



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

Number 282

Wednesday, May 25, 1955

WHEAT ACREAGE ALLOTMENTS

State wheat acreage allotments for the 1956 crop were announced recently by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The allotments are based on a national wheat acreage allotment of 55,000,000 acres. Acreage allotments for commercial wheat-producing states in the District (and those for 1955) are: New Mexico, 465,924 (447,354); Oklahoma, 4,860,057 (4,791,926); and Texas, 4,227,136 (4,207,578). Arizona and Louisiana have been designated noncommercial wheat areas.

RICE

Seeding of the new rice crop is making good progress. It is estimated that 65 to 70% of the crop has been planted in Texas, and in Louisiana, planting is about 85 to 90% completed.

Exports of rough rice during March totaled 72,339 cwt., according to the U. S. Bureau of the Census. This is approximately 10,000 cwt. more than during the same month last year.

The 1955 rice crop will be supported at a minimum price of \$4.66 per cwt., according to a recent announcement by the USDA. This is 85% of the April 15 parity price of \$5.48. Last year's rice crop was supported at \$4.92 per cwt., reflecting 90% of parity. If the supply of rice and the parity price as of August 1 indicate a higher level of support, the support price will be increased.

LIVESTOCK

Livestock receipts at Fort Worth during the first part of the week ended Friday, May 20, were small as a result of rains, but receipts increased by the end of the week. Lamb prices were \$1 to \$2 per cwt. higher, while cattle and calves closed at prices about steady with those of the preceding week. Butcher hogs averaged about \$1 per cwt. more than during the previous week, and sows sold at 50¢ to \$1 higher.

On Monday, May 23, cattle receipts at Fort Worth were slightly below those of the previous Monday and the comparable date a year ago, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. Cows comprised about a third of the receipts, with the remainder mostly yearlings. Good and Choice beef steers sold at \$18.50 to \$22.50; Commercial cows were \$12.50 to \$13, and Good stocker and feeder steers and yearlings averaged \$17 to \$20. Hog supplies on Monday were lower than a week ago, with most butchers and sows 50¢ per cwt. higher. Choice 190- to 240-lb. butcher hogs sold mostly at \$19 per cwt. Receipts of sheep were about 4,000 below those on last Monday, with prices steady to \$1 higher on some classes. Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs were \$21.50 to \$23, while shorn stocker and feeder lambs brought \$11 to \$14.

Cattle slaughter during the remainder of this year probably will be about the same as in 1954 - a little lower in the summer and higher in the fall - according to the USDA. Prices are expected to be around last year's levels. Hog slaughter during 1955 probably will stay above a year earlier, but the rate of expansion is slowing down. Reports from the Corn Belt show that most of the increase over a year ago in this spring's pig crop came in December, January, and February. This indicates heavy early marketings, with an early seasonal price decline this fall.

Total meat production in 1955 is expected to increase for the fourth consecutive year and to attain a record-high level, according to the AMS. The output is expected to be 3% to 4% more than a year earlier, with pork production showing the largest gain.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, May 20, Texas broiler markets opened unsettled in south Texas but were steady in east Texas and the Waco-Corsicana area. By the end of the week, the markets firmed, with prices 1¢ to 2¢ per lb. higher than the previous Friday's close. Closing prices were: South Texas and Waco, 30¢ per lb., and east Texas, 29.5¢ to 30¢ per lb., mostly 30¢. During the corresponding period last year, closing prices were 24¢ per lb. in Waco and south and east Texas and 26¢ per lb. at the Corsicana F.O.B. plant.

On Monday of this week, broiler markets were steady to firm in east Texas and the Waco-Corsicana area but unsettled in south Texas. Prices quoted per lb. were: East Texas, 30¢ to 31¢; south Texas and Waco, 30¢ to 31¢, mostly 30¢; and Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 30.5¢.

Broiler chick placements on Texas farms totaled 1,721,000 during the week ended May 14, according to the AMS. This is 3% below placements in the previous week but 23% above those in the comparable week last year.

E G G S

Egg production, beginning in late summer, will be affected by the sharp drop in laying-flock replacements, according to the USDA. There were 28% fewer chicks on farms on April 1 than a year earlier. Prospects are good that a substantial seasonal price rise will occur this year in contrast to 1954, when egg prices failed to increase from spring to fall.

W O R L D L I V E S T O C K N U M B E R S

In 1954, world cattle numbers increased for the eighth consecutive year and are estimated at 877,000,000, reports the Foreign Agricultural Service. The gain was about 10,000,000 head - the same as a year earlier but substantially below several previous years, when cattle numbers were undergoing rapid expansion.

World hog numbers rose substantially in 1954, reaching a record-high level of 319,000,000. The gain in hog population is expected to be reflected in an increase in world hog slaughter during 1955 and the first part of 1956.

Sheep numbers in the world in 1954 continued to increase for the eighth consecutive year. Last year, numbers totaled 833,000,000 - 1% above a year earlier and 18% above the 1946-50 average.

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

The USDA recently announced that 1955-crop peanuts will be supported at a national average minimum level of \$244.80 per ton, or 90% of the April 15 parity price of \$272. If the parity price at the beginning of the marketing year (August 1) is higher than on April 15, the support price will be raised. The 1954 peanut crop also was supported at \$244.80 per ton, representing 90% of the parity level at the beginning of last year's marketing season.

Feed grains in the United States as of April 1 are at record levels as a result of below-average disappearance during the October-March feeding period, according to the USDA. The total carry-over into the 1955-56 feeding year is now expected to be about 20% larger than last year's record of 32,000,000 tons. This will mean another large supply of feed grains next year if the 1955 growing season is average.

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