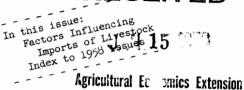
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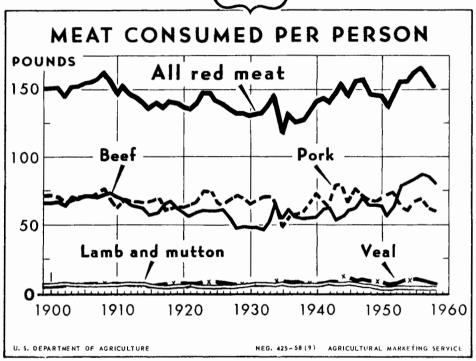
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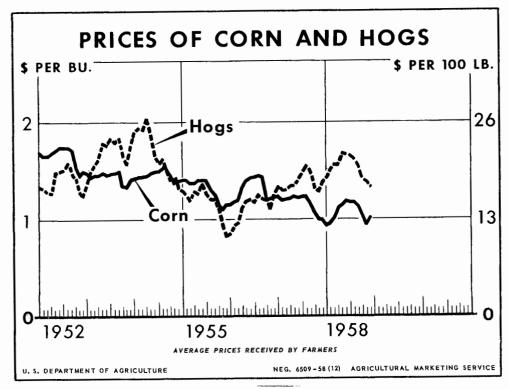
Beginning in the mid-1930's, production of meat in the U. S. increased faster than the population grew, and consumption per person trended upward. Consumption reached a peak in 1956. As supplies of both beef and pork were cut back, consumption de-

creased in 1957 and 1958. 1958 consumption, though only down to the postwar average, was the low in the recent decline. In 1959 meat consumption will increase, due to appreciably larger supplies of pork.

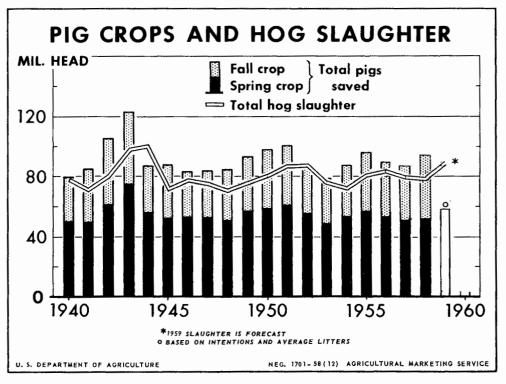
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Prices of corn have trended generally lower for several years. The price of hogs has been more variable, and in 1957 and 1958 it climbed substantially above a normal relation to the corn price.



Increases of 17 percent in 1958 fall pigs saved and of 13 percent in 1959 spring pigs in prospect may lift hog slaughter in 1959 to slightly above the postwar high set in 1952. Pork supplies per person will be smaller than in that year, as the population is larger. But supplies will be of a size that will reduce prices of pork and hogs considerably from those of last year.

THE LIVESTOCK AND MEAT SITUATION

Approved by the Outlook and Situation Board, January 5, 1959

SUMMARY

Livestock slaughter and meat production, led by a substantial increase in the supply of hogs, will be larger in 1959 than in 1958.

Weekly output of meat under Federal inspection rose above a year earlier about the middle of November. The November-December gain was due chiefly to unusually heavy slaughter weights for both hogs and cattle, though the number of hogs slaughtered also was up a bit. The increase ended a downtrend in meat output that had lasted two years.

larger meat output in 1959 will come primarily from an increased slaughter of hogs. This will result from the 17 percent more pigs saved in the fall of 1958 than the previous fall, and the 13 percent larger 1959 spring pig crop in prospect. A big slaughter of fed cattle, at heavy weights, is in sight for the early months of 1959. For the year as a whole, however, cattle slaughter is expected to be only a little above 1958.

Prices of cattle were higher in late 1958 than a year before, and hogs were higher until the last three weeks. These well sustained prices apparently reflected some increase in consumer demand for meat. This is a favorable factor in the outlook for 1959. Nevertheless, the sizable increase in the supply of hogs will result in considerably lower hog prices in 1959. Prices are expected to decline to a low in late winter or early spring. Prices will likely increase during the spring and decline during the fall, as is normal for those seasons. Although always well below 1958, no period of extreme reduction in hog prices seems in view for 1959.

Prices of fed cattle may decline slowly this winter, and are likely to be lower than last winter. They may not regain 1958 levels until summer. Prices of lambs also may feel the effect of heavier wintertime meat supplies, and they may average somewhat less than last winter.

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REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

1959 Spring Pig Crop to Rise

A 1959 spring pig crop of 59 million, 13 percent more than in 1958, is in view. This prospect is based on farmers' intentions for 12 percent more sows and gilts to farrow, as reported by them about December 1, and on a litter size slightly exceeding the 1958 spring average.

The prospective increase in spring pigs in 1959 is the first substantial increase since 1955. After the big 1955 crop, spring pig numbers decreased 8 percent in 1956 and changed little the next two years. The 1959 spring crop as now in prospect would be 2 percent greater than the 1955 crop

The population has grown since 1955, however, and relative to population the 1959 spring crop, as planned, will be smaller than the crop of that year. Moreover, the monthly distribution of spring farrowings will be smoother. Estimates for the U. S. based on data for 9 States show that December-February 1959 farrowings may be 29 percent above those of 1955, but March-May farrowings 13 percent less (table 1). This change very substantially reduces the amount by which March-May farrowings exceed those of December-February. In 1955, March-May farrowings were 1-1/3 times more than December-February; in 1959 they may be only a little over a half larger The percentage of the spring season total falling in March-May could drop from the 70 percent of 1955 to 61 percent in 1959.

More evenly distributed farrowings make more evenly distributed marketings possible. The prospective pattern of farrowings in 1959 therefore reduces the possibility of a big bulge in marketings next November-January. The change in distribution of farrowings thus is a highly desirable one. It will help a great deal in preventing a severe price decline in the fall of 1959 similar to that of 1955.

South Central, West Lead in Expansion

Montana, Oklahoma, Texas and Colorado lead all States in their planned expansion in 1959 spring farrowings. Intended gains are 44, 42, 40 and 40 percent, respectively. Several other Southern and Western States also look toward big percentage increases, and the South Central and Western regions show bigger prospective percentage gains than other regions. Intended farrowings in the Corn Belt, the major hog region, are up 11 percent. The prospective increase is 12 percent in the Western Corn Belt and 8 percent in the Eastern Corn Belt.

Table 1.—Number of sows farrowing in first and second half of spring farrowing season, 1955 to 1958 and intentions for 1959, with comparisons

	Numb	er farro	wing	: March- : May as		ntage of g total
Year	: December- :February		: : Total	:percent- :age of :December- :February	: :December- :February	
	: 1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	Percent	Percent	Percent
1955	2,501	5,858	8,359	234	29.9	70.1
1956	: 2,545	5,120	7,665	201	33.2	66.8
1957	: 2,425	4,852	7,277	200	33•3	66.7
1958	: 2,750	4,678	7,428	170	37.0	63.0
Intentions fo	r:					
1959 <u>1</u> /	: 3,217	5,100	8,317	159	38.7	61.3
Percentage change	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.			
1955-59	28.6	-12.9	-0.5			
	::					

^{1/} Estimated on basis of planned farrowings in 9 major States.

