



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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FOOD SUPPLIES IN RETAIL STORES

A nationwide survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the U. S. Department of Agriculture shows that, in 1957, retail food stores were carrying slightly more than 10 days' supply of food for the Nation, including nonconcentrated fluids. When counted separately, the nonconcentrated fluids comprised about 2 days' supply of beverages that could be substituted for drinking water.

The study was made to provide Civil Defense authorities with information to help in planning emergency feeding programs. The USDA points out that the supplies on hand in retail stores are in addition to the vastly larger supplies on farms and in the marketing system as a whole.

SURPLUS FOOD DONATIONS UP

During the first quarter of the current fiscal year (July through September), the USDA donated 581.8 million lbs. of surplus foods for use in school lunch programs and institutions in this country and by needy persons here and abroad. The donations represent an 18.5% increase over the quantity distributed in the corresponding period last year. Cereal products - including wheat and flour, corn and cornmeal, and rice - accounted for the major portion of the foods donated; dairy products comprised most of the remainder.

BARTER CONTRACTS UP SHARPLY

Barter contracts having an export value of \$9.2 million were negotiated by the Commodity Credit Corporation during July-September of this year, compared with contracts valued at \$400,000 during the corresponding quarter in 1957, and \$65.1 million for the entire fiscal year ended June 30, 1958, according to the USDA. Barter contracts provide for the exchange, on an equivalent value basis, of CCC-owned agricultural commodities for foreign-produced strategic materials.

PEANUT STOCKS

A total of 956 million lbs. of peanuts (equivalent farmers' stock) was held in off-farm positions in the United States on October 31, or the largest holdings for that date since records were started in 1938, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. Farmers' stock peanuts milled during August-October amounted to 267 million lbs., reflecting a 31% increase over the corresponding 3 months in 1957.

MEAT PRODUCTION

Red meat output in the Nation during the first 10 months of 1958 totaled 20.2 billion lbs., reflecting a 5% decline from the comparable period last year, points out the AMS. Production of beef was down 7%; veal, 24%; and lamb and mutton, 4%. The outturn of pork was about the same as a year earlier.

POULTRY

The major Texas commercial broiler markets improved during the trading week ended Friday, December 5, with closing prices fully 1¢ per lb. above the

previous week's close, reports the State Department of Agriculture. Closing prices were 17¢ per lb. in both south Texas and east Texas; 65% of the sales in the latter area were made at undetermined prices. During the comparable week in 1957, closing prices were 16¢ to 17¢, mostly 16¢, in south Texas, and 16¢ in east Texas.

On Monday, December 8, commercial broiler markets were steady in both south Texas and east Texas. Prices were 17¢ per lb. in south Texas and 16¢ to 17¢, mostly 16¢, in east Texas, with about 62% of the sales at undetermined prices.

	Area	Week ended November 29, 1958	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1957
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS				
	Texas.....	2,302,000	-1	41
	Louisiana..	446,000	16	58
	22 states..	28,353,000	1	16

L I V E S T O C K

Receipts of cattle and calves at Fort Worth on Monday, December 8, were larger than on both the comparable dates last week and a year ago, according to the AMS. About 30% of the combined cattle and calf offerings were slaughter types, while the remainder were stockers and feeders. The cattle run was estimated at 2,500 head, or 14% larger than both a week ago and the comparable date last year. The bulk of the steer supply was made up of Good and Choice grades weighing over 1,100 lbs., but demand for all weights was broad, and trading was moderately active. Good and Choice 1,075- to 1,250-lb. slaughter steers brought \$25.50 to \$27. Utility and Commercial cows were quoted at \$19 to \$22, and most Canners and Cutters were \$13.50 to \$18.50. Demand was active on stocker and feeder cattle, and prices remained firm. The bulk of the Medium and Good 500- to 775-lb. yearling stocker steers sold at \$25 to \$28.

The calf supply totaled 1,100, as compared with 400 a week ago and 700 on the comparable date a year earlier. Prices for slaughter calves were fully steady with those in the latter part of the previous week, and those for feeder calves remained strong. Good slaughter calves were \$27.50 to \$29.50, and Good stocker steer calves sold mostly from \$28 to \$33.50.

Hog receipts totaled 800, or 200 more than a year earlier and 300 larger than at this same time last year. Butcher hogs sold steady to 25¢ higher than in the latter part of the past week. Prices for sows remained steady. U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 195- to 240-lb. barrows and gilts sold at \$18.50 to \$18.75, with most sales at the lower figure.

Sheep and lamb marketings were an estimated 2,000, as compared with 600 a week ago and 1,400 a year earlier. Trade was fairly active, with slaughter lambs selling steady to strong at prices 50¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the past week. Good and Choice 85- to 100-lb. shorn slaughter lambs with No. 1 pelts sold at \$20 to \$21.

J. Z. Rowe
Agricultural Economist