The U. S. Department of Agriculture recently announced the Acreage Reserve Program for 1957-crop winter wheat. This part of the Soil Bank Act for 1957 was announced in advance of other phases of the program to make information available promptly to those farmers who must complete plans soon for fall-seeded wheat. Winter wheat producers will have the opportunity to sign Acreage Reserve agreements until September 21, 1956. Details of the 1957 Acreage Reserve Program as it will apply to the other basic crops (cotton, corn, rice, peanuts, tobacco, and wheat grown on farms where all wheat is spring-seeded) will be announced later this year.

On August 1 the USDA named 23 undesirable wheat varieties which will be discounted 20¢ per bu. in price support rates for the 1957 crop. The varieties are undesirable because of inferior milling or baking qualities. Discounts to discourage planting of undesirable wheat varieties were included in the price support program for the first time on the 1956 wheat crop.

Conservation Reserve Program
The Secretary of Agriculture recently announced the Conservation Reserve Program, which is the long-term part of the Soil Bank Act. The program is designed to divert land regularly used for crop production to conservation uses and provides (1) for cost-sharing assistance to farmers in making such shifts and (2) for annual payments on the land placed under the program. The Conservation Reserve Program will be available for 1956 to farmers who are in a position to comply with its provisions and who enter contracts with the USDA on or before October 15. For farmers interested in contracts beginning in 1957, the program will be available until March 15 next year.

Funds Allocated to Texas Drought Areas
The Secretary of Agriculture recently allocated $1 million for the hay and roughage program in the drought areas of Texas. Under the Federal-State cooperative program - which was proposed by the Governor of Texas - eligible farmers and ranchers in the "major disaster" counties of the State will receive certificates from Federal Funds which will have a value of $7.50 per ton of hay or roughage purchased. The State will pay certain administrative costs and will develop an arrangement under which banks of the State are expected to aid in handling the certificates so that they may be used as cash in making purchases.

Poultry
The major Texas commercial broiler markets were generally steady during the week ended Friday, August 17, reports the State Department of Agriculture. Closing prices - which were unchanged to 1¢ per lb. lower than a week earlier - were: South Texas and Waco, 19¢; east Texas, 18¢ to 20¢, mostly 19¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 19¢ to 20¢. During the corresponding period in 1955, closing prices were 27¢ per lb. in all the areas.

On Monday of this week, broiler markets were steady to firm in south Texas, fully steady in east Texas, and firm in the Waco-Corsicana area. The following prices were quoted: South Texas, 19¢ to 20¢, mostly 19¢; east Texas, 19¢ to 20¢; Waco, 19.5¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 20.5¢.
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS

Area
Texas...... 1,972,000
Louisiana.. 318,000
22 states.. 23,642,000

Week ended August 11, 1956

Percentage change from Previous Comparable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Week ended</th>
<th>Previous week</th>
<th>Comparable week, 1955</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>1,972,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>318,000</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 states</td>
<td>23,642,000</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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LIVESTOCK

Cattle receipts at Fort Worth on Monday, August 20, totaled an estimated 6,500, or 1,000 fewer than a week earlier but 1,600 more than at the same time last year, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. A larger run was expected, but widespread rains during the past week end evidently fell in some sections in time to curtail marketings. Trading was active on all classes of cattle. Prices of slaughter classes were mainly steady to strong, and those for stockers and feeders were strong. Most Good beef steers sold at $19 to $22; Utility cows, $9 to $11; and Medium stocker and feeder steers, mainly $13 to $14.50 per cwt.

Monday's calf supply is placed at 1,600, compared with 1,900 a week ago and 1,600 on the corresponding date in 1955. Trading was active, and prices were fully steady to strong. Good and Choice slaughter calves brought $15 to $18, and Medium and Good stocker steers cleared at $11 to $18.

Hog marketings are estimated at 1,500, reflecting increases of 50% from the previous Monday and 67% from the same time last year. Trading was moderately active, with shipping interests competing for a share of the supplies. Prices of barrows and gilts were steady to 25¢ or more per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the past week. Most mixed lots of U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 200- to 270-lb. butcher hogs brought $17.25 to $17.50.

Monday's sheep and lamb receipts are placed at 3,500, or 2,200 fewer than a week earlier but about double the supply on the corresponding date a year ago. Most slaughter classes sold early in the day and brought prices which were largely steady with those in the latter part of the past week. Prices of Good and Choice slaughter lambs ranged from $17 to $19 per cwt.

SHORN WOOL PRODUCTION - 1956

The amount of wool to be shorn in the United States in 1956 is estimated at 231,754,000 lbs., reports the AMS. The output is 1% smaller than the 233,370,000 lbs. shorn in 1955 and 5% below the 10-year (1945-54) average. The decline in production from the year-earlier level is the result of a decrease in the number of sheep shorn, as the average fleece weight was unchanged.

In Texas (the leading sheep-raising state), shorn wool outturn this year is placed at 11,938,000 lbs., reflecting declines of 7% from a year earlier and 24% from the 10-year average. The average number of sheep shorn and to be shorn is estimated at 5,181,000, compared with 5,593,000 in the previous year. The average fleece weight is expected to be 8.1 lbs., or the same as in 1955.

J. Z. Rowe
Agricultural Economist