



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## D A I R Y P R O D U C T S

Dairy support prices for the 1955-56 marketing year will be at a national average rate of \$3.15 per cwt. for milk used in manufacturing and 56.2¢ per pound for butterfat, Secretary of Agriculture Benson announced last week. These dollar-and-cents levels are an estimated 80% of modernized parity for milk used in manufacturing and 77% of the parity price for butterfat. On December 15, 1954, Texas farmers were receiving 48¢ per pound for butterfat in cream, according to the USDA.

No price support purchases of butter were made during the entire month of December - the first month since December 1952 in which no butter has been bought for price support operations. Cheese purchases in December were also at the lowest level in 2 years.

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

The Secretary of Agriculture has announced a support price of 62.5¢ per pound for shorn wool, grease basis, for the 1955 marketing year. In order to be eligible for the support payment, the wool must have been sheared after January 1, 1955, and marketed after April 1. Growers may store the wool in commercial wool warehouses or consign it for future sale, but they must keep title to the wool until April 1.

Trade in domestic wools on the Boston market was sluggish last week, but prices held steady. Some original bag 12-month fine Texas wool sold in the local market at \$1.60 per pound, clean basis, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service.

A substantial quantity of original bag adult mohair at 70¢ and cut mohair from 72¢ to 73¢ per pound was sold in the local market. Little mohair remains in Texas and that which is unsold is in strong hands.

## L I V E S T O C K

Unfavorable weather reduced livestock receipts on the Fort Worth market the first part of last week. As marketings returned to normal by midweek, most of the price advances were lost. Good and Choice slaughter steers and yearlings sold from \$18 to \$24. The better grades of slaughter calves brought from \$15 to \$20, with stocker steer calves and yearlings selling from \$17 to \$21. Fat lambs sold at \$17 to \$20, while stocker and feeder lambs brought from \$12 to \$18.50. Top hogs closed at \$18, while sows brought \$13.50 to \$16.

Cattle receipts at Fort Worth on Monday, January 17, were slightly larger than a week earlier. Trade was fairly active on steers and yearlings, with sales being fully as high as the latter part of last week. Good and Choice beef steers sold mainly from \$23 to \$23.50, while most beef cows cleared from \$10 to \$11. There were few of the top grades of stockers and feeders on the market, and Medium and Good stockers and feeders sold at \$14 to \$20. Butcher hogs sold from steady to 50¢ higher than Friday's close, with most sales averaging 25¢ higher. Feeder lamb prices were strong to 50¢ higher, with Good and Choice wooled slaughter lambs selling at \$19 to \$20. Feeder lambs moved out from \$16 to \$19.

The number of sheep and lambs on feed in the Nation on January 1 was estimated by the USDA at 3,952,000 head - 4% less than last year. Most of this decrease occurred in the Corn Belt and on wheat pastures in the Southwestern Plains states. The number on feed in Texas remained unchanged from a year earlier.

Increases for New Mexico and Arizona were 21% and 38%, respectively, while Oklahoma showed a decrease of 33%.

#### P O U L T R Y

Broiler markets in Texas last week strengthened, with prices generally closing 2¢ higher than in the previous week. Last week's closing prices reported by the Texas Department of Agriculture were: South Texas, 22¢-23¢; East Texas, 22¢-23¢; Waco, 23¢; Corsicana, F.O.B. Plant, 24¢.

Prices of broilers on Monday, January 17, advanced further, with prices from various areas quoted 1¢ per pound higher.

The USDA reported that 1,302,000 chicks were placed on Texas farms during the week ended January 8. This number is 42% above the placements in the previous week but 19% below placements the same week a year ago.

#### R I C E

Rough rice markets remained dull last week, with only a few sales being reported.

U.S. growers placed 15,450,098 bags (cwt.) of rough rice under price support through December 15, 1954, of which 6,110,687 bags (cwt.) - about 40% of the total - was rice produced by Texas growers. In contrast, on December 15, 1953, only 1,217,631 bags (cwt.) of rough rice had been placed under support, with Texas supplying 680,903 bags (cwt.).

The USDA has announced that 140,000 bags (cwt.) of rice will be donated for school lunches and welfare use. The Commodity Credit Corporation rice will be either milled into or exchanged for U.S. No. 2 milled rice and packed into 50-lb. bags. The CCC will pay costs of transporting the bags of milled rice to central points for distribution.

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