Support Levels for 1959-Crop Cotton

On January 30 the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced the levels of price support for 1959-crop upland cotton, under the alternate program choices made available to producers by the Agricultural Act of 1958.

For producers who elect program Choice (A) with "regular" acreage allotments and a higher level of price support, the available support (basis Middling 7/8" cotton, gross weight, at average location) will be 80% of the February 1959 parity price. The dollars-and-cents level to reflect this percentage of parity is 30.40¢ per lb.

For producers who elect program Choice (B) with 40% larger acreage allotments and a lower level of price support, the available support will be 65% of the February 1959 parity price, or 24.70¢ per lb.

There were no "A" and "B" choices for 1958-crop cotton. A single level of support was available for those who complied with their regular 1958 acreage allotments. This price support level was 31.23¢ per lb., reflecting 81% of the August 1, 1958, parity price.

Agricultural Prices

The newly revised index of prices received by farmers in the United States at mid-January was 244% of the 1910-14 average, which was unchanged from a month ago but was about 1% above the year-earlier level, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. Lower prices for hogs, cotton, dairy products, fruit, and tobacco were offset by increases for commercial vegetables, cattle, chickens, and calves.

The revised parity index (which reflects prices paid for commodities and services, plus interest, taxes, and wage rates) was 298 on January 15, which is 1% higher than a month earlier and nearly 3% above the index on the corresponding date in 1958. Prices paid for commodities, farm wage rates, and the preliminary 1959 estimates of interest and taxes all averaged higher than in the preceding month. The parity ratio declined to 82, which was 1% below both a month ago and a year earlier.

Pesticide Carry-Over Stocks Lower

Carry-over stocks of pesticides in the Nation on September 30, 1958, averaged 10% below the year-earlier level, according to a recent report of the USDA. Larger carry-overs of newer materials, especially organic phosphates and weed killers, were more than offset by lower inventories of DDT and of grain and soil fumigants.

Mohair Exports Up

U.S. exports of mohair and other wool-like specialty hair totaled 12.1 million lbs., clean basis, during January-November 1958, reports the Foreign Agricultural Service. This volume compares with 9.8 million lbs. shipped during the corresponding months a year earlier and the previous record of 11.8 million lbs. exported in 1956.

Livestock

Livestock marketings at Fort Worth on Monday, February 2, were below the week-earlier levels as a result of inclement weather and icy roads. According to
the AMS, the cattle supply totaled an estimated 1,600 head, compared with 2,000 a week ago and 1,700 a year earlier. Trading was active on all classes, and prices were mainly firm to strong. Good 800- to 1,100-lb. slaughter steers brought $26.50 to $27.50 per cwt.; most Utility cows, $19 to $20; and Medium and Good 550- to 700-lb. stocker and feeder steers, $24 to $30.

Calf receipts are placed at 400, or 43% fewer than on the preceding Monday but about the same as a year ago. Prices of slaughter calves were strong. Good grades of slaughter calves sold at $27.50 to $29, and stocker and feeder steer calves cleared at $30 to $33.

Monday's hog offerings were approximately 800, which was 200 below the week-earlier supply and 100 fewer than on the corresponding date in 1958. Trading was fairly active. Most barrows and gilts sold at prices which were 25¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the past week. Most U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 195- to 235-lb. butchers brought $16.75 to $17.25.

The sheep and lamb supply totaled 3,600, compared with 6,500 on the preceding Monday and 1,700 a year earlier. Trading was fairly active, with slaughter lambs (which comprised the major portion of the receipts) quoted at fully steady prices. Good and Choice 90- to 105-lb. wooled and fall-shorn slaughter lambs brought $16.50 to mainly $17.

MEAT PRODUCTION

The output of red meat in the Nation's commercial slaughter plants amounted to 24.4 billion lbs. in 1958, reflecting a 5% decline from the year-earlier total, reports the AMS. Production of beef was down 6%; veal, 23%; and lamb and mutton, 3%. Pork outturn was about the same as in 1957.

POULTRY

The Texas commercial broiler markets were weaker during the trading week ended Friday, January 30, as supplies of processed poultry throughout the Nation generally depressed prices of live birds, according to the Texas Department of Agriculture. As compared with a week earlier, closing prices were fully 2¢ per lb. lower in east Texas and 1¢ lower in south Texas. Closing prices were: South Texas, 17¢, with a very few lower, and east Texas, 15¢ to 16¢. (In the latter area, 58% of the sales were at undetermined prices.) During the corresponding period in 1958, closing prices were 22¢ to 23¢ in south Texas and 21¢ to 22¢ in east Texas.

On Monday, February 2, broiler markets remained weak in both south and east Texas. The following prices were quoted: South Texas, 16¢, and east Texas, 15¢ to 15½¢, although 56% of the sales in east Texas were at undetermined prices.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS</th>
<th>Week ended January 24, 1959</th>
<th>Percentage change from Previous week</th>
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Agricultural Economist