1958 Fall Pig Crop up 17 Percent

The fall pig crop of 1958 is estimated at 42.5 million head. This is 17 percent more than the 1957 fall crop. This increase ushered in the uptrend that is continuing with the 1959 spring crop.

Fall farrowings were up slightly more in the first half than the second half of the season. June-August farrowings were 18 percent larger, and September-November farrowings 13 percent larger (table 3).

Unlike prospective 1959 spring farrowings, 1958 fall farrowings increased most in the heart of the Corn Belt. The Western North Central States reported an average rise of 24 percent.

The fall crop of each year has been gaining in size relative to the spring crop. The 1958 fall crop is up 12 percent from 1955, but the 1959 spring crop is expected to be only 2 percent larger than the 1955 spring crop.

Table 2 .--Number of sows farrowing, pigs saved and pigs saved per litter, spring and fall pig crops, by regions, 1955 to date

SPRING PIG CROP

			SPRING PIG	CROP			
Year	North Atlantic	East	Central : West	South Atlantic	South Central	: Western	United States
	:1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head
Sows farrowing:	:						
1955	: 139	2,404	4,247	618	780	171	8,359
1956	: 138	2,317	3,572	645	834	159	7,665
1957	: 119	2,207	3,371	645	787	148	7,277
1958 1/	: 109	2,171	3,556	660	769	163	7,428
1959 2/	: 114	2,354	3,991	733	929	196	8,317
Pigs saved:	: :						
1955	: 937	16,678	29,630	4,097	5,220	1,128	57 , 690
1956	: 909	16,125	25,279	4,287	5,545	1,041	53,186
1957	: 824	15,746	24,485	4,385	5,353	1,019	51,812
1958 1/	: 750	15,347	25,532	4,408	5,176	1,123	52,336
1959 =	:						<u>2</u> /59,000
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Pigs saved per litter:	: :						
1955	: 6.68	6.94	6.98	6.63	6.69	6.63	6.90
1956	: 6.58	6.96	7.08	6.65	6.65	6.54	6.94
1957	6.88	7.13	7.26	6.80	6.80	6.86	7.12
1958 1/	: 6.86	7.07	7.18	6.68	6.73	6.92	7.05
1959 –	:		•			•	<u>2</u> /7.10
	:						
	<u> </u>						

FALL PIG CROP

	:1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head
Sows farrowing:	:						
1955	: 119	1,877	2,225	498	732	135	5,586
1956	: 108	1,785	1,984	504	694	119	5,194
1957	: 98	1,735	2,005	507	655	124	5,124
1958 <u>1</u> /	: 100	1,942	2,480	533	730	141	5,926
	:						
Pigs saved:	:						
1955	: 809	12,886	15,199	3,310	4,922	903	38,029
1956	: 738	12,625	14,118	3,417	4,687	801	36,386
1957	: 669	12,344	14,466	3,400	4,424	845	36,148
1958 <u>1</u> /	: 690 :	14,093	17,883	3 , 737	5,080	987	42,470
	:						
	: Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number
Pigs saved per	:						
litter:	:						
1955	: 6.79	6.87	6.83	6.65	6.72	6.66	6.81
1956	: 6.80	7.07	7.12	6.79	6.75	6.71	7.00
1957	: 6.81	7.11	7.21	6.71	6.75	6.84	7.06
1958 1/	: 6.87	7.26	7.21	7.02	6.96	6.96	7.17
<u></u> .	:						
	:						
	<u>:</u>						

^{1/} Preliminary. 2/ Number indicated to farrow from intentions as of December 1, 1958. Average number of pigs per litter with allownace for trend used to calculate indicated number of pigs saved.

Table 3 .--Number of sows farrowing and percentage distribution by months, fall season, 1954 to date

			Sows f	arrowing			
Year	: June	: : July	Aug.	: Sept.	: Oct.	: Nov.	: Total
	: 1,000 : head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head
1954 1955 1956 1957 1958	: 769 : 752 : 667 : 735 : 828	709 830 712 757 916	1,280 1,373 1,267 1,185 1,411	1,308 1,475 1,417 1,334 1,517	641 795 762 749 828	307 361 369 364 426	5,014 5,586 5,194 5,124 5,926
	:	Percents	ge distri	bution of	fall far	rowings	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
1954 1955 1956 1957 1958	: 15.4 : 13.5 : 12.8 : 14.4 : 14.0	14.1 14.9 13.7 14.8 15.4	25.5 24.6 24.4 23.1 23.8	26.1 26.4 27.3 26.0 25.6	12.8 14.2 14.7 14.6 14.0	6.1 6.4 7.1 7.1 7.2	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0

Hogs Marketed at Heavier Weights in Fall of 1958

The weight at which hogs are slaughtered is usually determined by three factors: (1) the price of hogs; (2) the price of feed; (3) producers' judgment as to the future price of hogs. High prices for hogs, low prices for feed, and prospects for stable or rising hog prices during the marketing season tend to lead to heavy weights. The opposite conditions lead to light weights.

Usually, the same conditions that favor heavy weights also stimulate an expansion in hog production.

Weights became heavy in 1958 about the same time that production started upward. Until well into 1958, weights had remained only average (table 4). Production also failed to increase much until then. A marked lack of confidence seemed to pervade the hog industry for a considerable time.

Table 4.--Average weight of barrows and gilts at 8 markets, and price spread by weights at Chicago, 1955 to date

Month:		Average live weight, 8 markets								Price spread 240-270 lb. from 200-220 lb. at Chicago					om
: :	1958	:	1957	:	1956	:	1955	:	1958	:	1957	:	1956	:	1955
:	Lb.		Lb.		Lb.		Lb.		Dol.		Dol.		Dol.		Dol.
January :	232		232		231		241		82		55		99		-1.16
February:	228		229		227		236		50		- .38		~. 53		94
March:	229		230		224		235		31		29		18		 52
April :	233		230		223		233		66		 38		28		59
May:	234		230		223		230		75		72		37		94
June :	229		226		221		225		77		 83		 45		-1.13
July :	219		215		217		215		29		 36		 38		46
August :	214		208		211		209		.10		.08		07		.01
September:	218		210		214		210		06		•19		.02		•13
October :	224		218		217		216		27		10		12		12
November:	230		225		223		224		69		40		44		72
December:	233		229		227		228		-1.14		81		58		-1.22
Average :	227		224		222		226		51		38		 36		 63

Compiled from data of Market News, Livestock Division.

