



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

Number 708

Wednesday, July 24, 1963

CATTLE ON FEED

The number of cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the 28 principal feeding states as of July 1, 1963, totaled an estimated 6.8 million head, points out the Statistical Reporting Service. This number is 11% more than a year earlier but represents a seasonal decrease from the 8.1 million head on feed at the beginning of April 1963. Compared with a year earlier, increases were shown for all weight groups, with the largest percentage gains registered for cattle and calves weighing less than 500 lbs. and those weighing 1,100 lbs. and over. Cattle feeders in the 28 states expect to market 56% of the July 1 inventory during July, August, and September. If these plans materialize, the marketings would be 9% above the number marketed during the third quarter of 1962.

In Texas, there were 268,000 head of cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market on July 1, 1963, or 24% above a year ago but one-fourth below the April 1, 1963, number. The State's feedlot operators intend to market 150,000 head of cattle between July 1 and September 30. This volume would be 56% of the total number on feed at the beginning of July and would be 3% less than that marketed during the July-September quarter of 1962.

MORE VO-AG STUDENTS IN HIGH SCHOOL

The U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare reports that more boys than ever before are studying vocational agriculture in the Nation's high schools. Enrollment in vo-ag usually closely parallels total membership in the Future Farmers of America, which reached a new high of 395,812 during the 1962-63 school year. The FFA membership was 7,820 more than in the preceding school year and about 18,000 more than 5 years ago.

The HEW report also shows that approximately 35% of the boys with three or more years of vo-ag enter farming on a full-time basis. About 25% of the youths attend college - primarily to major in agriculture - while many of the others use their farm experience, vo-ag education, and FFA training as background for employment in off-farm agricultural occupations.

FUTURES TRADING INCREASES

Overall activity in the futures markets for regulated agricultural commodities increased during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1963, with the largest trading in soybeans and wheat, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The number of transactions rose 8% and the dollar value of trading showed a 23% gain for 19 regulated commodities traded in for future delivery on exchanges operating under the Commodity Exchange Act.

VEGETABLES FOR COMMERCIAL PROCESSING

The 1963 acreage of nine vegetable crops planted for commercial processing in the Nation is estimated at 1.5 million acres, which is 8% below a year ago. According to the SRS, these nine crops account for 93% of the total planted acreage of the major vegetable crops used for commercial processing. Compared with 1962, smaller acreages of green lima beans, cabbage for kraut (contract), corn, and tomatoes in 1963 are expected to more than offset increases indicated for snap beans, beets, cucumbers, green peas, and spinach.

L I V E S T O C K

The Fort Worth cattle run during the week ended Thursday, July 18, totaled an estimated 4,100, reflecting decreases of 54% from a week earlier and 49% from the corresponding period in 1962, reports the Agricultural Marketing Service. Trading was moderately active on all classes except cows. Slaughter steers sold at prices which were steady to 25¢ per cwt. lower than the previous Thursday's close. Mixed Good and low-Choice 860- to 950-lb. slaughter steers brought \$23.75 per cwt., and Utility and Commercial cows sold at \$13.75 to \$16. Demand was again fairly broad for most classes of feeder offerings. Closing prices for feeder steers were steady to 50¢ per cwt. higher than a week ago, with Good and Choice 500- to 700-lb. animals quoted at \$22 to \$27.30 per cwt.

At approximately 1,850, the calf supply compared with 1,900 in the preceding week and 1,100 a year ago. Quotations on slaughter calves were fully steady. Good grades of killing calves brought \$23 to \$25 per cwt., and prices for feeder steer calves ranged from \$23.50 to \$28.10.

Hog receipts are placed at 1,500, or 100 fewer than in the previous week but about the same as a year earlier. Prices showed very little net change as compared with a week ago. The majority of the U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 190- to 255-lb. barrows and gilts cleared at \$18 to \$18.50 per cwt.

Sheep and lamb marketings of about 8,750 represented gains of 14% over a week ago and 7% over the corresponding period last year. Thursday quotations for slaughter lambs were fully 50¢ to \$1 per cwt. lower than a week ago. The bulk of the Good and Choice 69- to 116-lb. woolled spring slaughter lambs sold at \$17 to \$20 per cwt.

P O U L T R Y

During the week ended Friday, July 19, the major Texas commercial broiler markets opened weaker in south Texas and about steady in east Texas, according to the State Department of Agriculture. The market in east Texas weakened slightly on Tuesday, while that in south Texas became steady. Markets in both areas then remained steady throughout the rest of the week. At Friday's close, the undertone was firm in east Texas but was unsettled in south Texas. The closing quote in south Texas was 14¢ per lb., and prices in east Texas ranged from 13¢ to 13.5¢. During the comparable period in 1962, closing quotations in south Texas were 14.5¢ to 15¢, and those in east Texas ranged from 15.1¢ to 16.9¢.

On Monday, July 22, commercial broiler markets were about steady in south Texas and steady in east Texas. Prices per lb. were: South Texas, 14¢, with one load at 13.5¢; and east Texas, 13¢ to 13.5¢.

	Area	Week ended July 13, 1963	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1962
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,699,000	-5	4
	Louisiana..	508,000	-14	15
	22 states..	40,695,000	-2	5