



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

Number 243

Wednesday, August 25, 1954

C O T T O N

On Monday, August 23, Middling 15/16-inch cotton in the 10 spot markets averaged 34.03¢ per pound, compared with 34.08¢ per pound a week earlier. Trading during the week ended August 20 was more active, and reported sales continued to increase, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Most gins in north Texas are becoming active, as harvest is progressing rapidly upstate. First bales were reported from many counties in west Texas last week. Current ginnings are being offered fairly freely by producers, with only a small volume being placed in the loan.

Cotton ginned in Texas through August 15 was lower in grade and slightly longer in staple length than that ginned last season, according to the quality report issued by the USDA. Ginnings through August 15 amounted to 716,870 bales, compared with 512,411 bales a year ago, the Bureau of the Census reported.

Movement of cottonseed to crushing mills has been heavy in the active harvesting sections, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service's first cottonseed review for this season. Wagon lot prices of cottonseed paid to farmers in Texas the week ended August 19 averaged \$64.70 per ton. This is higher than the average price of \$55.70 per ton paid during the same period a year ago.

L I V E S T O C K

Receipts of cattle at Fort Worth and at other points around the major marketing circle last week were far in excess of the previous week but trailed year-ago figures by several thousand head.

Prices at the Fort Worth market on Monday, August 23, as reported by the USDA, were as follows: Good and Choice beef steers and yearlings, \$18.50 to \$22; Utility and Commercial, \$12 to \$17.50; Commercial cows drew \$11 to \$12; Canners and Cutters, \$6.50 to \$9. Medium and Good stocker and feeder steers and yearlings moved from \$13 to \$17, with Choice scarce.

Slaughter calves were active with Good and Choice killers clearing from \$13.50 to \$17; Utility and Commercial \$10 to \$13. Medium and Good stocker steer calves sold from \$13 to \$17.50, with a few Choice up to \$19.

Butcher hogs were lower and Choice 180- to 250-pound barrows and gilts brought \$23.50.

Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs cleared from \$17 to \$19; Cull and Utility, \$9 to \$15. Medium and Good feeder lambs moved from \$11 to \$15.

P O U L T R Y

The Texas broiler market on Monday, August 23, was steady to firm, reports the Texas Department of Agriculture. Prices for broilers and fryers weighing 2½ to 3 pounds were 25¢ to 26¢, mostly 26¢.

Placement of chicks on Texas farms for the week ended August 14 were 1,204,000. This was 9% below the previous week's placements and 3% below placements in the corresponding week a year ago.

Chicks hatched in commercial hatcheries in Texas during July were up 25% from the same month a year ago, according to AMS. Production was 6,830,000 chicks, compared with 5,461,000 in July 1953.

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

Two cars of original bag Good French Combing and staple 12-months Texas wool sold last week at \$1.80, and two cars of Average to Good 12 months sold at \$1.75, according to reports received by the USDA.

During the week ended August 20, approximately 500,000 pounds of mohair were sold in Texas at 66½¢ for Adult and \$1.01½ for Kid mohair. One car brought 67½¢ to \$1.02½ for Adult and Kid, respectively. Surplus Kid mohair brought from \$1.50 to \$1.55, to the warehouse.

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

An appeal has been made to the Western Traffic Association by the Secretary of Agriculture for reduced freight rates to farmers and ranchers in seven drought states - Arkansas, Colorado, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming. This action was considered necessary because farmers, stockmen, and dairymen in parts of these states must either transport hay into the areas or must move cattle to grazing lands in other parts of the country. Reduced rates in drought areas were in effect last year.

On July 21, twenty-three counties in Texas were designated as drought counties, while twenty-six in Oklahoma were added on August 2. Aid plans, a Federal-state cooperative hay distribution program, an emergency feed-grain program, and FHA emergency loans are available to eligible farmers and ranchers in drought designated counties.

Demand for farm products continues strong, reports the USDA in its The Demand and Price Situation. Consumer incomes available for spending were at record levels in the first 6 months of the year, and remained high in July. Consumers continued to spend about ¼ of their income for food. Exports of farm products in the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1953, totaled 4% above a year earlier, with exports of most commodities other than wheat above 1952-53. Shipments in April and May were 14% and 15% higher than these months of 1953, and 36% higher in June. Prices received by farmers through July averaged about 3% below a year earlier. Farmers' cash receipts also were down 3% with most of the decline in crop receipts.

The decline in milk output from the peak in early June has been considerably larger than usual this year, according to the USDA. This decline occurred mainly because of hot, dry weather during July. Price relationships also have been less favorable for milk production than in the past several years. With this decline in output, production of butter and cheese has declined and purchases by USDA have dropped sharply.

Despite a decline of about one-fifth in milk prices the past 2 years, the number of milk cows on farms has increased 5%, according to the USDA. The decline in milk prices in the past 12 months, though less than in the preceding year, was greater than the declines for most cost items and the prices of competing products.

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