



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

Number 344

Wednesday, August 1, 1956

FINAL LOAN RATES FOR COTTON

On July 27 the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced final loan rates for the 1956 crops of upland and extra-long staple cotton. The average loan rate for upland cotton, basis Middling 7/8", will be 29.34¢ per lb., gross weight, which reflects 82½% of the current parity price. The average loan rate for 1956-crop extra-long staple cotton will be 56.62¢ per lb., net weight, or 75% of the parity price. (The average rate for American-Egyptian cotton will be 56.70¢ per lb., and that for Sealand and Sea Island will be 51.70¢.) Support prices for 1955 crops of upland and extra-long staple cotton were 31.70¢ and 55.20¢ per lb., respectively.

RICE SUPPORT PRICE INCREASED

The USDA announced on July 27 that the national average support price for 1956-crop rice is being increased to \$4.57 per cwt., or 7¢ higher than the minimum price announced on April 23. The support price is being increased to reflect 82½% of the July 15 parity price of \$5.54 per cwt. The price support will be carried out through loans and purchase agreements and will be available from harvesttime through January 31, 1957.

AGRICULTURAL PRICES

The index of prices received by the Nation's farmers declined 1% during the month ended July 15, 1956, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. The index, at 244% of the 1910-14 average, compares with 247 a month earlier and 236 on the corresponding date in 1955. Lower prices received by farmers for fruit, meat animals, and commercial vegetables were responsible for the decline from the mid-June level. A sharp increase in potato prices and higher prices for milk and chickens were not enough to offset the declines in other commodities.

The parity index rose 1 point during the month ended July 15, as a result of an increase in prices of family living items. The index is placed at 287, or 2% higher than a year ago.

The parity ratio at mid-July was 85, which was 1 point lower than a month earlier and was the first downturn in the ratio since November 1955.

LIVESTOCK

Cattle receipts at Fort Worth on Monday, July 30, are estimated at 6,800, compared with 8,200 a week earlier and 5,200 on the corresponding date in 1955, reports the AMS. Stocker and feeder cattle - mainly yearlings - comprised over half of the supply, and slaughter cows accounted for about 35% of the receipts. Trading was slow, as asking prices were above the past week's close while bids were lower. Prices of slaughter cattle were steady to weak, and those for stockers and feeders were about steady. Good and Choice slaughter steers sold at \$18.50 to \$21.50; Utility and Standard slaughter heifers, \$11 to \$17; Utility cows, \$9.50 to \$11; Good stocker and feeder steers (mainly yearlings), \$16 to \$17.50; and Medium and Good heifers, \$13 to \$15.50.

Monday's calf supply totaled an estimated 1,600, or 100 more than a week earlier and 700 more than at the same time last year. Demand for stocker and feeder calves continued good; trading was active and prices were steady to strong. Offerings of slaughter calves were slow, and prices were about steady. Good and Choice slaughter calves brought \$14 to \$17 per cwt., and Good stocker steer calves cleared at \$16 to \$18.50.

Hog marketings are placed at 1,300, or 16% below a week ago but 86% above those on the comparable date in 1955. Early trading was very slow, and bids were lower; however, most butchers finally sold at prices which were steady to 25¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the past week. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 200- to 265-lb. slaughter hogs brought mostly \$16.50 to \$17.

Sheep and lamb receipts are estimated at 4,700 - about the same as on the previous Monday's market but 1,800 more than at the same time last year. Trading was fairly active. Slaughter spring lambs sold at prices which were 50¢ to \$1 per cwt. higher than in the preceding week; prices of other classes, including stockers, were steady. Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs were quoted at \$20 to \$22.

P O U L T R Y

The major Texas broiler markets held about steady throughout the week ended Friday, July 27, according to the State Department of Agriculture. Trading was active in south Texas and about normal in the other areas. Closing prices - which were unchanged to 1.5¢ per lb. lower than in the preceding week - were: South Texas, 20¢, with a few at 21¢; east Texas, 20¢ to 21¢; Waco, 20¢ to 20.5¢, mostly 20.5¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 21¢ per lb. During the corresponding period in 1955, the following closing prices were quoted: South Texas, 27¢ to 28¢, mostly 28¢; east Texas and Waco, 27¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 28¢.

On Monday of this week, broiler markets were steady to firm in south Texas and steady in east Texas and the Waco-Corsicana area. Prices were: South and east Texas, 20¢ to 21¢; Waco, 20¢ to 20.5¢, mostly 20.5¢; Corsicana, at the farm, 20¢ to 20.5¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 21¢ to 21.5¢ per lb.

	Area	Week ended July 21, 1956	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1955
BROILER CHICK				
	Texas.....	2,066,000	-9	21
PLACEMENTS	Louisiana..	360,000	18	25
	22 states..	24,653,000	-3	12

Production of broilers and outturn of turkeys in the United States are expected to be at all-time highs in 1956 and may exceed 1955 levels by 20% and 15%, respectively, according to the AMS. Egg production also is likely to set a new record, perhaps rising 2% or more above last year's high level.

Egg prices in the Nation have declined seasonally since the beginning of 1956 but have remained above a year earlier except for a short period after mid-June. In 1955, prices had definitely begun to turn seasonally upward by mid-June. According to the report, the prospect for the remainder of this year is for egg prices to rise seasonally; however, the peak may come at an earlier date and may be at a lower level than the U. S. average price of 47.1¢ per doz. received by farmers in December 1955.

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