



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

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6 MILLION NEW ACRES IN CONSERVATION RESERVE

New acreage placed in the Conservation Reserve Program for 1960 in the Nation exceeds 6.3 million acres, surpassing the announced acreage for the program year by more than a million acres, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. A larger acreage could be accepted with the available funds, mainly as a result of two factors: (1) conservation practices are being established more economically than in the past; and (2) per-acre annual payment rates under 1960 contracts are lower than anticipated. Indications are that the quality of land placed under contract in 1960 is higher than in any previous year. About 80% of the farmers placing new land in the program have elected to come in on a "whole farm" basis (placing all of their eligible cropland under contract). New Conservation Reserve participation in 1960 will be particularly heavy in wheat-producing areas. The cumulative total (1956-60) of 305,003 contracts, which will be in effect in the national Conservation Reserve Program this year, involves 28.4 million acres.

In the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), a total of 755,151 new acres will be placed in the Conservation Reserve Program this year. The 1956-60 cumulative total in the Conservation Reserve in these states is 6.2 million acres, or 22% of the national figure.

USDA PLANS TO EXPAND AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

The Secretary of Agriculture recently announced that the USDA is conducting an over-all review of current export policies, programs, and activities as a basis for further expanding its agricultural trade promotion activities, in accordance with the President's export trade message to Congress on March 17. The agricultural export review includes items, such as trade barrier removal, quality, credit, pricing, promotion activities of Government and industry, and Government-financed exports under the Food for Peace Program.

DAIRY INCOME

U. S. farmers grossed \$5 billion from the sale of dairy products in 1959, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. The income was slightly above that in the preceding year but was 2% less than in 1957. The price of whole milk sold to plants and dealers in 1959 averaged \$4.15 per cwt., which was 3¢ per cwt. higher than in 1958.

In Texas, gross farm income from dairy products in 1959 amounted to \$153 million, or 7% below that in the previous year. The reduced gross income resulted mainly from a lower average price of \$5.26 per cwt. for milk sold to plants and dealers, compared with an average price of \$5.46 per cwt. in 1958.

COTTON SERVICES AVAILABLE

U. S. cotton growers who desire to have their cotton classed and receive market information under terms of the Smith-Doxey Act should apply for these services as soon as their cotton is planted, according to the USDA. The services are available to any group of producers who organize to promote the improvement of cotton. Applications and instructions for applying may be obtained from county agricultural agents or from classing offices of the Cotton Division of the AMS.

L I V E S T O C K

Continued dry weather in the marketing territory was a major factor in the Fort Worth cattle trade during the week ended Thursday, April 21, points out the AMS. Cattle receipts were an estimated 7,300 head, or 26% more than a week ago and 20% above the year-earlier level. Although trading on slaughter steers and heifers was rather slow, prices generally were fully steady. The majority of the Good and Choice 770- to 1,090-lb. slaughter steers cleared at \$26 to \$27.50 per cwt., and Utility and Commercial cows were quoted at \$16.50 to \$19.50. Trading on stockers and feeders was only moderately active; thin, gaunt animals were the easiest to sell. Most of the Good 500- to 700-lb. yearling stocker steers brought \$24 to \$25.50.

The calf supply of 1,800 was 700 greater than in the preceding week but about the same as the corresponding period of 1959. Trading on slaughter calves was fairly active in most sessions, and prices were unchanged to \$1 lower than in the preceding week. The bulk of the Good and Choice killing calves sold at \$25 to \$27.50, and Medium and Good 250- to 450-lb. stocker and feeder steer calves ranged from \$24.50 to \$29.

Hog offerings at Fort Worth during the week ended April 21 were approximately 3,700, compared with 3,000 a week ago and 3,300 a year earlier. Prices advanced early in the week but declined later; closing quotations were steady with those in the latter part of the previous week. Mixed U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 180- to 260-lb. barrows and gilts brought \$15.50 to \$16.25.

In contrast to increased supplies of other livestock classes, sheep and lamb marketings of 16,800 were down 30% from the preceding week and 13% below the year-earlier level. Slaughter spring lambs sold at prices which were 50¢ to mostly \$1 higher than in the previous week. Good, Choice, and Prime 75- to 90-lb. slaughter spring lambs were quoted at \$22 to \$23.50.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, April 22, commercial broiler markets opened steady in south Texas and unsettled in east Texas, reports the State Department of Agriculture. Both markets were weaker at the close, with quotations ½¢ to 1¢ per lb. lower. Reasons for the price declines were the poor demand and adequate to fully adequate broiler supplies. Friday prices were 17½¢ to 18¢ in south Texas and 16¢ to 17¢ in east Texas, although 49% of the sales in the latter area were at undetermined levels. During the comparable period in 1959, closing prices were 16¢ in south Texas and 15¢ to 16¢ in east Texas.

The Southwest Poultry Exchange offered 222,400 broilers on Friday, selling 126,400 at 15.9¢ to 16.8¢ (buyers absorbed 3% of rejected birds) and 21,000 at 15.4¢ to 16.5¢ (buyers absorbed all rejects).

On Monday, April 25, commercial broiler markets were slightly weaker in south Texas and about steady in east Texas, with the following prices quoted: South Texas, 17¢; and east Texas, 16¢ to 16½¢ (62% of the sales were at undetermined quotes).

	Area	Week ended April 16, 1960	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1959
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,109,000	3	-24
	Louisiana..	479,000	-3	-1
	22 states..	34,754,000	0	-6

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