TEXAS CROP VALUATION

The aggregate value of principal crops grown in Texas during 1956 is placed at $1.1 billion, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. The value is 9% below both the year-earlier level and the 10-year (1945-54) average. Cotton accounted for a higher cash value than all the other crops combined, while sorghums ranked first in acreage harvested.

The acreage of principal crops harvested in Texas in 1956 is estimated at 21.8 million acres, or 10% below the 24.3 million acres harvested in 1955 and 19% less than the 1945-54 average of 26.7 million acres. Drought, acreage restrictions, and the Soil Bank were responsible for the lower total acreage harvested.

WINTER WHEAT ACREAGE DOWN

The acreage planted to U. S. winter wheat in the fall of 1956 is estimated at 36.8 million acres, according to the AMS. The acreage is almost a fifth less than in the preceding fall and is the smallest since 1913. Based on conditions as of December 1, 1956, the wheat crop for 1957 is indicated at 625 million bu. A crop this size would be 15% below the 1956 output and 28% less than the 10-year (1945-54) average.

In the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), the acreage seeded to 1957-crop winter wheat is estimated at 7,938,000 acres, or 17% below the acreage planted for the 1956 crop. Production is indicated at 73,190,000 bushels - down a fourth from the 1956 output.

EMERGENCY GRAZING EXTENDED

On December 26, 1956, the Secretary of Agriculture announced an extension of the authorization for emergency grazing of Soil Bank Acreage Reserve land in designated counties through January 31, 1957. The announcement extends the Acreage Reserve emergency grazing (which was previously authorized through December 31, 1956) in 678 counties or parts of counties in 11 states. The extension will allow time for a re-examination of the need for emergency grazing of Acreage Reserve land by the Governors of the respective states and by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. States in the Eleventh District which are affected and the number of counties affected in each are: New Mexico, 31; Oklahoma, 77; and Texas, 233.

PIG CROP

The 1956 pig crop in the Nation totaled almost 90 million head, or 6% below a year earlier, reports the AMS. The spring pig crop, at 53.1 million, was down 8%; and the fall crop, at 36.5 million, was 4% smaller. The number of sows farrowed in the fall of 1956 was 7% below the preceding year, while the number of pigs saved per litter was the highest of record. According to farmers' breeding intentions, 7,501,000 sows are expected to be farrowed in the spring of 1957. If the number of pigs saved per litter is about average, the spring pig crop is expected to be about 2% below a year earlier.

In the District states the 1956 pig crop is placed at 3,099,000, which is 7% fewer than in the preceding year. The number of sows to be farrowed in the spring of 1957 is indicated at 221,000, or 15% below the year-earlier level.
LIVESTOCK

As a result of the Christmas holiday, cattle receipts were small at the Fort Worth market during the week ended Thursday, December 27, 1956, according to the AMS. The cattle supply, at an estimated 4,300, was almost a third below a week earlier and 17% smaller than in the corresponding period of 1955. Trading was active on all classes of slaughter cattle, and prices were mostly strong to 50¢ per cwt. higher than in the preceding week. Choice slaughter steers sold at $20 to $20.50; Utility cows, $10 to $12; and Medium and Good stocker and feeder steers, $13 to $16.50.

Calf marketings totaled only 950, compared with 1,500 in the previous week and 1,200 a year ago. Prices of slaughter calves were strong, with Good and Choice killers quoted at $15 to $18 per cwt. Supplies of stocker and feeder calves were too limited to test values.

Hog offerings during the week ended December 27 are placed at 1,300, which is less than half the week-earlier supply but almost double receipts on the comparable date in 1955. The week's top price of $18.25 was the highest since July 1955. Most No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of mixed slaughter hogs brought $17.75 and $18.

In contrast to the smaller receipts of other classes of livestock, sheep and lamb supplies were unusually heavy. The marketings, at an estimated 12,300, were more than double both the week-earlier and year-ago volumes. Lambs (predominantly slaughter classes) comprised about 95% of the supply. Trading was fairly active on slaughter lambs until late Thursday, December 27, when prices declined. Compared with a week earlier, prices of slaughter lambs were steady to 50¢ per cwt. lower, and those for feeders were steady. Good and Choice 80- to 95-lb. shorn slaughter lambs with No. 1 and No. 2 pelts brought $17.50 to $18.50.

POULTRY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS</th>
<th>Week ended December 22, 1956</th>
<th>Percentage change from Previous week</th>
<th>Comparable week, 1955</th>
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FARM EXPORTS RISE

The value of U.S. farm exports for 1956 is expected to exceed $4 billion, according to a recent report of the USDA. The total is 30% above the 1955 level and is approximately equal to the all-time high of $4.1 billion in 1919. Prices of export agricultural commodities were lower in 1956 than in 1919, but the quantity exported is estimated to be 5% greater. Agricultural exports have increased each year since 1953, and the record shipments in 1956 reflect the continuing improvement in the economic situation overseas.

J. Z. Rowe
Agricultural Economist