



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

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## DAIRY PRICE SUPPORTS LOWERED

On December 18, the Secretary of Agriculture announced that dairy price supports for the marketing year beginning April 1, 1958, will be set at 75% of parity. The announcement was made well in advance, so that adjustments and milk promotion plans could be under way by the start of the new marketing year.

The dollars-and-cents level of support for butter, cheese, and nonfat dry milk during 1958-59 will be announced before the beginning of the marketing year next April 1. During the current year, dairy supports are available at \$3.25 per cwt. for milk used for manufacturing purposes (reflecting 83% of parity) and 58.6¢ per lb. for butterfat (reflecting 80% of parity).

## GOVERNMENT WOOL STOCKS ELIMINATED

The Secretary of Agriculture recently commended the sheep and wool industry and officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for their success in completely disposing of Government-owned wool. The wool, which was held in inventory on November 1, 1955, was acquired under the 1952, 1953, and 1954 price support loan programs. The Secretary also stated that the Commodity Credit Corporation has been successful in eliminating Government-owned stocks of other products, including cotton linters, cottonseed meal, cottonseed oil, seeds, linseed oil, and flaxseed.

## 1957 TEXAS PECAN CROP

The 1957 Texas pecan crop is estimated at 43 million lbs. by the Agricultural Marketing Service in its final report for the season. The crop is 56% above the year-earlier output and is 36% greater than the 1946-55 average.

## WORLD AGRICULTURAL SITUATION

World agricultural production in 1957-58 is expected to be at a record level; but, as has been the case since 1952-53, the output probably will barely keep abreast of the population increase, according to the USDA. Production is expected to equal the all-time high reached in 1956-57 despite sharp declines in some major areas, such as the Soviet Union, Canada, and Australia. Per capita consumption has been increasing because of rising population, industrial activity, improved living standards, and increased productivity.

World trade in agricultural products reached record levels in 1956-57.

As a result, carry-over stocks of several important commodities - particularly cotton and wheat - in exporting countries were smaller at the beginning of the current season than a year earlier. While the 1957-58 total volume of world agricultural trade may not equal the previous year's level, it is likely to exceed that of all other years, points out the USDA.

## POULTRY

During the week ended Friday, December 20, prices at the major Texas commercial broiler markets were generally unchanged from a week earlier, points out the State Department of Agriculture. However, trading was somewhat less active, as a result of the light preholiday demand. Closing prices were mostly 16¢ per lb. in south Texas, east Texas, and Waco. During the comparable period in 1956, the following closing prices were quoted: South Texas, 16¢; east Texas, 15¢ to 16¢; and Waco, 15½¢.

On Monday, December 23, Texas commercial broiler markets remained steady, and supplies were adequate for a fair demand. Prices were 16¢ per lb. in all areas.

	Area	Week ended December 14, 1957	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1956
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS				
	Texas.....	1,731,000	-1	-6
	Louisiana..	269,000	-12	0
	22 states..	25,148,000	2	10

#### FROZEN POULTRY STOCKS

Total U. S. frozen poultry holdings at the end of November 1957 were 4% below those of a month earlier, states the AMS. The holdings, at an estimated 363.9 million lbs., were slightly below a year ago but were 21% above the 1952-56 average for the end of November. Frozen turkey stocks (which accounted for 61% of the total) declined 8% during November but were still 14% above those of a year earlier and were 45% greater than the 1952-56 average for the end of November.

#### LIVESTOCK

The preholiday marketings of cattle and calves were comparatively small at Fort Worth on Monday, December 23, states the AMS. Cattle receipts totaled an estimated 1,400, compared with 1,900 a week ago and 700 on the corresponding day in 1956 (which was Christmas Eve). Trading on all classes of slaughter calves was active, and prices were fully steady to strong. Demand continued good for all kinds of stocker and feeder cattle, and prices were fully as high as those in the past week. Good 800- to 1,150-lb. slaughter steers cleared at \$22.50 to \$24; most Utility cows, \$15.50 to \$16.50; and Medium and Good 550- to 700-lb. stocker steers, \$19 to \$24 per cwt.

Monday's calf receipts are placed at 400, or only about half the year-earlier figure but 300 more than on the comparable date last year. Prices of slaughter calves were strong, with some sales 25¢ to 50¢ per cwt. higher than in the previous week. Good and Choice slaughter calves and Good stocker and feeder steer calves brought mainly \$23 to \$26.

Hog supplies are estimated at 900, or 200 below the previous Monday's receipts but about triple the offerings a year ago. Trading on butcher hogs was fairly active, and prices were mostly steady with those in the latter part of the preceding week. Mixed lots of U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 190- to 270-lb. barrows and gilts accounted for the bulk of the run and brought mainly \$19 and \$19.25 per cwt.

Monday's sheep and lamb offerings totaled an estimated 1,900, or 19% more than a week ago but 21% below the year-earlier level. Trading was fairly active, and prices were mostly steady with those in the latter part of the past week. Good and Choice 90- to 95-lb. shorn lambs with mostly No. 1 and No. 2 pelts sold mainly at \$21.50 to \$22.

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