Table 5.—Average weight of slaughter steers, and price spread between weight groups, Chicago, 1955 to date

Month	:	Av		ge live ll grad	weight,		Price spread Choice steers, 1100-1300 lb. from 900-1100 lb.					
	:	1958	:	1.957	1.956	1955	1958	1957	1956	1955		
	:	Lb.		Lb.	Lb.	Lb.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.		
January	:	1,141		1,148	1,154	1,095	29	40	-1.04	14		
February	:	1,129		1,157	1,166	1,092	•08	 25	 73	09		
March	:	1,117		1,151	1,151	1,081	.28	•02	20	.02		
April	:	1,118		1,143	1,141	1,089	•73	12	10	0		
May	:	1,119		1,140	1,125	1,093	.67	.07	02	02		
June	:	1,132		1,136	1,134	1,111	•29	03	04	16		
July	:	1,138		1,120	1,125	1,121	 03	.08	01	 29		
August	:	1,143		1,124	1,109	1,122	01	• 34	•26	15		
September	:	1,145		1,126	1,109	1,126	- .24	•26	•64	 42		
October	:	1,161		1,131	1,115	1,135	30	•09	•53	 45		
November	:	1,175		1,138	1,129	1,132	62	10	•63	 53		
December	:	1,190		1,141	1,143	1,145	 57	•04	.11	85		
Average	:	1,144		1,137	1,134	1,114	0	0	•01	 25		

Compiled from data of Market News, Livestock Division.

Table 4 shows that weights of barrows and gilts at 8 markets began to exceed 1956 and 1957 levels in April of 1958. In November they were 5 pounds above a year earlier and 7 pounds above two years earlier. The December increase was about as large.

Until fall, the price spread between light and heavy hogs in 1958 fluctuated around the same levels as in 1956 and 1957. In November and December, however, heavy hogs were discounted considerably more than in the same months of those two years, and about as much as in 1955 (table 4).

Cattle Weights Also Heavy

Under the same conditions that brought about heavy weights for hogs, weights of fed cattle advanced steadily in the second half of 1958. The average weight of all slaughter steers at Chicago rose above a year earlier in July (table 5). In each month since then it has been not only above 1957, but above all previous years on records going back to 1922.

Heavy steers were discounted in price beginning in September. In November and December, the discount at Chicago for 1100-1300 pound compared with 900-1100 pound steers was about \$0.60 per 100 pounds. This was the most since late 1955 and early 1956, the last time an excess supply depressed the market for heavy cattle. The discount for the 1300-1500 pound weight group in late 1958 was larger; its average price was about \$1.50 less than the 900-1100 pound group.

Even though price discounts for weight of both cattle and hogs widened in 1958, they would have been even wider if total meat supplies had been greater. How sensitive prices are to weight at any time depends to a degree on how large a supply of meat is available. A big meat supply usually leads to a sensitivity to weight. A small supply creates less concern with weight.

$\frac{\text{More }}{\text{in }} \frac{\text{Meat }}{1959} \xrightarrow{\text{be Produced}}$

Meat output in 1959 will be higher than a year before. The difference, still small at the end of 1958, will widen during the winter and will be greatest in the spring. Later in the year it could narrow a bit. By far the largest part of the increase will consist of pork.

As they were fed slowly and to heavy weight, hogs came to market later in 1958 than in 1957. December slaughter was very nearly as large as October's; in 1957 it was 9 percent smaller. The later slaughter in 1958 occurred despite earlier farrowing. This demonstrates that in any given year the rate of feeding for market can have a great influence on the seasonal pattern of marketing — so much so as to mask the influence of the seasonal farrowing pattern.

A few early fall pigs rushed to market doubtless were slaughtered in December. There will be more in January, and by February marketing of fall pigs will be underway in volume. Thereafter market supplies of hogs will be considerably larger than in 1958.

Hog Prices to be Lower

A considerable price impact from the larger supply of hogs will be felt. Hog prices always move up and down quickly in response to a changing supply. One reason is that when output of pork has been reduced for some time, as was true in 1957 and 1958, consumers tend to drift away from it. After a large supply has been restored consumers are won back only gradually. Prices can be especially sensitive to supply in the adjustment period.

Prices of hogs are expected to decline to a lower level early in the year. Thereafter their changes probably will be little more than their usual seasonal fluctuation. There is no great danger of an abrupt collapse at any one season. This prospect results from the smoother seasonal distribution of farrowings now than a few years ago (see page 4).

The early downtrend in 1959 prices will probably end in a late-winter or early-spring low. The seasonal advance during the spring will not be great, and the summer high will be considerably below the top reached last summer. Prices will remain much below those of a year earlier during their fall decline. Yet if producers do not exceed their intended farrowings the fall low in price will almost certainly be considerably above the low point to which prices fell in December 1955. In that month the U. S. average price to farmers was \$10.60 per 100 pounds.

Market weights will tend to continue heavy and discounts fairly wide in early months of 1959. Later, two of the three factors that influence weights will point in the direction of lighter weights. Only the abundance of feed will encourage feeding to heavy weight. Except in the late spring, when seasonal price advances almost always offset the disadvantage of discount for weight, it normally is hazardous to feed to heavy weight in a lower price year such as 1959.

More Fed Cattle To Be Slaughtered in First Half of 1959

In the first half of 1958, commercial cattle slaughter averaged 10 percent below a year earlier. By the end of the year, slaughter was close to its 1957 rate.

Most of the change during the year was in slaughter of steers, particularly of fed steers. Steer slaughter under Federal inspection lagged far behind 1957 in early months of 1958 (table 6). Later it advanced above 1957. It was the only class to do so. Heifer slaughter remained close to the previous year's rate during all of 1958. Cow slaughter was consistently below the 1957 rate, reflecting the larger numbers of cows retained on farms for expansion of herds.

Table 6 .-- Number of cattle slaughtered under Federal inspection, by class, United States, by months 1958 compared with 1957

	Ste	ers	Hei	fers	: Co	ows	Calv	es
Month	1958	: 1957	: : 1958	1957	: 1958 :	: : 1957	: : 1958	1957
	:1,000 :head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head
January February March April May June July August September October November December	877 678 706 780 831 857 921 855 870 875	944 765 822 836 939 800 878 872 807 868 715 772	249 245 258 225 236 241 245 253 267 286 220	296 266 236 232 240 215 260 257 262 285 221 209	477 365 373 353 374 382 367 346 398 455 337 ≅√⊖	579 433 428 403 450 482 572 556 522 609 552 466	547 468 518 485 438 430 435 424 472 541	657 550 632 613 580 535 596 615 638 742 598 569
Year <u>1</u> /	:	10,018		2,980		6,051		7,324

^{1/} Computed from unrounded numbers.

Compiled from Market News, Livestock Division.

Marketings of fed cattle proceeded slowly during 1958, and by late summer a sizable backlog of heavy steers had been built up. As they moved into slaughter channels during the fall, receipts of fed steers at markets advanced above 1957. Their increased numbers accounted for the larger steer slaughter. Since weights of fed cattle were heavier, output of fed beef was up considerably.

