



AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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B I L L I O N - D O L L A R M A R K E T F O R F O O D

School lunchrooms provide a billion-dollar market for food in the United States each year, and this market is expected to grow at least 25% in the next decade, according to a recent U. S. Department of Agriculture report. Larger enrollments and increased availability of school food services resulted in a 56% expansion in the use of foods in the Nation's public schools between 1957 and 1962. During this period, the number of public school children using school food services increased about a million each year. More than three-fourths of the food used in school lunchrooms in the 1962-63 school year was purchased through commercial channels; the remainder was federally donated.

E L E C T R O N I C S U S E D I N F O R E S T F I R E F I G H T I N G

A revolutionary new system for detecting and mapping forest fires has been developed by the USDA's Forest Service. After seeing the system in action last year, the Canadian Forestry Department is also experimenting with electronic fire surveillance systems.

The USDA's Forest Service, in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Defense, has developed and is improving a scanning system which can be used by high-flying aircraft to spot and map fires. The new system will permit detection and mapping of fires at night and through dense smoke.

In 1964, an electronic scanning system was used successfully in mapping 17 large forest fires in the United States. The system is also being tested for the rapid detection of small fires in both coniferous and hardwood forests.

S O Y B E A N O U T L O O K

Soybean prices to U. S. farmers, which averaged \$2.85 per bu. during March-April, declined to \$2.72 per bu. in May, reports the Economic Research Service. Prices during the remainder of the 1964-65 marketing year are expected to fluctuate but probably will average above the June-September 1964 level of \$2.39 per bu. Soybean exports are up 9%, and the season's total may reach 205 million bu., compared with 191 million bu. during 1963-64. Consequently, the U. S. carry-over on September 30, 1965, is expected to total 10 million bu., compared with 32 million bu. a year earlier.

R U R A L W A T E R S Y S T E M L O A N S

The Farmers Home Administration approved 79 rural community water system loans during April and May, increasing the total of such loans to 751 since the present program began in 1961, reports Secretary of Agriculture Freeman. The additional 79 loans amounted to nearly \$9.6 million and will serve approximately 45,000 people in 20 states. The 751 loans made since 1961 have financed \$107 million worth of water system developments serving half a million rural people in 37 states.

The loans will be repaid over a period of 40 years or less from proceeds of the water systems. The loans are financed primarily with funds provided by banks and other private lenders or investors; repayment is insured by the FHA, a USDA agency. Loans of this type are available through county offices of the FHA to organizations operating on a nonprofit basis, such as rural water districts, rural nonprofit corporations, and the local governments of small towns.

L I V E S T O C K

Cattle and calf receipts at Fort Worth advanced during the week ended Thursday, June 24, but were below the year-earlier level, reports the Consumer and Marketing Service. The cattle supply of approximately 6,500 compares with 5,850 in the previous week and 6,875 a year ago. Demand was broad for most classes of cattle, and trading generally was moderate to fairly active. Quotations for slaughter steers and heifers were steady to weak as compared with a week earlier. Good and Choice 1,085- to 1,435-lb. slaughter steers cleared at \$23 to \$24.90 per cwt., and Utility and Commercial cows brought \$13.50 to \$15.20. Trading on feeder cattle was very uneven, and prices were little changed from the preceding week. Standard and Good 650- to 850-lb. feeder steers sold at \$17 to \$20 per cwt.

Calf offerings are placed at 2,525, or 23% above the previous week but 11% below the corresponding 1964 period. Slaughter calf prices averaged fully steady to strong as compared with a week earlier. Good grades of killing calves sold at \$22 to \$24 per cwt., and quotations for Standard and Good stocker steer calves ranged from \$18 to \$25 per cwt.

A total of 1,025 hogs was received at Fort Worth during the week ended June 24, a figure that is slightly above both the preceding week and the year-earlier level. The week's top price of \$25 per cwt. was the highest since July 1958.

Sheep and lamb marketings totaled an estimated 6,700, or about one-fifth below a week ago but one-fifth above the comparable period last year. The previous week's price break on slaughter lambs was extended 50¢ to \$1 per cwt. on Monday; and during the remainder of the trading period, quotations held about steady. The majority of the mixed lots of Good and Choice 61- to 99-lb. slaughter spring lambs cleared at \$22 to \$24 per cwt.

P O U L T R Y

For the week ended Friday, June 25, the major Texas commercial broiler markets opened weaker, reflecting price decreases in other parts of the Nation, reports the Texas Department of Agriculture. Markets in both south and east Texas were steady throughout the trading period. At Friday's close, the east Texas market was stronger, and the undertone in both areas was firm. Closing prices in south Texas were 14.5¢ to 15¢ per lb., and those in east Texas ranged from 14.6¢ to 15.6¢. During the corresponding 1964 period, the closing quotation in south Texas was 14.5¢ per lb., and east Texas prices ranged from 14¢ to 14.7¢.

The Texas commercial broiler markets were stronger on Monday, June 28. The following prices per lb. were quoted: South Texas, 15.9¢, and east Texas, 14.8¢ to 15.5¢.

	Area	Week ended June 19, 1965	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1964
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	3,182,000	-2	5
	Louisiana..	619,000	-3	5
	23 states..	49,962,000	-1	10