COTTON

Spot cotton prices have moved up gradually since the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced its September estimates of cotton production this year. With these estimates showing substantial reduction in crop prospects, spot cotton prices were expected to rise. On Monday, September 20, Middling 15/16-inch cotton in the leading spot markets averaged 34.57¢ per pound, a new high for the season and almost 2¢ above a year ago.

Cotton futures also rose last week. Prices for all 1954-crop months closed the week at levels ranging from about 5 to 40 points higher than a week earlier. The sharpest advances occurred in prices for the near months.

Agricultural Marketing Service reports that offerings of current ginnings are increasing in volume but many farmers, particularly in central and far western areas of the Belt, are holding for higher prices. Meanwhile, trading has continued to increase in most country markets. Demand is good for practically all grades of cotton stapling 1 inch and longer.

A moderate volume of cotton has been moving into the CCC loan program. Net loan entries of 1954-crop cotton reported in the week ended September 10 were 29,500 bales, bringing the total for the season through that date to 64,000 bales. The bulk of this cotton was in Texas and Georgia.

Wagon lot prices of cottonseed paid to producers in Texas last week ranged from $63 to $72 per ton, with an average price of $66.40 per ton, according to AMS. The average price 1 week earlier was $66.80 per ton and 1 year ago, $52.40 per ton. Cottonseed meal was quoted in the Dallas market at $78 per ton, wholesale, bag lots, carloads.

GRAINS

The start of the 1954 soybean crop to market in volume last week led to a sharp decline in soybean prices, which was reflected in prices of some other grains. At Chicago, corn prices declined 3¢ to 3 7/8¢. Wheat closed 1 7/8¢ lower to 1 3/4¢ higher, and oats, 1 1/8¢ to 2 1/8¢ lower, while rye prices advanced as much as 2¢.

It was announced last week by the USDA that the 1955-crop wheat minimum average support price will be $2.06 per bushel. This is 82 2/3¢ of the current parity price for wheat. This rate will not be reduced subsequently but it will be increased if the wheat parity price on July 1, 1955, is higher than the current parity price. Support for wheat in the commercial area will reflect the full national support price. In the newly designated 12-state noncommercial wheat area, wheat will be supported at 75% of full support. Included in the noncommercial wheat area are Arizona and Louisiana.

It has been announced that the loan maturity and delivery date for purchase agreement rice under the 1954 rice support program has been advanced from April 30, 1955, to February 28, 1955, for all states other than California and Arizona. This action was taken so that rice acquired by CCC in the South can be moved early enough to avoid conflict with the movement of the 1955 rice crop.
LIVESTOCK

Marketings of livestock at Fort Worth were very heavy last week. Prices on some classes turned uneven but other classes showed gains. A strong demand for stocker and feeder cattle reflected optimism on the part of buyers. Some slaughter classes of cattle, however, closed around $1 lower. Hogs were at the lowest point in 19 months, falling on Wednesday to a top of $20.25. Fat lamb prices closed $1 to $2 lower, while yearlings and older sheep declined about 50¢. Stocker and feeder lambs held steady.

On Monday, September 20, stocker and feeder cattle were reported by the USDA as selling very slow and weak to unevenly lower. Trade in hogs and lambs also was slow. A USDA report gives the following quotations: Commercial and Good slaughter steers, $15 to $21; Commercial cows, $11 to $11.50; Medium and Good stocker and feeder steers and yearlings, $12 to $17, a few Choice to $18.50; Commercial and Good slaughter calves, $11 to $15; Medium and Good stocker steer calves, $12 to $18; Choice 190- to 260-pound butcher hogs, $20 to $20.25; Good and Choice slaughter lambs, $16 to $18; Medium and Good stocker and feeder lambs, $11 to $15.

FARM INCOME

U. S. farmers received $17.4 billion from marketings in the first 8 months of 1954, or 4% less than the revised total for the corresponding period last year, according to The Farm Income Situation, published monthly by the USDA. Prices of farm products averaged 3% lower than last year, with the total volume of marketings nearly the same.

The USDA prepares estimates of farmers' realized net income, which are calculated by adding cash receipts from farm commodity marketings to nonmoney income and government payments and subtracting farm production expenses. U. S. farmers' realized net income in the first half of 1954 was at an annual rate of approximately $12.5 billion, slightly higher than during the second half of 1953 but lower than the total of $12.8 billion for the full year 1953.

Cash receipts from farm marketings in the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District are available for the first 6 months of 1954. Louisiana reports an increase over the same period last year, while the other 4 states show declines. Here, in millions of dollars, are the January-June figures for 1954 (figures for the first 6 months of 1953 in parentheses): Louisiana, 116 (112); Oklahoma, 221 (230); Texas, 656 (675); New Mexico, 62 (73); and Arizona, 160 (193).

MISCELLANEOUS

Texas broiler markets opened irregular last week and closed about steady, according to reports of the Texas Department of Agriculture. Closing prices for broilers weighing 2½ to 3 pounds were 22¢ to 23¢ per pound, versus 26¢ a year ago. Approximately 100,000 pounds of Adult original-bag mohair were sold in Texas last week at 61¢, to the warehouse, AMS reports.

South Texas peanut growers are receiving from $240 to $252 per ton for newly harvested peanuts. Yields are low in most areas, however, and the crop in some dry counties is described as a failure.

W. M. Pritchett
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