



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

## FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

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### S O C I A L   S E C U R I T Y   T A X   D E A D L I N E !

April 16 is the deadline for self-employed farmers and ranchers to report their net earnings and pay social security taxes this year, according to the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The reporting date was moved forward 1 day because April 15 falls on Sunday. Every person self-employed in any kind of agricultural enterprise whose net earnings amounted to at least \$400 in 1955 is required to report his earnings, up to a total of \$4,200, and pay a 3% social security tax on them.

### A G R I C U L T U R A L   P R I C E S

The index of prices received by U. S. farmers increased 2% during the month ended March 15, 1956, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. The index at mid-March is placed at 230% of the 1910-14 average, compared with 226 a month earlier and 243 on the corresponding date last year. Prices of most crops increased from mid-February to mid-March, with higher prices for tomatoes, potatoes, and cotton making the most important contributions to the 3½% increase in the crop index. The livestock and livestock products index increased only ½ of 1%, as higher prices for beef cattle, hogs, and chickens were nearly offset by lower prices for milk, eggs, and calves.

The parity index (which reflects prices paid for commodities plus interest, taxes, and wage rates) on March 15 was 282, which was about 2/3 of 1% higher than a month earlier but was 1% lower than at the same time in 1955. Upturns in food and feeder livestock prices were primarily responsible for the increase from mid-February; however, small increases were also recorded for farm supplies, machinery, and tractors.

Farm product prices increased somewhat more than the parity index, thereby raising the parity ratio 1% to 82 on March 15. At the same time last year, the parity index was 86.

### F A R M   I N C O M E

Cash receipts from farm marketings in the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) totaled \$294,389,000 during January this year, reflecting a decline of 8% from a year earlier. Receipts from crops were 11% below those in January 1955, and livestock receipts were 3% less.

### L I V E S T O C K

An estimated 2,900 cattle were received at Fort Worth on Monday, April 2, according to the AMS. This supply compares with 3,000 a week earlier and 4,200 at the same time last year. Trading on slaughter steers and heifers was moderately active, and prices were fully steady as compared with those in the latter part of the past week. Stockers sold at prices which were about in line with those a week earlier; prices for cows were barely steady. Choice beef steers brought \$18 to \$18.50; Commercial and Good heifers, \$14 to \$17.50; beef cows, mostly \$12 to \$12.50; and Good stocker steers, \$15.50 to \$17.50 per cwt.

Monday's calf supplies totaled only 400, or 150 fewer than a week earlier and less than half the receipts on the corresponding date in 1955. The demand for both slaughter and stocker calves was strong enough to make an early clearance of

these animals at firm prices. Choice slaughter offerings were quoted at \$18.50 to \$19.50, and Good stocker steer calves sold at \$16 to \$18.

Hog receipts are placed at 1,400, or the largest since September 1955. These supplies compare with 1,200 on the preceding Monday and 650 at the same time in 1955. No. 2 and No. 3 Grade butchers with average weights of more than 235 lbs. comprised a large part of the offerings. Only a small percentage of the marketings was suitable for top prices. Butchers and sows brought prices which were mostly steady with those in the latter part of the past week. U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of mixed 190- to 245-lb. slaughter hogs sold mainly at \$15 per cwt.

Monday's sheep and lamb marketings are estimated at 5,500, reflecting declines of 4% from a week earlier and 13% from a year ago. Old-crop lambs accounted for 60% of the offerings; spring lambs comprised 25%; and old ewes made up most of the remainder. Trading was a little slow, but prices for all classes were mostly steady. Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs cleared at \$18.50 to \$20.

#### POULTRY

During the week ended Friday, March 30, the major Texas broiler markets were steady to weak, reports the State Department of Agriculture. Trading was normal to heavy. Closing prices - which were unchanged to 2¢ per lb. lower than in the preceding week - were: South Texas, 22¢; east Texas, 21¢ to 22¢, mostly 21¢; Waco, 21¢ to 22¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 23¢ to 23.5¢ per lb. During the corresponding week in 1955, closing prices were 32¢ in all the areas.

On Monday, April 2, broiler markets were steady to weak in the Waco-Corsicana area and steady in south and east Texas. Trading was extra heavy in east Texas and normal in south Texas and the Waco-Corsicana area, with the following prices quoted: South Texas, 21¢ to 22¢, mostly 22¢; east Texas and Waco, 21¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 22.5¢ to 23¢ per lb.

	Area	Week ended March 24, 1956	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1955
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	1,944,000	0	17
	Louisiana..	337,000	15	17
	22 states..	25,681,000	3	24

#### MAN - MADE FIBERS

In terms of "cotton equivalent," U. S. production of all man-made fibers in 1955 was a record high of 4.0 million bales, reports the AMS. Rayon and acetate output totaled 1,261 million lbs., which is the largest annual production since 1951 and compares with 1,086 million lbs. in 1954. The outturn of nylon and other non-cellulose base fibers increased for the eighth successive year and in 1955 amounted to 458 million lbs., or 33% larger than a year earlier.

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