. Shortage of storage facilities is necessitating the sale of some grain. Current market prices to the farmer are well below prevailing loan rates.

P O U L T R Y

On Monday, June 7, Texas broiler markets were generally steady with last week's decline. Supplies were adequate on most weights, and prices were quoted at 23¢ per pound at the farm, in all areas.

For the week ended May 29, the USDA reported that placement of chicks on Texas farms was 4% below the previous week and 13% below the corresponding week a year ago.

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

The Index of Prices Received by Texas Farmers as of May 15 is reported by the USDA at 272% of the 1910-14 average. This is 2 points higher than mid-April but 8 points below May 15, 1953. The increase over a month earlier resulted from sharp increases in average prices for commercial vegetables and smaller increases for cotton and other oil-bearing crops. Livestock and livestock products recorded a small decline.

Carl H. Moore
Agricultural Economist