POULTRY

Texas broiler markets remained generally steady throughout the week ended Friday, March 4, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture. Prices were mostly 30¢ per lb. throughout the week and represented the highest weekly prices paid for broilers in south Texas since March 1953 and in east Texas and the Waco-Corsicana area since December 1952. Last week's closing prices per lb. were: South Texas, 30¢; east Texas, 29¢ to 30¢, mostly 30¢; Waco, 30¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 30.5¢. A year earlier, closing prices were 23¢ per lb. in all areas.

Broiler prices on Monday, March 7, were: South Texas, 29¢ to 30¢, mostly 30¢ per lb.; east Texas, 29¢ to 30¢, mostly 29¢; and Waco, 29¢.

Broiler chick placements on Texas farms totaled 1,561,000 during the week ended February 26, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. This is 7% above those in the previous week and 5% above placements for the corresponding week a year earlier.

LIVESTOCK

Prices of hogs on the Fort Worth market during the week ended Friday, March 4, were the lowest in almost 5 years, with Choice butcher hogs closing at $16 per cwt. - the lowest since April 1950. Supplies of hogs during the week were about 200 more than a week earlier and 100 more than a year earlier. Cattle and calf receipts at Fort Worth were larger than in the previous week but smaller than during the same period in 1954. Most of the cattle supplies were short-fed yearling steers and heifers. Fed cattle and slaughter calves sold generally at 50¢ to $1 per cwt. below a week earlier. Total sheep and lamb receipts at Fort Worth for the week ended March 4 were 4,400 more than a week earlier but about 4,700 below the comparable period in 1954. Spring lambs brought $1 to $1.50 per cwt. more than a week earlier, and prices of old-crop lambs were fully steady. Feeder lambs were steady to weak.

Receipts of cattle at Fort Worth on Monday of this week were a little lower than a week earlier but slightly above those on the same date in 1954, according to the AMS. Most of the supply was fed steers and heifers. Sales of beef steers and heifers were generally steady to strong compared with last week's close. Good and Choice slaughter steers sold at $18.50 to $23.50; Good and Choice heifers brought $17 to $22. Medium and Good stocker and feeder steers and calves were $1h to $20.50. Calf receipts were smaller than a week earlier but were larger than a year ago. Good and Choice butcher calves sold at $17.50 to $20.50, with a few head quoted at $21. Hog supplies were slightly below a week earlier. Choice 190- to 235-lb. butcher hogs sold at $16 and $16.25. Monday's receipts of sheep and lambs at Fort Worth totaled 6,000, or about 500 below a week earlier. Good and Choice spring lambs brought $22 to $23.50 per cwt.

Red meat production in commercial slaughter plants in the United States totaled 2,196,000,000 lbs. during January 1955, according to the AMS. This is 3% less than the 2,268,000,000 lbs. of red meat produced a month earlier but 6% more than the 2,065,000,000 lbs. produced in January 1954. In Texas, commercial meat production during January 1955 is estimated at 96,315,000 lbs. - 3% more than in January 1954.
COTTON

Spot cotton prices in southwestern markets declined during the week ended Friday, March 4, according to the AMS. Activity was slow in most markets, and the volume of producers' offerings of free cotton was small. Domestic mill purchases were limited and consisted mostly of small lots of a wide range of qualities for prompt delivery.

Weather conditions in the southwestern area (Texas and Oklahoma) during the past week were near ideal for cotton farming activities. On the High Plains, preplanting irrigation was under way, while in the Rio Grande Valley, cotton planting was about half completed. In the Coastal Bend section, planting was making rapid progress.

Prices for Middling 15/16" staple declined on the Dallas market each day during the past week and on Monday, March 7, were quoted at 32.5¢ per lb. - an average of 80 points below the previous Monday's price.

MISCELLANEOUS

The index of prices received by the Nation's farmers and ranchers rose 1 point during the month ended February 15, 1955, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The index was 24.5% of the 1910-14 average - 5% below a year earlier. The livestock and livestock products index rose 2% during the period, while the all-crop index declined 1%. From January 15 to mid-February, a sharp contraseasonal increase in egg prices and higher prices for cattle, chickens, and oranges slightly more than offset lower prices for hogs, strawberries, milk, and cotton.

The parity index (reflecting prices paid for commodities plus interest, taxes, and wage rates) was 283 on February 15 - unchanged from a month ago and 1 point higher than a year earlier.

The index of prices received by Texas farmers and ranchers rose 8 points from January 15 to February 15, reaching 270% of the 1910-14 average. Increases from a month earlier were noted for most meat animals, chickens, eggs, sweet potatoes, cotton, cottonseed, hay, commercial vegetables, and citrus fruit. Decreases occurred in prices of hogs, wholesale milk, corn, rice, and peanuts.

Texas mohair production in 1954 is estimated at 13,097,000 lbs. - 9% above the 11,972,000 lbs. produced in 1953. Cash receipts from the sale of mohair in the State totaled $9,561,000 in 1954, compared with $10,775,000 in 1953 - a decrease of 11%. The smaller income in 1954 was the result of a lower average price per lb. received for the 1954 mohair clip which more than offset increased production.

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