FEED WHEAT PROGRAM

The U. S. Department of Agriculture recently announced a revision of program regulations extending the period within which farmers may file applications to make use of the feed wheat provisions of the wheat marketing quota program. The deadline for filing applications for participation in the program for 1958-crop wheat is June 6, or 15 days prior to the final date for adjusting excess planted acreage to the farm wheat allotment, whichever is later. Dates for such adjustments vary by locations. Previously, the final date for filing such an application was October 1957 (for the 1958 winter wheat crop seeded last fall) or planting time on the farm, whichever was later. The feed wheat program permits farmers whose wheat acreage allotments are less than 30 acres to produce up to 30 acres of wheat for use exclusively on the farm where grown, without being subject to marketing quotas.

FOREST FIRES AT ALL-TIME LOW

Forest fires in the Nation were held to a record low of 83,400 during 1957, falling below the 100,000 mark for the first time, reports the USDA. The figure compares with 143,000 forest fires in 1956 and 200,800 in 1947. The area burned, at 3.4 million acres, was about half the year-earlier level and only a seventh of the area burned 10 years ago. The three major causes of forest fires during the past few years have been debris burners, incendiaries, and smokers. In 1957, debris burners topped the list.

In the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District, the total number of forest fires in 1957 (and comparisons with 1956) were: Arizona, 1,162 (2,129); Louisiana, 2,795 (7,586); New Mexico, 743 (1,471); Oklahoma, 1,815 (3,359); and Texas, 1,009 (5,410).

FARM UTILITY BILLS

U. S. farm utility bills have almost doubled during the past 10 years as a result of increased application of electricity to farm and home tasks and wider availability of improved telephone service, points out the AMS. Consumption of electricity increased 142%, but the average bill rose only 91% because of the "step-down" rate structure generally followed where the cost per kilowatt-hour decreases as more power is used. The average monthly telephone bill rose 79% from $3.26 in 1947 to $5.82 in 1957.

WORLD CATTLE NUMBERS CONTINUE UPWARD

World cattle numbers continued to increase during 1957 and at the beginning of the current year were a record 972 million, reports the Foreign Agricultural Service. The 11 million head advance during the previous year reflected gains of 5.3 million in the U.S.S.R., 2.7 million in Asia, and 1 million each in South America, Western Europe, and Africa.

Cattle production has expanded considerably in the tropical and semitropical areas during the past several years and is likely to continue to increase in these areas, which have a large potential for expansion. A significant occurrence in the world cattle situation is the decrease in cattle numbers in several of the leading beef exporting countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Argentina, and Uruguay. On the other hand, numbers in Mexico and Denmark continue to rise.
E A R L Y L A M B S I T U A T I O N

As of May 1, the condition of early lambs ranged from about average in Missouri and the Southeastern States to good or excellent in the Western States, points out the Agricultural Marketing Service. In Texas, spring lambs have made good gains on the lush grass and small grain pastures, and marketing weights have been heavier than usual. Marketings have increased from a year earlier.

L I V E S T O C K

Cattle receipts at Fort Worth on Monday, May 19, were nearly as numerous as a week earlier, when the supply was the largest of the season, according to the AMS. Marketings totaled an estimated 4,000, or 800 fewer than a year ago. Prices generally were steady to weak, with the following prices quoted: Good 550- to 1,000 lb. slaughter steers, $25.50 to $27 per cwt.; most Utility cows, $17.50 to $19; and Good 550- to 700-lb. stocker and feeder steers, $24.50 to $27.

The calf run is placed at 600, or a fourth smaller than both a week ago and the corresponding date in 1957. Prices were mainly steady. Good Grades of slaughter calves brought $25.50 to $27, and stocker and feeder steer calves were quoted at $27 to $30.

Hog offerings totaled about 500, compared with 800 on the previous Monday and 1,300 a year ago. Trading was slow and somewhat uneven. Barrows and gilts sold at prices which were 25¢ to 50¢ lower than in the latter part of the preceding week. The bulk of the U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 200- to 250-lb. butchers brought $22 to $22.50.

Monday's sheep and lamb marketings, at an estimated 10,800, were 34% below the week-earlier level and 16% fewer than on the comparable date last year. Trading on slaughter spring lambs was slow, and prices ranged from steady to 50¢ lower than in the latter part of the previous week. The market for other slaughter classes and feeders was steady; trading on shorn slaughter lambs was fairly active. Good and Choice 90- to 107-lb. shorn slaughter lambs with No. 1 through No. 3 pelts cleared at $17.50 to $18.

POULTRY

The principal Texas commercial broiler markets were weak during the week ended Friday, May 16, points out the State Department of Agriculture. Closing prices ranged from 1¢ to 2¢ per lb. lower than a week earlier, with the following prices quoted: South Texas, 19¢ to 19 1/2¢, mostly 19¢; east Texas, 18¢ to 19¢; and Waco, 18¢. During the corresponding period in 1957, closing prices were mainly 20¢.

On Monday of this week, broiler markets were steady in south Texas and about steady in east Texas and Waco. Prices were: South Texas, 19¢; east Texas, 18¢ to 19¢, mostly 18¢; and Waco, 18¢.

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<tr>
<th>BROILER CHICK</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Week ended May 10, 1958</th>
<th>Percentage change from</th>
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J. Z. Rowe
Agricultural Economist