



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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AGRICULTURAL PRICES

The index of prices received by U. S. farmers declined 2% during the month ended June 15, 1960, to a level 236% of the 1910-14 average, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. The decrease was rather general, with beef cattle, potatoes, eggs, and most vegetables showing the major price reductions. On the other hand, fruit prices averaged higher than a month earlier. The index was the lowest since February of this year and was $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ below a year ago.

The parity index (which reflects prices paid for commodities and services, plus interest, taxes, and wage rates) declined nearly 1% during the month - the largest decrease for any one month since December 1955. Nevertheless, the June index was a new high for the month and was fractionally above a year ago.

The decline in farmers' cost rates was not as great as that in farm product prices; therefore, the parity ratio, at 79, was 1% below the mid-May level and 2% lower than a year ago.

WHEAT SUPPLY AT ALL-TIME HIGH

The total U. S. wheat supply for the marketing year which began July 1, 1960, is estimated at an all-time high of 2,561 million bu., or 6% greater than the year-earlier record and 26% above the 1954-58 average, according to the AMS. The increase is mainly the result of the larger wheat crop in prospect as of June 1 - 1,271 million bu., compared with the 1959 crop of 1,128 million bu.

MORE PROCESSED FARM FOODS CONSUMED

During the 30-year period 1925-54, consumption of frozen foods by U. S. civilians increased ninefold, and consumption of canned foods rose 275%, according to a recent report of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Indications are that increases in per capita quantity and expenditures for processed foods for home consumption during the next 15 or 20 years are likely to be half again as much as for foods with relatively little processing.

PLAN NOW FOR TOMORROW'S TREES

The theme of a new USDA publication, "Look to Your Timber, America," is: "Trees don't grow overnight, so now is the time for action if this country is to have the timber it needs 40 years from now." The booklet emphasizes four ways of stepping up timber growth: (1) increase tree planting; (2) keep newly cut lands productive; (3) strengthen the control of diseases, insects, and fire; and (4) use more of the timber now being cut, as well as dead and cull trees.

Single copies of "Look to Your Timber, America" may be obtained from the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

PENALTY RATES FOR 1960 "EXCESS" COTTON

The USDA has announced marketing quota penalty rates on "excess" 1960-crop upland and extra-long staple cotton. The penalty rate on upland cotton is 19.4¢ per lb., and that on extra-long staple cotton is 41.2¢ per lb.

L I V E S T O C K

During the week ended Thursday, June 30, Fort Worth cattle marketings were reduced as a result of the approaching Fourth of July holiday and the decline in prices, reports the AMS. Cattle receipts were approximately 11,700, or 19% below the week-earlier level but 65% above a year ago. Demand for slaughter steers and heifers was narrow, and trading was slow. Thursday prices were mainly 25¢ to 50¢ per cwt. lower than in the latter part of the preceding week. The majority of the Standard and Good 845- to 1,130-lb. slaughter steers sold at \$18 to \$23, and Utility and Commercial cows brought \$14 to \$15.50. Closing quotations on stockers and feeders - which accounted for about 80% of the total cattle supply - were mostly \$1 to \$2 lower than a week ago. Medium and Good 500- to 700-lb. yearling stocker steers cleared at \$22 to \$23.

At an estimated 1,800, calf offerings were down 18% from the previous week and 10% from the corresponding period last year. Closing prices of slaughter calves were \$1 to \$2 lower than in the preceding week, with most of the Good and Choice animals quoted at \$22 to \$23. Good and Choice 325- to 485-lb. stocker steer calves brought \$26 to \$27.50.

The hog supply of 2,900 compared with 2,500 a week earlier and 3,400 a year ago. In contrast to the lower cattle and calf prices, quotations on barrows and gilts were mostly 50¢ higher than in the latter part of the previous week. Mixed U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 185- to 250-lb. butchers cleared at \$16 to \$17.

Sheep and lamb receipts are placed at 7,800, reflecting decreases of 44% from a week ago and 21% from a year earlier. Demand for killing classes improved somewhat, and prices were 50¢ to \$1 higher than in the latter part of the preceding week. Good and Choice slaughter spring lambs sold mostly at \$17.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, July 1, commercial broiler markets opened steady in south Texas and unsettled in east Texas, points out the State Department of Agriculture. At the close, markets remained steady in south Texas and were about steady in east Texas. The expected good holiday demand failed to develop, and trading volumes were only light to moderate in both areas. Friday quotations were 19¢ per lb. in south Texas and 17¢ to 17½¢ in east Texas, although 47% of the sales in the latter area were at undetermined levels. During the corresponding period in 1959, closing prices were 17¢ in east Texas, but there were too few sales in south Texas to quote.

No report was available for Monday of the current week because of the Fourth of July holiday.

	Area	Week ended June 25, 1960	Percentage change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1959
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,482,000	0	-1
	Louisiana..	551,000	-6	11
	22 states..	38,189,000	-1	11

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