



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 1963

Seedings of 1963 crops in the United States, based on March 1 planting intentions of farmers, are indicated to be the second smallest of record, or 2% more than last year's all-time low, points out the Statistical Reporting Service. The acreage of the 17 crops in the March survey usually accounts for around 85% of the all-crops total. The survey was made during the signup period for the 1963 feed grain and wheat programs, and planting intentions for corn, sorghums, spring barley, and spring wheat may be altered later by growers' decisions concerning participation in these programs. The acreage of feed grains is expected to be 2% above 1962, and that of food grains is indicated to be up 6%. A reduction in the acreage of cotton is expected to more than offset an increase in that for soybeans, which would result in a net decrease of less than 1% in the acreage of oilseeds.

The following table shows the percentage changes in acreages of selected spring crops which farmers intend to plant in 1963 from the planted acreages in 1962 for the states of the Eleventh Federal Reserve District and the Nation.

PLANTINGS OF SELECTED SPRING CROPS

Five Southwestern States and United States

(Percent changes, 1963 from 1962)

<u>Area</u>	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>All corn</u>	<u>Oats</u>	<u>Barley</u>	<u>All sorghums</u>	<u>All hay</u>	<u>Peanuts</u>	<u>Rice</u>
Arizona.....	-4	-3	0	14	4	-10	---	---
Louisiana.....	-10	2	-5	---	15	3	---	0
New Mexico.....	-5	7	9	-7	5	5	-33	---
Oklahoma.....	-8	-16	-21	-3	8	3	-2	---
Texas.....	-10	-12	1	0	5	1	0	0
Five states....	-9	-10	-4	0	5	1	-1	0
United States..	-9	6	-5	-5	6	-1	-1	0

SOURCE: U. S. Department of Agriculture.

NUMBER OF TEXAS FARMS CONTINUES DOWNWARD

The number of farms in Texas declined to an estimated 224,000 in 1962, or 8,000 fewer than in the preceding year, according to the SRS. The number is less than one-half the record 506,000 in 1931.

Consolidation of farm units accounted for the decrease in the number of Texas farms in 1962, as total land area in farms remained stable at 154 million acres. The average size of farms was 688 acres, compared with 664 acres in 1961.

L I V E S T O C K

Fort Worth cattle receipts during the week ended Thursday, March 21, showed decreases of 31% from the preceding week and 43% from the corresponding period in 1962, states the Agricultural Marketing Service. Demand was good for the reduced supply, and trading was moderately active on all classes. Decreased supplies and higher prices at northern markets, coupled with a good demand and higher prices for carcass beef at wholesale centers, were the major factors accounting for the upward trend for steers at Fort Worth after eight consecutive weeks of lower prices. Quotations for slaughter steers were mostly 50¢ to 75¢ per cwt. higher than on the preceding Thursday. Mixed Good and Choice 1,065- to 1,225-lb. slaughter steers brought \$22.25 to \$23 per cwt., and Utility and Commercial cows sold mainly at \$14 to \$16.50. Trading on feeder cattle was moderately active, and closing prices for steers weighing over 500 lbs. were steady to 50¢ per cwt. higher than a week ago, with Good and Choice 500- to 700-lb. feeder steers quoted at \$22 to \$25.20 per cwt.

At an estimated 700, the calf run was 100 more than both a week earlier and a year ago. Prices for slaughter calves were steady to strong. Good grades of killing calves weighing up to 550 lbs. brought \$23 to \$24 per cwt., and prices for feeder steer calves weighing under 500 lbs. ranged from \$22 to \$26.

The hog supply is placed at 1,450, or 19% below the preceding week and 24% less than a year earlier. Trading was fairly active early in the period but was only moderately active at midweek. Quotations for barrows and gilts were steady to 25¢ per cwt. lower than on the previous Thursday. The bulk of the U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 190- to 250-lb. butchers brought \$14 to \$14.25 per cwt.

Sheep and lamb offerings totaled approximately 10,300, compared with 8,000 a week earlier and 13,600 a year ago. Trading was fairly active, and closing prices for slaughter spring lambs were steady to 50¢ per cwt. higher than on the preceding Thursday; quotations for all other classes were mostly steady. Good and Choice 75- to 91-lb. shorn slaughter lambs with No. 2 to fall-shorn pelts sold at \$17 to \$17.50 per cwt.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, March 22, the major Texas commercial broiler markets opened weaker and then became steady on Tuesday, reports the State Department of Agriculture. The market in east Texas strengthened slightly on Wednesday, and that in south Texas remained fully steady; markets in both areas were steady throughout the remainder of the trading period. Closing prices per lb. in south Texas were 15.3¢ to 15.9¢, mainly 15.5¢ to 15.9¢; and quotations in east Texas ranged from 14.5¢ to 15.4¢. During the corresponding period in 1962, the closing price in south Texas was 16¢, and quotes in east Texas ranged from 15¢ to 15.7¢.

Commercial broiler markets were fully steady in south Texas and about steady in east Texas on Monday, March 25. Prices per lb. were: South Texas, 15.3¢ to 15.9¢, mostly 15.5¢ to 15.9¢; and east Texas, 14.5¢ to 15.3¢, mainly 15¢ to 15.3¢.

	Area	Week ended March 16, 1963	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1962
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,701,000	2	-7
	Louisiana..	521,000	1	-8
	22 states..	40,525,000	2	-5