Part of the backlog of heavy steers probably remained on farms on January 1, 1959. In addition, it appears that more cattle were placed on feed this fall than a year before. Also, they moved to feeding areas earlier. Receipts of stocker and feeder cattle in the Corn Belt in both September and October set new records for those months, but November receipts were below November 1957. As a result, marketings of fed cattle in the first part of 1959 probably will be above those of early 1958.

Prices of fed steers in December 1958 were \$1.00 to \$2.00 per 100 pounds above a year before. The increase was made possible by a strong consumer demand for beef and by the reduced slaughter of cows and calves. These two factors will continue to be a supporting influence. Nevertheless, because the supply of fed beef will be larger than last winter, it is doubtful that fed cattle prices will repeat last year's steady increase. The more likely prospect is that after edging to an early high, prices will slip seasonally lower. Late winter and spring prices may be somewhat below last year. By summer, however, prices may again be above 1958.

Cow, Feeder Prices to Remain High

Prices of cows and of feeder cattle have been unusually high relative to prices of fed cattle. Abundant and cheap feed, and active demand for breeding stock for expansion of herds, are the major reasons.

As both factors will continue, prices of those classes will remain high relative to prices of fed cattle. However, if fed cattle prices fail to advance this winter as they did last winter, prices of cows and feeder stock will be under some downward pressure. They may climb somewhat higher in early spring due to a seasonally strong demand for stocker animals to go on grass, but otherwise there is little possibility of any substantial further advances in prices of those classes during 1959.

Lamb Prices Down

In December, slaughter of sheep and lambs was slightly above the low slaughter a year before. Otherwise, however, it was the smallest for the month since 1951. The rate of sheep and lamb slaughter continues to be small enough to make it possible for the inventory of sheep on farms to continue its increase.

Nevertheless, the lamb market was rather weak in December. Prices declined steadily for about 12 weeks, and at year's end had turned up only slightly. Prices at that time were below late 1957 prices.

Wheat pastures in the Southwest are poorer this winter than last winter, when they were exceptionally good. Last year lambs were held on wheat pastures through the winter, and many went into feedlots afterward. When marketed at heavy weights in early-spring, lower prices resulted. The seasonal price pattern is likely to be different this year. Prices may advance gradually during the winter, and by early spring they could be as high as last year, or higher. Winter-season price weakness this year may prove to have been early, rather than late as in 1958. The winter-average price, however, is likely to be lower this year than last.

USDA Grade Standards for Slaughter Lambs Revised

Effective January 5 revised grade standards were adopted on slaughter lambs and sheep. These revisions corresponded to changes in standards for lamb, yearling mutton and mutton carcasses that were adopted on February 11, 1957. The major changes in the standards were to lower the finish requirements for older lambs in the Choice and Prime grades, and to permit a superior development of conformation to compensate for a slight deficiency of finish in the Choice grade. The minimum requirements for finish in the Good grade were increased slightly. Grade and class names were not changed.

These revisions make it possible for more mature lambs to qualify for the Choice and Prime grades at somewhat lighter weights and after shorter periods of feeding than formerly.

These changes in grade specifications are examples of modifications made from time to time to improve the marketing system for livestock and meat. Currently standards have been adopted for almost all classes and grades of meat animals and carcasses, and they are widely used throughout the industry.

Retail Meat Prices to Decline

Retail prices of meat climbed to highs in the summer of 1958. They have since receded, in a seasonal movement. They will decline somewhat further. Prices of pork will decrease this winter. A seasonal advance this spring will be followed by a seasonal decline during the fall. At all times pork prices will be lower than last year. It is likely, however, that seasonal fluctuations will be less than in most years. The greatest difference between 1959 and 1958 pork prices could occur at midsummer, when prices are seasonally highest.

Prices of the higher grades of beef also may decline this winter, due to sizable marketings of fed cattle. The decrease will not be great. It will be temporary, as a later increase is probable. The cattle cycle has not yet reached the stage where prolonged declines in beef prices are to be expected.

Prices of the lower grades of beef may prove relatively stable in 1959. They already are relatively high compared with prices of fed beef, and little further advance is to be anticipated. But neither is much decline in prospect, chiefly because the supply of cow beef will continue rather small.

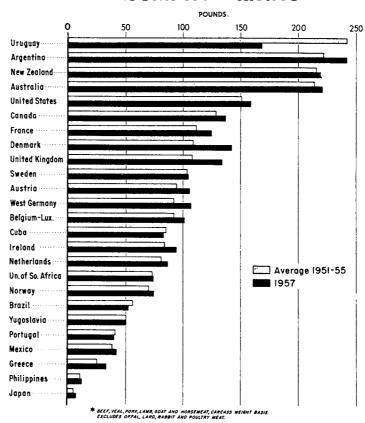
<u>World Meat Consumption</u> in 1957

World trade in meat continued to rise in 1957 but there was little change in meat production and consumption. 1957 consumption per person was above 1956 in most countries of Europe, the U.S.S.R., Mexico and Uruguay but was smaller in the United States, Argentina, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Yugoslavia and France.

The leading countries in per capita consumption during 1957 were Argentina, Australia, New Zealand and Uruguay. (See chart.) In these countries beef and veal dominates, although lamb and mutton consumption in Australia and New Zealand was around 75 pounds per person. These four countries, together with the pork exporting countries of Denmark and the Netherlands, furnished over three-fourths of all meat exports in 1957.

According to reports of the Foreign Agricultural Service, meat production in 43 countries in 1957 totaled 95.2 billion pounds; and production in 1958 probably was close to this level.

WORLD PER CAPITA MEAT* CONSUMPTION RISING



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPORTATION OF LIVESTOCK AND MEAT INTO THE UNITED STATES

By Harold Abel, Coordinator
Western Livestock Marketing Research
Denver, Colorado 1/

Foreign trade in agricultural products has been very important to American agriculture for years. In 1957 the value of U.S. agricultural exports was about \$4.5 billion and of agricultural imports around \$3.9 billion. But of this \$3.9 billion of imports, nearly 60 percent consisted of complementary commodities such as coffee, cocoa and crude rubber, which cannot be produced in the U.S. In terms of supplementary commodities, the value of U.S. agricultural exports is nearly three times that of imports.

Exports of agricultural commodities make up nearly one-fifth of our total exports. Hence, any material change in agricultural exports can have repercussions not only upon American agriculture, but on U. S. business as well.

