WORLD COTTON OUTPUT REACHES PEAK

World cotton production in 1958-59 is estimated by the Foreign Agricultural Service at a record 44.0 million bales, or 0.5 million bales greater than the previous peak outturn in 1955-56 and 2.3 million bales above the 1957-58 level. The record output reflects the trend toward higher yields. The world average yield this season is over one-half bale per acre. The acreage is placed at 79.5 million acres, which is 2.3 million acres less than in both 1956-57 and the 1950-54 average. Substantial reductions in U. S. cotton acreage in recent years have been offset somewhat by continued acreage expansions in a number of other important producing countries.

TEXAS TOMATO GROWERS FAVOR MARKETING ORDER

In a referendum held in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, 83% by number of tomato producers and 74% by volume of output favored a proposed tomato marketing order, according to preliminary reports of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Over 1,200 tomato growers voted in the referendum, which was held February 25 to March 2.

CCC PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The investment of the Commodity Credit Corporation in price support programs as of January 31, 1959, totaled $9 billion, according to the USDA. The cost value of inventories amounted to $5.2 billion, and loans outstanding were $3.8 billion. On the corresponding date last year, the CCC's investment was $7.2 billion, of which inventories were $5.1 billion and loans outstanding were $2.1 billion. Price supports extended (total loans, plus direct purchases and purchase agreements) on 1958 crops alone through January 31, 1959, are placed at $3.5 billion, compared with $1.8 billion on 1957 crops through January 31, 1958.

FARM MARKET NEWS CARRIED BY RADIO AND TV

Farm market news currently is being broadcast over more radio and television stations than ever before, according to an Agricultural Marketing Service survey. Of the 1,977 radio stations replying, 1,472 reported that they broadcast market news regularly - mostly on a daily basis - as did 165 of the 367 television stations replying. In 1956 (the previous survey year), 1,461 radio stations and 149 TV stations reported that they were carrying farm market news furnished by Federal and State market news offices.

TEXAS WINTER VEGETABLE PRODUCTION LIGHT

On the basis of March 1 conditions, the Texas output of 1959-crop winter vegetables for fresh market is estimated to be 36% below the year-earlier level and 33% below the 1949-57 average, reports the AMS. The outturn of all winter vegetables except broccoli is below that in 1958; however, production of cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, and lettuce accounts for most of the decrease.

SIZE OF FOREST FIRES CUT

The acreage burned on national forests in the United States declined almost 15% during 1958, despite a 53% increase in the number of fires. According to the USDA, most of the credit for reducing the acreage burned goes to the improvement in and increased use of aerial equipment developed during the past few years.
The major part of the aerial work is carried on by private individuals or firms; the U. S. Forest Service owns 32 airplanes and one helicopter.

**POULTRY**

During the trading week ended Friday, March 13, the Texas commercial broiler markets opened with prices mainly 1¢ per lb. higher than at the preceding Friday’s close and held steady during the remainder of the period, reports the State Department of Agriculture. Closing prices were 18¢ in south Texas and 17¢ in east Texas, although 60% of the sales in the latter area were at undetermined prices. During the corresponding week in 1958, closing prices were 22¢ in south Texas and 21¢ in east Texas.

The Texas commercial broiler markets were steady on Monday, March 16. Prices were unchanged from the previous Friday's close; however, 57% of the sales in east Texas were at undetermined levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Week ended March 7, 1959</th>
<th>Percentage change from Previous week</th>
<th>Percentage change from Comparable week, 1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texas.......</td>
<td>2,471,000</td>
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<td>-2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Louisiana..</td>
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<td>-4</td>
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<td>22 states..</td>
<td>34,722,000</td>
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<td>14</td>
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</table>

**LIVESTOCK**

The cattle run at Fort Worth on Monday, March 16, is estimated at 2,200 head, reflecting gains of 38% over a week ago and 5% over the corresponding date in 1958, points out the AMS. Trading on slaughter steers and heifers was rather slow, but prices were mostly fully steady with those in the latter part of the preceding week. Demand for stocker and feeder cattle was broad, and trading was active; prices were fully steady to strong. Good and Choice 1,000- to 1,150-lb. slaughter steers were quoted at $25.50 to $27.25 per cwt.; Utility and Commercial cows, $19 to $21; and Medium and Good stocker and feeder yearlings, $27 to $29.

The calf supply totaled 400, or 100 fewer than on the previous Monday but about the same as the year-earlier level. Prices of slaughter calves were fully steady to 50¢ higher than in the latter part of the previous week. The major portion of the Good and Choice slaughter offerings cleared at $28 to $29.25, and Medium and Good stocker steer calves sold mainly at $28 to $33.50.

Monday's hog receipts were approximately 1,100, which was about the same as a week ago but 38% more than on the comparable date last year. Trading was active, with barrows and gilts selling at prices which were 25¢ to mostly 50¢ higher than in the latter part of the preceding week. Mixed U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 190- to 240-lb. slaughter hogs brought $16.50 to $17.

Nearly 10,000 sheep and lambs were received at Fort Worth on Monday, compared with 5,500 a week earlier and 6,900 on the corresponding date in 1958. Trading was slow; however, steady prices were paid for most of the offerings. Good and Choice 75- to 90-lb. slaughter spring lambs sold at $21.50 to $22.50.

**MOHAIR PRODUCTION**

The 1958 mohair clip in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas (these states accounted for 99% of the national total) was an estimated 20.6 million lbs., or one-tenth above the year-earlier outturn, according to the AMS. The value of sales in these states (excluding incentive payments) amounted to $13.9 million - down 12% from the 1957 level.

J. Z. Rowe, Agricultural Economist