



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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L I V E S T O C K

The number of all livestock on the Nation's farms and ranches increased 3% during 1954, according to the United States Department of Agriculture. Gains were noted in the numbers of all cattle and calves and hogs, while decreases occurred in numbers of milk cattle, sheep, horses, and mules.

The following table shows the numbers of livestock on farms and ranches in the five states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District on January 1, 1955, and a year earlier.

LIVESTOCK ON FARMS AND RANCHES, JANUARY 1

Five Southwestern States

(In thousands)

Area	Cattle		Hogs		Sheep	
	1955p	1954	1955p	1954	1955p	1954
Arizona	945	909	25	25	461	473
Louisiana	1,787	1,842	410	380	132	122
New Mexico	1,140	1,175	52	47	1,271	1,294
Oklahoma	3,182	3,315	432	346	183	197
Texas	8,501	8,587	1,087	906	5,331	5,331
Five states ...	15,555	15,828	2,006	1,704	7,378	7,417

p-Preliminary.

SOURCE: United States Department of Agriculture.

The number of goats in Texas on January 1 this year was 2,249,000 head, compared with 2,082,000 head a year ago, or an increase of 8%.

The 1954 U.S. calf crop, estimated at 42,210,000 head, is the second highest of record and compares with the 1953 calf crop of 40,947,000 and the 10-year (1943-52) average of 35,176,000 head, according to the USDA. The record calf crop in the Nation is a result of the large cow herds on farms and ranches during 1954.

In Texas the 1954 calf crop was 4,259,000 head - 1% above the 1953 crop of 4,211,000 head and 13% more than the 10-year average of 3,775,000. In contrast to the Nation, Texas cow herds were smaller in 1954 than a year earlier, but the higher percentage of calves saved resulted in a larger calf crop.

Receipts of cattle and calves at the Fort Worth market during the week ended February 18 were larger than in either the preceding week or the comparable week in 1954. There was little change in sheep receipts from either a week earlier or a year ago. Hog numbers were smaller than a week ago but were nearly double the comparable week in 1954. Some weakness developed in prices of steers and yearlings during the past week. Heifers sold at fully 50¢ per cwt. lower than a week earlier,

while fat steers and yearlings were steady to 50¢ lower. The calf market was very active, with prices strong to 50¢ higher than a week ago. Demand for stocker and feeder calves continued good, with prices fully steady on all classes. Prices of fat lambs were irregular during the week; yearlings and old sheep were scarce, and prices were stronger. Prices of hogs fluctuated within narrow limits during the week and closed at a top price of \$17.25 per cwt. - the lowest since December 1952.

Cattle receipts at Fort Worth on Monday, February 21, were the smallest Monday supplies in over a year. Good and Choice slaughter steers brought \$20 to \$24 per cwt. Good stocker and feeder steers and yearlings closed at \$19 to \$21. Good and Choice butcher calves brought \$18 to \$20.50, while Medium and Good stocker steer calves sold at \$15 to \$21. Supplies of hogs were smaller than a week ago; Choice 185- to 240-lb. butcher hogs closed at a top price of \$17.75. Monday's sheep receipts were less than half the supplies of a week ago. Good and Choice shorn slaughter lambs sold at \$19 to \$20.50; stocker and feeder lambs were \$16 to \$19.50.

P O U L T R Y

The number of chickens, excluding commercial broilers, on Texas farms on January 1, 1955, was 21,388,000, compared with 21,184,000 a year earlier and the 10-year (1944-53) average of 27,599,000 birds. Turkey numbers were placed at 621,000 - 2% higher than a year earlier.

Commercial broiler production in Texas totaled 71,790,000 birds in 1954 - 10% more than in 1953. However, because of lower prices, gross income, which was placed at \$49,000,000, was 6% lower than in 1953.

Placements of broiler chicks on Texas farms during the week ended February 12 were 1,416,000. This is 6% more than in the previous week but 13% below placements for the corresponding week a year ago.

During the week ended Friday, February 18, Texas broiler prices held steady and were about the same as a year earlier, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture. Trading was generally moderate in all areas. Last Friday's closing prices were 25¢ per lb. in south Texas, east Texas, and Waco and 26¢ at the Corsicana F.O.B. plant. Prices on Monday, February 21, were 26¢ in all areas.

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

During the week ended Friday, February 18, original-bag 12-month Texas wool of good French combing and staple sold in the local markets at \$1.60 per lb., clean basis, while 12-month Texas wool mostly for scouring purposes brought an estimated clean price of \$1.50 to \$1.60, delivered to Boston. Heavy fall wools sold in Texas for delivery to Boston at an estimated clean price of \$1.25 per lb., according to the Agricultural Marketing Service.

Contracting of mohair in Texas continued on a small scale at $66\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ per lb. for adult mohair and \$1.06 $\frac{1}{2}$ for kid mohair, to the warehouse. The mohair market in Boston was rather quiet last week.

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