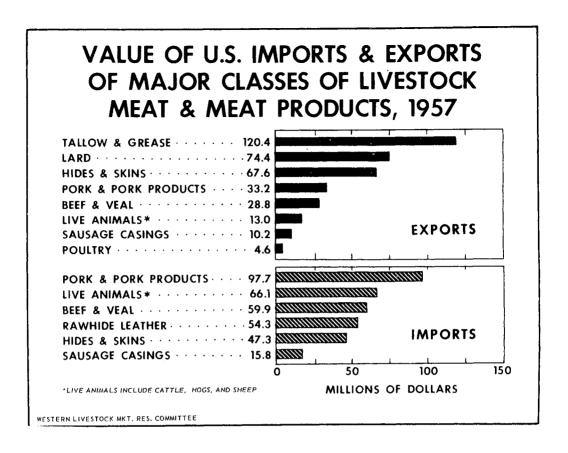
U. S. foreign trade in meat animals and their products typically consists of imports of cattle and calves, beef and lamb, and the preferred pork products; and of exports of various meats (including variety meats), tallow and grease, lard, and hides and skins. The relative importance of major items in 1957 is shown on the top chart on page 16. The total export of livestock, meat and meat products in 1957 amounted to \$383 million, while imports were \$290 million.

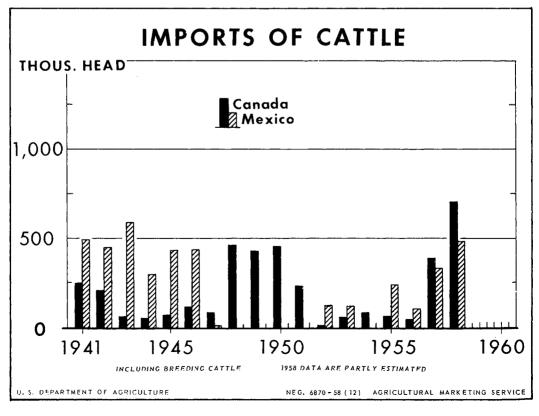
Live Cattle and Processed Meat Imports Increase in 1957 & 1958

The substantial increase in imports of live cattle and processed meat has been of considerable interest to stockmen and others in the trade. There also is concern about future imports.

Imports of both live animals and meat vary considerably from year to year. For example, imports of cattle from Mexico were above average from 1941 to 1946 (lower chart, page 16). Cattle imports from Canada were relatively high in 1948 to 1950. In 1957, 703,000 head of dutiable cattle were imported from the two countries combined, but this was still not quite as large as imports in 1941. Thus it is difficult to determine just what to consider" a normal" importing year.

^{1/} Adapted from a statement delivered to the California Farm Bureau Federation, San Jose, California, November 10, 1958.





It also is very difficult to make valid comparisons with years when embargoes on imports from Canada and Mexico have been in force. (See top chart, page 18.) Canada, for instance, as a war measure imposed an export ban in 1942 on live cattle to the U.S. This restriction was lifted in August 1948. From February 1952 to March 1953, the United States maintained an embargo on Canadian cattle because of foot-and-mouth disease. Imports from Mexico have been restricted in two periods because of the same disease, one from 1947 to September 1952 and another from May 1953 to January 1955.

Imports of meat also have varied a great deal. As seen in lower chart, page 18, 1948-52 and 1957-58 were the biggest beef importing years.

Even the 1958 record imports of cattle and beef (carcass weight equivalent) do not bulk large in relation to total U. S. production. For instance, 1958 imports were around 8 percent of U. S. production.

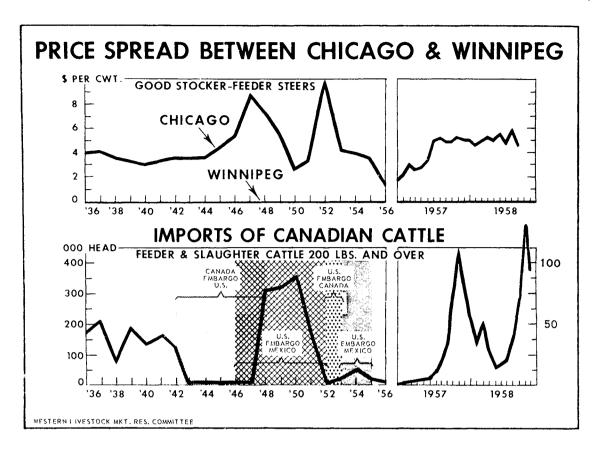
Most Live Cattle Imports Are Stockers and Feeders

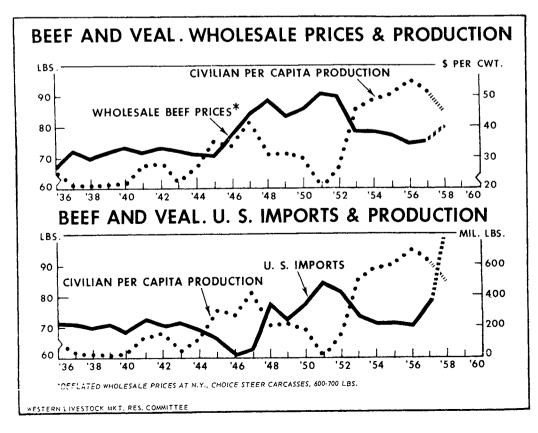
Normally, the bulk of live cattle imports is of the stocker-feeder classes. Virtually all Mexican imports are cattle of this type. Sometimes a substantial number of fat Canadian cattle are received, but the majority of Canadian imports also are stockers and feeders.

Although past imports of live cattle have not been large compared with domestic production, they have had a sizable influence on some local markets during short periods. One reason is that there is no penalty on the percentage of the quota that can enter during a given week or month as long as the quarterly quota is not exceeded. Another is that most Canadian imports enter the United States on a line West of the Manitoba Province and Mexican imports enter the West through El Paso and Nogalas. Also, imports from both countries are largely seasonal. As a result of this Western concentration, the impact of increased supplies is felt more and earlier there than in other parts of the country.

Beef Imports Low Priced

Pork imports largely consist of canned hams and shoulders, a speciality and preferred product. Beef imports, on the other hand, tend to be lower quality products. The average value of imported beef per pound, for instance, is less than the value of cattle imports (carcass equivalent basis). Most of the beef that is imported is cured, processed, or fresh boneless beef for processing. All come from the cheaper portions of the carcass, or from lower grade animals. Historically, Argentina has been one of our principal suppliers of processed meat mainly in the form of canned beef. Over the years, beef imports have competed almost entirely with the lower quality products produced in this country.





One reason this is true is that the U. S. produces relatively more of top grade beef than do other countries, and less of lower grade. The growth of our feeding industry has increased the percentage of our total slaughter that is from fed animals and has reduced the proportion of Utility and Commercial beef produced.

Import Regulations

The U. S. import duty on slaughter and stocker and feeder cattle is one and one-half to two and one-half cents per pound, depending upon weight of animal (table 7). The two and one-half cent rate applies on all cattle 200-700 pounds, and also on those over 700 pounds when the annual tariff quota exceeds 400,000 head. Beef and veal either fresh or frozen carries a flat three cents per pound duty. Even though the U. S. ships some live cattle and processed beef to Canada, the Canadian duty against us is not as severe as our own. The main difference is that Canada has no arrangement such as the U. S. uses by which the duty is increased when a specified volume of total imports is exceeded.

