



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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1959 FARM COTTON ALLOTMENTS

The Agricultural Act of 1958 provides two alternatives for the upland cotton farmer: (1) Under Choice A, he may plant his regular allotment, for which he will receive not less than 80% of parity; (2) under Choice B, he may increase his cotton acreage allotment by not more than 40% over his regular allotment and receive a 15% lower price guarantee. The Secretary of Agriculture recently announced that Choice B farm allotments for the 1959 crop of upland cotton will be 40% larger than Choice A allotments for the same farms. The announcement means that such farmers may increase their 1959 upland cotton acreage by the full 40%.

TEXAS PECAN PROSPECTS DOWN

The 1958 Texas pecan crop is estimated, as of September 1, at 38 million lbs., or 31% below the 1957 output but 20% above the 1947-56 average, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. Pecan prospects are quite spotted in north, central, and east Texas; however, the over-all outlook is fairly good in these areas. A good crop is indicated for the Edwards Plateau. In south Texas, nuts continued to drop, causing further reduction in the already light prospective outturn. Trees had a heavy bloom, but poor pollination and insect damage have lowered the crop outlook.

FARM EMPLOYMENT UP SEASONALLY

Approximately 9.2 million persons were at work on U. S. farms during the week of August 24, 1958, reflecting a slightly more than usual seasonal gain of 3% over the month-earlier level, according to the AMS. The number was about 1% larger than a year ago, and this was the second time in 1958 that the number of workers exceeded that on the corresponding date in 1957. The gain over the July figure resulted from a 5% increase in the number of hired workers, raising August hired employment over the 3-million mark for the first time since 1955. The number of family workers continued its long-time downward trend; however, the AMS points out that the pace seems to be slowing.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, September 12, the Texas commercial broiler markets opened the week's trade on a slightly higher price level, which increased gradually as supplies became limited in both the south and east Texas areas, according to the State Department of Agriculture. At the market's close, supplies were still short to about adequate; however, a slight decrease in processor demand occurred in final trading. The closing undertone was steady in both south and east Texas, with prices 2¢ to 3¢ per lb. above the previous week's close. The following closing prices were quoted: South Texas, 18¢, with a few at 18½¢ and 19¢, and east Texas, 17½¢ to 18¢. (In east Texas, 51% of the sales were at undetermined prices.) During the corresponding period in 1957, closing prices were 18¢ in south Texas and 17¢ in east Texas.

On Monday, September 15, prices in the south Texas broiler markets were mostly 1¢ higher than at the previous Friday's close, while those in east Texas were steady. Prices were 19¢ in south Texas and 18¢ in east Texas. (In the latter area, 58% of the broilers were sold at undetermined prices.)

	Area	Week ended September 6, 1958	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1957
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS				
	Texas.....	1,898,000	2	2
	Louisiana..	395,000	6	-5
	22 states..	27,218,000	-2	8

U S D A T O E X P A N D W O O L R E S E A R C H

Construction of a new wool-processing laboratory is under way on the grounds of the Western Utilization Research Laboratory at Albany, California, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The new building - which will be two stories high and have 18,000 square feet of floor area - will permit a large expansion of the Department's research on new wool products and processes. Pilot-scale equipment for processing raw wool into finished worsted fabric will be installed. Later, the plant will be equipped for production of knitted and soft woolen goods.

Research on improved methods of processing wool, new wool products, and treatments to make wool garments easy to care for will be conducted in the new building. Improved wool properties sought include resistance to yellowing and shrinkage, permanent pleats, more rapid drying, and less need for pressing. The plant is expected to be in operation early in 1959.

L I V E S T O C K

Cattle supplies at Fort Worth on Monday, September 15, totaled about 3,700, or 500 more than both a week ago and a year earlier, according to the AMS. Prices of both slaughter and stocker animals were mainly steady. The limited receipts of Good slaughter steers weighing around 1,000 lbs. brought \$24 per cwt.; Utility and Commercial cows, \$18.50 to \$21; and Medium and Good 550- to 700-lb. stocker yearlings, \$20 to \$27.50.

Calf marketings are placed at 1,400, which is 12% below the week-earlier figure but 75% greater than on the comparable date in 1957. Slaughter calves sold at prices which were steady to 50¢ higher than in the latter part of the past week. Good and Choice grades of slaughter calves cleared at \$24.50 to \$27, and stocker steer calves weighing under 500 lbs. were quoted at \$28 to \$33.

An unusually small supply of 300 hogs arrived at Fort Worth on Monday of this week. The receipts compare with 500 a week ago and 800 a year earlier. Prices of butchers were fully 25¢ higher than in the latter part of the previous week. U. S. mixed No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 200- to 250-lb. barrows and gilts brought \$21.25 and \$21.50.

Sheep and lamb offerings totaled approximately 900, or about the same as on the preceding Monday's market but a fourth below the year-earlier level. Trading on slaughter classes was very slow, and prices were weaker. On the other hand, feeders continued in good demand and sold at firm prices. Medium and Good feeder lambs were quoted at \$19 to \$20.50.

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