



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## AGRICULTURAL PRICES

The index of prices received by U. S. farmers advanced almost 1% during the month ended January 15 to 244% of the 1910-14 average, according to the Statistical Reporting Service. Generally higher prices for vegetables and oranges, following freeze damage in important producing areas, were primarily responsible for the rise; seasonally lower prices for wholesale milk and cotton were partially offsetting. The January index was nearly 1% above a year ago.

The parity index (which reflects prices paid for commodities and services, plus interest, taxes, and wage rates) reached a new record of 311 on January 15 and was 2% above a year ago. The major factor in the 1% increase over the preceding month was higher prices for commodities used for farm production purposes, especially those of an agricultural origin.

The parity ratio remained at 78, which is 2% below that on January 15, 1962.

## SCREWORM ERADICATION PROSPECTS

The recent severely cold weather in Texas may be advantageous in the eradication of screwworms, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Fewer screwworm infestations are being reported in the areas affected by the low temperatures, indicating a decreased number of screwworms to be eradicated. USDA officials point out, however, that successful eradication operations during 1963 depend upon (1) taking full advantage of the retarding effects that cold weather has on the increase and spread of screwworms; (2) preventing entry of screwworm-infested animals into areas free of the pest; (3) widespread use of screwworm preventive measures and pesticide treatments; (4) quick discovery and reporting of all suspected screwworm cases; and (5) effectiveness of measures being taken along the southern and western borders of the eradication area to prevent screwworm invasions.

## FOOD MANUFACTURING INVESTMENTS RISING

Recent surveys by the U. S. Department of Commerce and the Securities Exchange Commission show that expenditures for plant and equipment by firms manufacturing foods and beverages in the Nation totaled an estimated \$1 billion in 1962, or the largest annual investment since 1943. Expenditures in plant or equipment made or planned by textile manufacturing firms amounted to \$630 million in 1962, compared with \$500 million in 1961.

## LIGHTER GRASSHOPPER INFESTATIONS

Grasshopper infestations in the Western and Midwestern States may be much lighter in 1963 than they were last year, says the USDA. In a 16-state survey conducted in the fall of 1962, grasshoppers were discovered on 7.8 million acres of rangeland, compared with 13.5 million acres a year earlier. An acre is considered to be infested when there are eight or more adult grasshoppers per square yard. Despite the prospect for fewer grasshoppers in 1963, ranchers are encouraged to continue control measures against this pest. Small infested areas should be treated before the grasshoppers leave their breeding grounds, in order to avoid a buildup later in the season.

In the Eleventh District states included in the survey (Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), 440,220 acres of rangeland were infested with adult grasshoppers in 1962, or only about one-fourth of the 1961 figure.

## L I V E S T O C K

Moderating weather, together with a special auction sale, resulted in increased cattle and calf receipts at Fort Worth during the week ended Thursday, January 31, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service. The cattle supply of approximately 4,600 was 35% larger than in the preceding week but 27% smaller than a year earlier. Trading was slow on slaughter steers and heifers and was only moderately active on other classes. Slaughter steers sold at prices which were mainly 50¢ to 75¢ per cwt. lower than the previous Thursday's close. Mixed average-Good to average-Choice 1,075- to 1,120-lb. slaughter steers cleared at \$25.75 to \$26.25 per cwt., and Utility and Commercial cows brought \$14 to \$17. Prices for feeder steers and heifers were steady to 50¢ per cwt. higher than a week ago, with Good and Choice 500- to 700-lb. animals quoted at \$23 to \$26.

Calf marketings totaled an estimated 1,400, or about double the week-earlier figure and 56% above the corresponding period in 1962. Good grades of slaughter calves sold at \$23 to \$24.50 per cwt., and quotes on feeder steer calves weighing under 500 lbs. ranged from \$23.50 to \$26.

Hog offerings are placed at 1,600, which is 475 more than in the previous week and 75 above a year ago. A downward trend in prices continued throughout the trading period. The majority of the U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 180- to 250-lb. butchers brought \$15 to \$16.

A total of 6,400 sheep and lambs was received at Fort Worth during the week ended January 31, representing decreases of 23% from a week earlier and 41% from last year. Demand continued broad each day for practically all classes, and quotations remained generally unchanged. Prices for the bulk of the Good and Choice 75- to 96-lb. shorn slaughter lambs with No. 1 and No. 2 pelts were \$17.50 to \$18 per cwt.

## P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, February 1, the major Texas commercial broiler markets opened steady, points out the State Department of Agriculture. Slight, gradual price increases were reported throughout the trading period in both south and east Texas. At Friday's close, reports indicated a continued strong market for the following week. Closing quotations per lb. in south Texas were 15.5¢ to 16¢, mostly 15.9¢ to 16¢; and prices in east Texas ranged from 14.9¢ to 16.1¢. During the corresponding week in 1962, the closing quote in south Texas was 18.5¢, and prices in east Texas were 17.8¢ to 18.4¢.

Commercial broiler markets were stronger in south Texas and about steady in east Texas on Monday, February 4. Prices per lb. in south Texas were 16.3¢ to 16.4¢, mostly 16.3¢; and those in east Texas ranged from 15¢ to 15.9¢.

	Area	Week ended January 26, 1963	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1962
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,501,000	6	0
	Louisiana..	526,000	15	16
	22 states..	35,675,000	2	-2