What Causes the Volume of Imports to Fluctuate?

Shipments of cattle and beef to the United States are based largely upon price relationships between foreign markets and our own. Foreign suppliers attempt to sell in the markets that give the highest net return. If the United States offers an advantageous market, shipments are made to this country; if there is an advantage in other countries, shipments are directed there. This is exactly what has been happening the last two years. U. S. prices in 1957 and 1958 have been comparatively high so foreign suppliers have obtained higher returns by selling to the U. S.

To see how imports of cattle into the U. S. respond to changes in prices, look again at the upper half of chart, page 18, showing spreads between Chicago and Winnipeg prices, and the lower half of the same chart which shows the level of cattle imports from Canada. While the prices compared are for stocker-feeder cattle, the same general relationship exists for slaughter cattle.

When the price spread is narrow, imports drop; when it is wide, imports increase. For instance, the 1956 drought and heavy slaughter forced prices down in the U.S. The price spread dropped from the \$4.00 level of 1955 to below \$2.00 in 1956. As a result, imports of Canadian cattle were reduced sharply. The situation changed drastically in the fall of 1957, when U.S. prices recovered. Sales to the U.S. increased sharply and exceeded 80,000 head in the peak month of October. For a number of months in 1958 the spread between Chicago and Winnipeg varied from \$5.00-6.00, and Canadian shipments to the U.S. increased further.

Table 7.-- U. S. and Canadian tariff rates on livestock and meat

Item	: : : : : :	U. S. rate on imports from Canada	Canadian rate on imports from U. S.	Canadian rate on imports from Australia & New Zealand
Livestock, purebred for breeding Cattle, slaughter-feeder,	:	Free	Free	Free
Under 200 lb.	Lb.	$\begin{array}{c} 1\frac{1}{2}\not\in\text{within}\\ \text{quota of}\\ 200,000 \text{ per} \end{array}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$ no quota	Free
200-699 pounds 700 pounds and over Dairy cows, 700 pounds	: Lb. : Lb. :	year 1/ 2½¢ over quota 2½¢ 1½¢ within quota of 400,000 per year 1/2/ 2½¢ over quota	1½¢ 1½¢ no quota	Free Free
and over	Lb.	1½¢	1½¢	: Free
Beef and Veal, fresh or frozen Hogs, live Pork, fresh or frozen Bacon and hams	: Lb. : Lb. : Lb.	$ \begin{array}{ccc} & 1\not & \\ & 1\frac{1}{4}\not & \\ & 2\not & \text{unboned} \\ & 3\frac{1}{4}\not & \text{canned and}/ \end{array} $	3¢ 1¢ 1 ¹ / ₄ ¢ 1 ² / ₄ ¢	3¢ Free 1¼¢ Free
Sheep and Lambs Mutton, fresh or frozen Lamb, fresh or frozen	: Head : Lb. : Lb.	2 ½¢	\$2.00 6¢ 6¢	Free

^{1/} Year begins April 1.

^{2/} Only 120,000 head are allowed entry at the low rate during any quarter. Quarters begin April 1, July 1, October 1, January 1.

In addition to tariff duties, transportation and marketing costs tend to limit inshipments. As a result, the spread between prices in the U. S. and even our next door neighbors of Mexico and Canada must be at least \$3.00-4.00 before any large volume enters. Higher cost of transportation, greater death loss and shrink and the likelihood of price changes serve to limit or prevent shipments of live cattle from nations other than Canada and Mexico.

In the same way, imports of beef into the United States usually reflect trends in the price of beef. Prices in turn are largely influenced by the size of U. S. supply relative to demand. The lower chart on page 18 shows that imports of beef have been high when U. S. prices are high, and low when prices are low. These in turn are related to opposite changes in U. S. beef supply per person.

When U. S. beef production is down, U. S. consumers have to get along on less beef than in other years. Increased imports at that time prevent further reduction in the supply for consumers, but do not keep it up to normal. It may seem odd, but increased imports usually are a sign of prosperity for the American cattle producer. Imports have never been large on a depressed market.

Higher prices of beef and cattle in the U. S. in 1958, and large imports of both, resulted from a strong domestic demand for beef in face of a two year decline in production. The 1958 beef and veal production was about 14.6 billion pounds, about 9 percent below 1956 and 7 percent below 1957. Also, we have been adding 3 million people to our population each year since 1956. Result: Beef consumption per capita in 1958, even with the substantial increase in imports, dropped to about 80.5 pounds. This compares with over 85 pounds in 1956.

The drop in beef production resulted from a reduction of more than 4 million head in slaughter, chiefly in cows and calves slaughtered. The sharp reduction in cow slaughter coupled with the higher level of feeding has created a shortage of lower grades of beef and this, in turn, is directly related to the larger imports of boned and processed meat.

Favorable or unfavorable price differentials between countries are probably the most direct and important cause for wide fluctuations in imports. Neverthless, there are other reasons. The cost of transfer and barriers to trade are important. Also a factor is the level of cattle production in exporting countries in relation to the U. S. cattle cycle, and the cost of production in exporting countries. Still another is risk and uncertainty in market prices. The time required to move dressed meat and live animals from an exporting country such as New Zealand to the U. S. must be reckoned with by exporters. Price margins may be favorable at the time an exporting agreement is consummated, but four to six weeks later when the meat arrives U. S. prices may have changed sufficiently so that all profits are wiped out. This becomes a real force in limiting exports when prices on the U. S. market are changing rapidly, particularly if the changes occur when the spread in prices between countries is narrow.

It seems likely that the cost of transfer, mainly transportation, will for all practical purposes continue to prevent large shipments of live cattle exclusive of breeding stock from countries other than our traditional suppliers Canada and Mexico. Under present conditions, transporting live cattle for long distances by boat or other means is not profitable. Our insistence on high standards for animal disease control and health and the maintenance of a high quality of meat for U. S. consumers will also tend to retard future shipments of live cattle from other countries. Programs to clear up animal disease would be expensive and in turn increase production costs in supplying countries

The Outlook for Trade in Cattle

In 1958 combined imports of cattle and beef are estimated to be equivalent to about 8 percent of U. S. production. This exceeds the previous record of 6 percent set in 1951.

On the basis of expected price relationships and estimates of 1959 beef and veal production, 1959 imports for these products will likely remain large but not quite as large as in 1958. As the cattle cycle swings toward larger production, the percentage of total U. S. production of beef represented by imports may be expected to decline.

A brief rundown on the situation in a few of the more important exporting countries will help to clarify prospects for imports.

Canada

Unfavorable weather in parts of western Canada contributed to large movements of cattle to the United States in 1958. These outshipments reduced inventories of beef steers and heifers early in 1958, and the number of those classes on farms at midyear was down 15 percent from 1957.

