An organizational meeting of the International Wheat Utilization Committee was held in Washington in mid-June at the request of the Secretary of Agriculture. The Committee is composed of representatives from major wheat-exporting countries - Argentina, Australia, Canada, France, and the United States. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations also participated in the meeting.

A working group was set up by the Committee to study the foreign market development activities of the United States and the possibility of broadening the participation in these activities. The group also will consider the feasibility of joint projects and studies relating wheat disposal efforts to economic development programs.

The Nation's imports of livestock, meat, and meat products (excluding wool) during 1958 amounted to $512 million, or 78% above 1957 imports, according to the Foreign Agricultural Service. Exports, at $287 million, were a fourth below the 1957 level. Slaughter of all types of livestock in the United States declined during 1958. The consequent rise in prices made this country an attractive market for foreign meat and meat products, while, at the same time, American meat products were relatively expensive in foreign markets. Thus, the United States changed from a net exporter of livestock, meat, and meat products during 1957 to a net importer in 1958.

The average length of the farm workday has not shortened appreciably, despite the varied and labor-saving devices which have been adopted in recent years, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. A survey indicates that, as of June 1, the national average length of the workday for farm operators was a few minutes shorter than in any previous year; yet, it totaled 10.6 hours. The report indicates that wet weather may have affected the results of the survey. The average length of the workday for hired workers was 9.3 hours, which is unchanged from the 5-year average for June 1.

World sheep numbers increased about 15 million during 1958 to reach a new record of almost 967 million head at the beginning of 1959, according to the PAS. The Soviet Union accounted for most of the increase, with sheep numbers rising from 120 million to nearly 130 million. North America showed a 4% gain during 1958; and in the United States, sheep numbers were the highest since 1947.

Texas commercial broiler markets were generally steady throughout the week ended Friday, June 19, according to the State Department of Agriculture. Prices were unchanged from closing quotations of the previous week. The general undertone of the market was fully steady in both south and east Texas areas. Closing prices were 16¢ per lb. in south Texas, with a very few sales ranging from 1¢ per lb. lower to 1/2¢ per lb. higher, and were 15¢ per lb. in east Texas, with
48% of the sales at undetermined prices. In the corresponding period a year ago, closing prices were 22¢ per lb. in south Texas and 21¢ per lb. in east Texas.

On Monday, June 22, poultry markets were steady in south Texas and were steady to firm in east Texas. Prices were 16¢ per lb. in south Texas and mostly 15¢ per lb. in east Texas, with 45% of the sales at undetermined prices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Week ended June 13, 1959</th>
<th>Percentage change from Previous week</th>
<th>Comparable week, 1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texas........</td>
<td>2,306,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louisiana...</td>
<td>446,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 states....</td>
<td>34,359,000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Livestock**

**Supplies of cattle** at Fort Worth during the week ended Thursday, June 18, totaled 9,300, or about 43% more than a week earlier but 3% fewer than in the corresponding period in 1958, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. Part of the gain in supplies from the week-earlier level resulted from a special auction sale during the week. Prices for yearling slaughtering steers showed little change from the previous week, while prices for older cattle declined 25¢ to 50¢ per cwt.

The small supply of Good and Choice 700- to 1,075-lb. slaughter steers was quoted at $27.75 to $29.25 per cwt. Canner and Cutter cows sold mainly at $14 to $14.50. Prices for Medium and Good 490- to 725-lb. yearling stocker steers ranged from $25 to $29.50.

Calf marketings were 2,700, or 1,100 more than in the preceding week and 300 larger than on the comparable date last year. Choice 450- to 475-lb. slaughter calves and yearlings sold earlier in the week in a narrow range of $30.50 to $31.50 per cwt.; prices toward the end of the week declined 50¢ to $1 per cwt. Medium and Good stocker and feeder steer calves brought $28 to $32.

Hog marketings are estimated at 3,000, or the same as a week ago, but 9% fewer than in the comparable period in 1958. Prices of barrows and gilts were steady to 25¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the preceding week. Most mixed U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 180- to 240-lb. barrows and gilts sold from $15.75 to $16.25.

Sheep and lamb receipts were 18,800, which is only slightly below a week earlier but is 15% greater than a year ago. Slaughter spring lambs were quoted at prices which were steady to 50¢ per cwt. higher than in the latter part of the previous week; slaughter spring lambs were mostly 50¢ per cwt. higher. Good and Choice 70- to 75-lb. slaughter spring lambs ranged from $22 to $22.50. Cull and Utility slaughter ewes were quoted at $5 to $5.50 per cwt.

**Red Meat Output**

The Nation's output of red meat for the first 4 months of 1959 was 6% more than in the January-April period in 1958, reports the AMS. Compared with a year earlier, increases were noted for beef, pork, mutton, and lamb; veal production declined. Most of the gain in red meat production was in pork.

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Agricultural Economist