



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## THOUSANDTH RURAL TELEPHONE SERVICE LOAN

The Rural Electrification Administration recently made its thousandth loan to improve and extend telephone service in rural areas, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Farmers Independent Telephone Company of Grantsburg, Wisconsin, received the thousandth loan in the eighth year of the REA's rural telephone program. The loan brings the total of REA loans for rural telephone facilities to \$382 million.

The REA loans will enable 540 independent telephone companies and cooperative associations to provide modern dial service for more than 840,000 farm families and other subscribers in small towns and rural areas. As of April 1 this year, 295 of the borrowers had placed in service 1,130 new dial exchanges and constructed nearly 100,000 miles of telephone line.

## VEGETABLES AND MELONS - TEXAS

Production of spring- and summer-crop vegetables and melons in Texas (except midsummer cantaloupes) is estimated, as of June 1, to be 4% below the 1956 output but 10% above the 1949-56 average, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. Prospective outturn of south Texas cantaloupes, north Texas onions, and east Texas tomatoes was reduced by excessive rains during May. Watermelon prospects are fairly good; however, the crop is about 10 days late in all sections of the State.

## MILK AND EGG PRODUCTION UP

U. S. milk production reached a record 13,122 million lbs. in May, reports the AMS. The output was 2% greater than a year earlier and 6% above the average for the month of May. Production per cow also set a new record on June 1. The average outturn in herds of crop reporters was 23.20 lbs. per cow, or 4% higher than the previous year's June 1 record and 12% above the average for that date. Milk output during the first 5 months of 1957 totaled 54.7 billion lbs., compared with 54.3 billion lbs. for the comparable period last year.

The rate of egg production in May, at 19.2 eggs per layer, compares with 18.9 eggs a year ago and the 1946-55 average for the month of 18.2 eggs. Farm flocks laid 5,662 million eggs in May - 2% above the year-earlier output.

## SURPLUS FOOD DONATIONS

Donations of surplus food during the first 9 months of the current fiscal year, which began July 1, 1956, totaled over 2 billion pounds, or about 54% more than during the same period in the previous fiscal year, according to the USDA. Of the total food donations this fiscal year, almost 60% was distributed to foreign countries and the remainder was given to eligible recipients in this country.

## FARM LABOR

Farm employment in the Nation totaled 8,238,000 during the week of May 19, reports the AMS. This total reflected a seasonal rise of 800,000 from a month earlier but was nearly 500,000 below that on the corresponding date last year.

According to the report, the length of the farm workday continues to decline. Farm operators averaged 10.7 hours work per day around the first of June, compared with 10.9 hours per day on the corresponding date in 1956 and 11.2 hours

per day at that time in 1955. Hired workers averaged 9.2 hours per day around June 1 this year, compared with 9.3 hours in the preceding year and 9.5 in 1955. Declines in working hours per day were reported in nearly all states.

#### P O U L T R Y

According to the Texas Department of Agriculture, commercial broiler markets in the State were generally steady during the week ended Friday, June 14. Prices were unchanged from a week earlier except in south Texas, where a 1¢ per lb. increase occurred as a result of a continued shortage of desired-weight birds. The following closing prices were quoted: South Texas, 21¢ to 22¢, mostly 22¢; east Texas and Waco, 21¢; and the Corsicana F.O.B. plant, 21.5¢. During the comparable week last year, closing prices were: South Texas, 20¢ to 22¢, mostly 21¢, and east Texas and Waco, 21¢. (Prices for the Corsicana F.O.B. plant were not available.)

On Monday, June 17, broiler markets were fully steady in south Texas and steady in east Texas and Waco. Prices were 22¢ per lb. in south Texas and 21¢ in the other areas.

	Area	Week ended June 8, 1957	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1956
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,236,000	7	-5
	Louisiana..	445,000	13	21
	22 states..	28,605,000	2	2

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

Cattle and calf marketings at Fort Worth on Monday, June 17, were below both the previous week's unusually large supplies and the year-earlier level, reports the AMS. Cattle receipts totaled an estimated 6,600, compared with 8,100 a week earlier and 7,000 on the comparable date in 1956. Trading on beef steers and heifers was about steady with that in the previous week. The cow trade was active, and prices were steady to strong. Standard and Good 800- to 1,100-lb. slaughter steers brought \$17.50 to \$22.50; Utility beef cows, \$13 to \$14.50; and Medium and Good 500- to 700-lb. stocker and feeder steers, \$16 to \$21.50.

Monday's calf receipts are placed at 1,100, reflecting declines of 45% from a week ago and 27% from the corresponding date last year. Prices of slaughter calves were fully steady with those in the previous week. Most of the Good slaughter calves cleared at \$19.50 to \$21, and Medium and Good stocker steer calves brought \$16 to \$22.

Hog offerings, at an estimated 1,200, were 100 more than on the preceding Monday's market but 200 fewer than a year ago. Demand for butchers was good, and prices were steady to 25¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the past week. U. S. No. 1 and No. 2 Grades of 210- to 230-lb. slaughter hogs were quoted at \$21 - the highest price since June 1955.

Sheep and lamb supplies, at an estimated 8,000, were smaller than both a week earlier and a year ago. The quality of most offerings was considerably lower than a week earlier. Early trading was uneven, but trading later in the day was mostly steady. Utility and Good spring lambs sold mainly at \$18 to \$19.50 per cwt.

J. Z. Rowe  
Agricultural Economist