In the long-run, no outstanding expansion of beef cattle numbers in the Central Provinces is expected, and production on the Western Prairies can increase markedly only after heavy capital expenditures. Investments of this nature will probably be made only in response to domestic demand and not to unstable export markets.

Long-term demand in the U. S. would also have to remain high enough to maintain the necessary spread between U. S. and Canadian prices. This would imply a consumer demand for beef greater than U. S. domestic farm and ranch resources could supply at reasonable prices to consumers.

Since cow and calf numbers have been maintained in Canada, it is possible that sizable supplies of feeder cattle will be available in 1959 if prices are favorable. Canadian shipments to the U.S. in 1959 are expected to be only moderately lower than in 1958.

New Zealand

Total cattle numbers in New Zealand dropped 1 percent from 5,867,000 head on January 31, 1955 to 5,809,000 head on January 31, 1957. All of this drop was in dairy animals. Beef cattle numbers rose slightly. The outlook for the foreseeable future is for stable dairy cattle numbers and slowly increasing beef cattle numbers.

The reduction in dairy herds over the last two years has resulted from extensive culling of over-age or poor quality dairy animals. The meat from these animals has gone into boneless manufacturing beef for use in frankfurters, bologna, hamburgers, etc. Prices of bulls and lower grade cows rose to very high levels in New Zealand. This in turn tended to lower the spread in prices of boned beef between U. S. and New Zealand and to make export business less profitable. As dairy herds are now reported to be fairly well thinned out, production of this meat will likely increase no further.

So long as a relative shortage of cutter quality cattle exists on the U.S. market, imports from New Zealand will remain close to recent volume. Under those conditions the U.S. presents a relatively attractive market. When U.S. production recovers under the stimulus of present high prices, and with the quantity of cutter cows and bulls marketed in New Zealand not likely to increase, shipments of beef from that country to the U.S. probably will decline.

Australia

A most important development in the U. S. meat trade has been the complete freeing of Australian shipments of lower grade beef to areas other than the United Kingdom. Beginning October 1, 1958 Australia has been free to send unlimited amounts of lamb, mutton and manufacturing beef to markets other than the United Kingdom. Only shipments of 1st and 2nd quality beef to destinations outside the Commonwealth are still under a quota, which is 7,500 long tons per year.

Until that date, there was a "free market quota" for shipments to the United States and other destinations outside the Commonwealth. It was 15,000 long tons and it included all grades of beef as well as lamb and mutton.

It is expected that exports to the U.S. will rise substantially in 1959.

Mexico

Mexico is a traditional exporter of feeder cattle to the United States. During the past 22 months, exports of feeders increased in response to high U. S. prices. However, a good season in 1958 led Mexican ranchers to hold back animals to build up herds. This has somewhat reduced U. S. imports from Mexico. Exports of feeders from Mexico are expected to remain fairly level in the foreseeable future. Almost no slaughter animals are imported from Mexico.

Although Mexico is trying to build up its beef processing industry and would like to earn dollars from meat exports, no clear pattern has developed. Rapidly growing meat consumption is absorbing most of the increased capacity, and exports — although higher than usual — have been sporadic.

Summary

Foreign trade is important to agriculture. Foreign trade in livestock and meat is small relative to our own production. However, it can be significant for certain products, as imports are sometimes sizable for cattle and calves, for lower grades of beef, and for certain pork items, while exports of a few meat items, and of lard, tallow, and hides, are substantial. Imports affect U. S. prices most when they are bunched at a particular time or a particular area. Otherwise, their price impact is small.

Imports of cattle and beef fluctuate a great deal from year to year. Their volume largely reflects the price relationships between the U. S. and the supplying country. As a rule, imports are large when production of beef in the U. S. is cyclically reduced and U. S. prices are cyclically higher. They are small when domestic beef production is up and prices lower.

Supplying countries probably will be able to provide almost as many cattle and almost as much beef in 1959 as in 1958. Farther in the future, when U. S. production increases, imports can be expected to decrease considerably.

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Slaughter--NOV.
Wool production, price and income--MAR.

Supply and distribution of meat, by months, 1958

	:			Comme	rcially p	roduced			:	Total 2/	·
	:	Supply		:		Distribut	ion		:	Civilian	consumption
Period		: Begin-	:Imports :	Exports and shipment	FUGTUR	: :Military	· Total ·	por	Produc- tion	Total	Per person
	: Mil. : 1b.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. lb.	Mil. 1b.	Mil. lb.	Mil. 1b.	<u>Lb.</u>	Mil. 1b.	Mil. 1b.	<u>Lb.</u>
Beef:	:										
July August September	: 1,148 : 1,079 : 1,149 : 3,376	108 112 118	7 ⁴ 66 67 207	3 3 5	112 118 123	41 25 25 91	1,174 1,111 1,181 3,466	6.8 6.5 6.9			3/ 20.5
3rd quarter October November December 4th quarter	1,219 980	123 137	201	5	137 159	32 26					
Veal:								•			
July August September	96 93 94	8 7 7	<u>4</u> / 1 4	4/ 4/ 4/	7 7 9	5 4 4	92 90 92	•5 •5 •5			
3rd quarter	283	88	5	4/	99	13	274	1.6			3/ 1.7
October November December 4th quarter	103 82	9 12		<u>4</u> /	12 13	1 ₄ 3					
Lamb and mutton:	:										
July August September 3rd quarter	53 50 55 158	12 10 11	2 3 2	14/ 14/ 1	10 11 10	1 1	57 52 56	•3 •3 •3			3/ 1.0
October November December 4th quarter	60 48	10 10		<u>#</u> /	10 10	4/ 4/					
Pork:	:								<u> </u>		
July August September	: 714 : 719 : 821	210 173 149	18 16 15	10 9 9	173 149 127	24 12 13	735 738 836	4.3 4.3 4.9			
3rd quarter	2,254	510	49	28	127	49	2,309	13.4	·····		3/ 14
October November December 4th quarter	933 859	127 134		11.	134 181	13					
All meat:	:								· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
July August September	: 2,011 : 1,941 : 2,119	338 302 285	94 86 88	13 12 15	302 285 269	70 41 43	2,058 1,991 2,165	12.0 11.6 12.6			
3rd quarter October November December 4th quarter	: 6,071 : 2,315 : 1,969	338 269 293	258	40 16	269 293 363	154 57 42	6,204	36.1			3/37-5

^{1/} Derived from estimates by months of population eating out of civilian food supplies, unadjusted for underenumeration.
2/ Includes production and consumption from farm slaughter.
3/ Estimated.
4/ Less than 500,000 pounds.

