



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF DALLAS

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TWO - WAY BEEF PURCHASE PROGRAM

Secretary of Agriculture Freeman recently announced that the U. S. Department of Agriculture will initiate 2 beef purchase programs in a further effort to improve prices to producers. The Department will purchase substantial quantities of USDA choice grade beef for distribution mainly to schools. The meat will be bought in the form of frozen boned roasts and ground beef. Under the second program, the USDA will purchase considerable amounts of canned beef in natural juices for distribution to needy families. Inquiries concerning the beef purchase programs should be addressed to the Livestock Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. 20250.

1964 FEED GRAIN SIGNUP

Reports on the first 3 weeks (February 10-27) of a 7-weeks' signup period for the 1964 feed grain program show the enrollment of 543,534 U. S. farms to divert 13.7 million acres, the USDA has announced. The signup is running ahead of that in the corresponding period of last year's program in both the number of farms signed up and the total acreage to be diverted. The 13.7 million acres accounts for 48% of the base acreage on the enrolled farms. Of the total acreage, intended corn acreage diversion represents 10.2 million acres; grain sorghum, 2.5 million acres; and barley, almost 1 million acres.

In the Eleventh Federal Reserve District states (Arizona, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas), 53,141 farms were signed up during February 10-27 to divert 1.9 million acres from the production of corn, barley, and grain sorghum under the 1964 feed grain program. The diversion comprises 49% of the base acreage of the southwestern farms which have signed up to participate this year.

FARMER'S SHARE OF CONSUMER'S FOOD DOLLAR

The Nation's farmers received an average of 37¢ of the consumer's food dollar in 1963 - the smallest share since 1934 when they received 34¢ of the food dollar. According to the Statistical Reporting Service, two major influences reduced the farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar: (1) the continuing growth of marketing charges and (2) a slight decrease in the prices received by farmers for food products.

The SRS says that the farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar does not necessarily measure the farmer's earnings, because it shows only changes in prices without indicating the volume of marketings. The volume of crops and livestock product marketings by U. S. farmers in 1963 was about 2 1/2% larger than in 1962.

WORLD WHEAT PROSPECTS GENERALLY GOOD

Increased plantings and generally favorable crop conditions in France, West Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Greece point to good crops, reports the USDA. On the other hand, conditions in Spain have been less favorable. The Danube Basin countries (Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria) may repeat the above-average production of 1963. Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia report considerably better prospects than a year ago, and the Soviet Union probably will harvest a near-normal wheat crop in contrast to last year's small production. Soil

moisture conditions are much improved in the USSR spring wheat areas of the New Lands, where the crop failure was the worst last year.

L I V E S T O C K

Fort Worth cattle receipts during the week ended Thursday, March 12, are placed at 3,200, or 14% above the previous week but 24% below the comparable 1963 period, points out the Agricultural Marketing Service. Slaughter steers sold at prices which were fully steady to 25¢ per cwt. higher than a week earlier. Good and Choice 970- to 1,175-lb. slaughter steers brought \$20.50 to \$20.75 per cwt., and the majority of the Utility cows cleared at \$14.25 to \$15.50. Thursday quotations for feeder cattle averaged \$1 per cwt. higher than the previous week's close, with Good and Choice 520- to 710-lb. steers quoted at \$20.30 to \$24.60.

At an estimated 800, the calf run was 150 fewer than in the preceding week but 200 more than a year ago. Quotes for Good grades of slaughter calves were mainly 50¢ per cwt. higher than on the previous Thursday, while those for other grades held mostly steady. Good grades of killing calves sold at \$21 to \$21.50 per cwt., and quotes for Good and Choice 300- to 510-lb. stocker steer calves ranged from \$22 to \$26.90.

Hog marketings of approximately 800 reflected decreases of 16% from a week ago and 56% from the year-earlier figure. Trading was rather uneven, and prices were mainly 50¢ per cwt. lower than the previous Thursday's close. The bulk of the U. S. No. 1 through No. 3 Grades of 175- to 230-lb. barrows and gilts cleared at \$14.50 to \$15.25 per cwt.

Sheep and lamb supplies totaled about 1,700, compared with 2,200 in the preceding week and 8,000 a year ago. Demand was fairly broad for all offerings. Prices for the limited supply of slaughter spring lambs were fully \$3 per cwt. higher than in the previous week, with some mostly Choice 76- to 92-lb. animals quoted at \$22 per cwt.

P O U L T R Y

Commercial broiler markets opened slightly stronger in south Texas and steady in east Texas for the week ended Friday, March 13, reports the State Department of Agriculture. The south Texas market became steady on Tuesday and remained steady throughout the trading period. In east Texas, slight price increases were noted toward the middle of the week. At Friday's close, markets in both areas were steady, with a firm undertone. The closing quotation in south Texas was 14.5¢ per lb., and prices in east Texas ranged from 13.5¢ to 14.7¢. During the corresponding 1963 period, closing prices in south Texas were 16.3¢ to 16.8¢, and those in east Texas ranged from 15.2¢ to 15.9¢.

Texas commercial broiler markets were stronger on Monday, March 16, with the following prices per lb. quoted: South Texas, 15¢; and east Texas, 13.8¢ to 15.2¢.

	Area	Week ended March 7, 1964	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1963
BROILER CHICK				
PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	3,062,000	6	19
	Louisiana..	583,000	-1	13
	22 states..	43,646,000	3	9