



# AGRICULTURAL NEWS OF THE WEEK

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## FHA EMERGENCY LOANS HIT HIGH MARK

A high mark for recent years of \$77 million in emergency loans was advanced during 1965 to 21,555 farmers and ranchers by the Farmers Home Administration, reports Secretary of Agriculture Freeman. This demand reflected the serious drought situation of 1964 and preceding years which stimulated a heavy credit demand in 1965. A wide variety of natural disasters in 1965 - including drought, floods, freezes, snowstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes - also increased credit demand. FHA emergency loans were available during 1965 in 1,725 designated counties in 44 states and in the entire Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The 1965 emergency loan volume represented a 41% increase over the \$55 million loaned to 16,105 farmers in 1964.

## USDA RECOMMENDATION FOR TURKEY CROP

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has recommended that the number of turkeys raised for slaughter during the major marketing period (August through December) of 1966 should not exceed last year's production by more than 4%. Marketings of this size, combined with poultry already hatched, would result in a total 1966 turkey crop of about one-tenth above the 1965 production. The USDA says that demand for turkeys is expected to increase during 1966, particularly during the first part of the year while competing red meats are in short supply. During the major turkey-marketing season, however, demand is not expected to be up as much as in the early months of the year.

## FIRST REPORT ON FEED GRAIN PROGRAM SIGNUP

A total of 405,252 U.S. farms had been signed up to participate in the 1966 feed grain program through February 11 of the regular signup period, January 31-April 1, according to the USDA's first report on the program. Reports indicate that those farmers who have enrolled in the program have a base acreage of 18.3 million acres, of which they have agreed to divert 7 million acres. Since the 1966 program does not provide for payment for the first 20% diversion except on farms with small bases, the total acreage for diversion from production in 1966 likely will be somewhat larger than the 7 million acres of diversion for which payment is to be received.

## WORLD COTTON CROP AT ALL-TIME HIGH

World cotton production in 1965-66 may set a new record of 52.1 million bales, according to the latest estimate of the Foreign Agricultural Service. A crop of this size would be about 0.2 million bales larger than the previous peak outturn in 1964-65 and nearly one-fifth above the 1955-59 average.

## CATTLE IMPORTS MORE THAN DOUBLE

Although U.S. imports of red meat were down in 1965, cattle imports of 1.1 million head were more than double the number brought in the previous year and were the third highest cattle imports of record. No breakdown of the 1965 figures is yet available, but in past years, the bulk of these imports has been comprised of animals weighing under 700 lbs. (for fattening in the United States). The USDA says that it is likely that this pattern will continue, mainly in order to supplement domestic

supplies of feeder animals. As has been the case in past years, virtually all of the animals imported in 1965 were from Canada and Mexico.

RECORD BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS

Broiler chick placements in the Nation reached a record 2,369 million during 1965, or 10% above 1964, points out the Statistical Reporting Service. Georgia had the largest number of chicks placed, followed by Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina, Mississippi, Maryland, Texas, Delaware, Maine, and California. Placements in these 10 states accounted for 86% of all the broiler chicks placed in the 23 major broiler-producing states in 1965.

	Area	Week ended March 5, 1966	Percent change from	
			Previous week	Comparable week, 1965
BROILER CHICK PLACEMENTS	Texas.....	2,877,000	8	1
	Louisiana..	698,000	-4	18
	23 states..	48,254,000	-1	7