- 28 -Selected price statistics for meat animals and meat

		19	57	:	1958	
Item	Unit		December	: October :	November	December
Cattle and calves		: :				
	Dollars per					
Chicago, Prime	100 pounds	26.79	27.86	27.81	27.6 4	27.28
Choice	do.	25.20	25.98	26.67	26.77	27.19
Good		23.43	24.08	25.63	25.82	25.88
Standard		20.52	21.48	24.22	54-44	24.51
Commercial			21.60	24.25	23.50	23.29
Utility		17.98	18.23	22.58	22.50	22.45
All grades		25.06	25.74 24.12	26.70 25.20	26.79 25.51	27.01
Sioux City, all grades		23.21 23.51	24.25	25.25	25.57	
Cows, Chicago		23.71	24.2)	2).2)	27.71	
Commercial	do∙	15.50	16.12	20.01	19.93	
Utility			15.04	18.66	18.50	
Canner and Cutter		12.52	13.37	16.85	16.80	
Vealers, Choice, Chicago	do.	27.60	28.98	32.42	33.40	
Stocker and feeder steers, Kansas City $\underline{1}/\ldots$	do.	21.41	22.68	25.80	26.46	25.81
Price received by farmers		377.00	10.60	60.05	60.00	00.00
Beef cattle		17.80	18.60	26 . 20	22.20	22.30
Calves	do.	19.30	20.80	20.20	26.40	27.00
Hogs						
Barrows and gilts						
Chicago		•				
160-180 pounds	do.	1.6.23	18.06	18.35	18.26	
180-200 pounds		17.32	19.11	19.20	18.97	
200-220 pounds	do.	: 17.46	19.25	19.32	18.87	
220-21-0 pounds		: 17.38	19.04	19.26	18.62	
240-270 pounds		17.06	18.44	19.05	18.18	
270-300 pounds		17.04	17.82	18.86	17.84 18.51	18.16
All weights		17.17	18.64 18.45	19.08 18.88	18.13	18.15 17.86
Sows, Chicago		: 17.01 : 15.26	15.21	17.41	16.14	14.62
Price received by farmers		16.60	17.80	18.50	17.90	17.40
Hog-corn price ratio 3/		:	2,000	20170	-1-2-	·
Chicago, barrows and gilts		14.8	16.2	16.6	16.6	15.6
Price received by farmers, all hogs		: 16.9	18.1	17.8	19.0	17.1
:	:	:				
Sheep and Lambs	Dollars per	•				
	100 pounds	6.86	7.28	6.97	6.75	
Slaughter ewes, Good and Choice, Chicago Price received by farmers		6-59	6.88	7.30	7.23	7.18
Lambs	. 40.	. 0.79	0.00	1.30	,	1
Slaughter, Choice and Prime, Chicago	do.	23.01	23.00	4/23.31	4/22.29	
Feeder, Good and Choice, Omaha		21.06	21.30	4/23.78	4/21.72	4/21.90
Price received by farmers		20.00	20.60	20.80	20.30	19.00
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	:	:				
All meat animals	:	:				
Index number price received by farmers			002	220	206	323
(1910-14=100)		277	293	330	326	JEJ
Meat.		•				
	Dollars per					
Steer beef carcass, Choice, 500-600 pounds		41.63	42.83	43.89	44.20	
Lamb carcass, Choice, 45-55 pounds		47.26	48.16	49.96	48.05	
Composite hog products:	:	:				
Including lard	:	:				
71.90 pounds fresh		: 19.74	21.15	21.20	21.11	
Average per 100 pounds		27.45	29.42	29.49	29.36	
71.01 pounds fresh and cured		23.36	24.46	25.44	24.68 3h.76	
Average per 100 pounds	. do.	: 32.90 :	34.45	35.83	34.76	
Excluding lard 55.99 pounds fresh and cured	do.	20.98	22.09	22.88	22.34	
Average per 100 pounds		37.47	39.45	40.86	39.90	
Retail Imited States average	: Cents	:	3,4.7		3,7	
Beef, Choice grade	: per pound	72.4	74.0	80.7	81.0	
Pork, excluding lard	: do.	: 58.1	59.1	63.4	61.8	
Index number meat prices (BLS)	:	:				
Wholesale (1947-49=100)	:	: 93.2	95.0	104.9	103.7	
Retail (1947-49=100) 5/	:	: 108.9	110.5	121.4	120.0	
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>				

^{1/} Average all weights and grades.
2/ Chicago, St. Louis N. S. Y., Kansas City, Omaha, Sioux City, S. St. Joseph, S. St. Paul, and Indianapolis.
3/ Rumber bushels of corn equivalent in value to 100 pounds of live hogs.
4/ Choice grade.
5/ Includes beef and veal, pork, leg of lamb and other meats.

Selected marketing, slaughter and stocks statistics for meat animals and meat

		19	57		1958	
Item	Unit	November	December		November	December
Meat animal marketings Index number (1947-49=100)	:	136	122	154	123	
Stocker and feeder shipments to		; }				
	1,000	3			_	
Cattle and calves		973 248	608 190	1,273 636	897 222	
Slaughter under Federal inspection Number slaughtered						
Cattle		1,515	1,473	1,642	1,302	
Steers	_	715	772	875	725	
Heifers	do.	: 221 : 552	209 466	286 455	220 337	
Bulls and stags		27	27	26	20	
Calves	do.	598	569	541	441	
Sheep and lambs		958	978	1,131	883	
Hogs		5,505	5,523	5,911	5,258	
Percentage sows	Percent	7	7	7	8	
Cattle	Pounds	1,004	1,019	1,026	1,048	
Calves	do.	199	186	207	205	
Sheep and lambs		96	99	96	99	
Hogs	do.	234	238	233	242	
Average production :	do	. 550	EKO	E82	501	
Veal, per head		550 110	563 104	583 117	591 115	
Lamb and mutton, per head		46	48	46	46	
Pork, per head		: 133	133	134	139	
Pork, per 100 pounds live weight:		57	57	58	58	
Lard, per head		33 14	34	32	34 31	
<pre>Iard, per 100 pounds live weight: Total production</pre>	do. Million		14	14	14	
Beef		831	826	954	966	
Veal	do.	65	59	63	50	
Lamb and mutton		: 44	47	52	42	
Pork Lard		730 183	742 189	793 191	730 178	
Commercial slaughter 1/ Number slaughtered	1 000					
Cattle	1,000 head	2,039	1,981	2,180	1,737	
Calves		963	913	882	705	
Sheep and lambs		1,088	1,103	1,302	1,026	
Hogs		: 6,536	6,603	6,979	6,227	
Total production Beef	Million		1,064	1 010	080	
Veal		: 1,072 : 110	98	1,219 103	980 82	
Lamb and mutton	do.	50	52	60	48	
Pork	do.	865	882	933	859	
Lard	do.	208	215	217	201	
Cold storage stocks first of month						
Beef	do.	108	131	123	137	159
Veal	do.	111	11	9	12	13
iamb and mutton	do.	: 6	5	10	10	10
Pork	do.	: 138	164	127	134	181
Total meat and meat products 2/	do.	318	370	317	346	419
-		•	•	• •	J	>

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 $[\]frac{1}{2}$ Federally inspected and other commercial. $\frac{2}{2}$ Includes stocks of canned meats in cooler in addition to the four meats listed.

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