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MILK COWS AND MILK PRODUCTION ON FARMS, BY STATES, 1944

In 1944, the record high number of milk cows in farm herds producing at the lowest rate per cow in a half dozen years turned out the second largest volume of milk in the Nation's history. United States milk production, based on estimates for individual States released today, was about 119 billion pounds, compared with 118.1 billion pounds the previous year, 119.2 billion pounds in 1942 and a 1925-39 average of 100.4 billion pounds. On a per capita basis, (including both civilian and military population) the amount produced in 1944 was equivalent to 861 pounds per year, or 2.35 pounds per person per day. This was less than in the past 3 years, but 7 percent above the average amount per capita for the 1925-39 period.

TABLE 1 -- MILK COWS AND MILK PRODUCTION ON FARMS, UNITED STATES, 1925-39 AVERAGE AND 1940-44

Year	: Number of Milk cows on farms 1/	: Production per milk cow 2/		: Total Milk Production on farms 2/	
		: Milk	: Butterfat	: Quantity	: Amount per Capita
	: Thous.	: Pounds		: Mil. lb.	: Pounds
1925-39 Av.	22,952	4,379	172	100,369	807
1940	23,684	4,624	183	109,510	830
1941	24,361	4,741	187	115,498	868
1942	25,167	4,738	188	119,240	886
1943 ^{3/}	25,663	4,604	183	118,140	866
1944 ^{4/}	25,984	4,578	182	118,952	861

- ^{1/} Average number on farms during year, excluding heifers not yet fresh.
^{2/} Excludes milk sucked by calves and milk produced by cows not on farms.
^{3/} Revised.
^{4/} Preliminary.

Wisconsin, with production stepped up to 14.6 billion pounds in 1944, again led all States in total milk output. Other top-ranking States, in order, were Minnesota with 8.5 billion pounds, New York with 7.7 billion, Iowa with 6.7 billion, and Illinois and California with 5.5 billion pounds each. As compared with 1943, milk production was generally higher in the Northern States east of the Mississippi River, in nearly all of the Southern States, and in the major milk producing States of the Western Region. Maine, Missouri and Utah showed the greatest percentage increases over the previous year. On the other hand, decreases in milk production of 4 percent or more were common in the western Corn Belt States, in the central and northern Great Plains area and in several of the interior Mountain States.

The number of milk cows on farms, which has gained steadily since 1938, averaged almost 26 million head in 1944, an increase of about 300 thousand from 1943 numbers. In milk-selling areas from Wisconsin eastward, and in most Southern and some Western States, milk cow numbers in 1944 were appreciably larger than in 1943. However, in most of the major butter producing States west of the Mississippi River, the number of milk cows on farms reached its peak in 1943 and was down moderately in 1944. Despite heavy culling in late months of the year, the number of milk cows in the country as a whole at the end of 1944 was slightly higher than at the beginning. The number of yearling heifers on January 1, 1945, however, was

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down moderately from a year earlier, and the number of heifer calves kept for milk cows was drastically reduced. Hence it seems likely that the Nation's milking herd may be close to the peak of its recent wave of expansion.

Milk production per cow in 1944 was somewhat above average levels, but was substantially less than the high rate of production of the preceding few years. While concentrated feeds were fed liberally, especially in the last half of the year, and pastures furnished an average supply of green feed, a response in terms of milk production per cow occurred only in some areas. Farmers appear to be coping with a tight labor situation by milking only the best of their milk cows, and allowing the less productive ones to go dry earlier than usual or be suckled by calves. The percentage of milk cows being milked, as reported by crop correspondents on the first of each month, would indicate that the average length of lactation period in 1944 was reduced by 10 or 11 days as compared with 1941, when incentives for maximum milk production per cow were likewise strong but when labor shortage was not a major farm problem. The lower level of milk production per cow is in part a reflection of the smaller number of days in milk.

Milk production per cow for the country as a whole in 1944 averaged 4,578 pounds, the lowest since 1938, but still almost 5 percent above average in the 15-year period prior to 1940. As compared with 1943, pronounced declines were registered in the West North Central and some interior Western States where dual purpose type milk cows predominate and where cream is the principal dairy product sold by farmers. Returns for butterfat including dairy production payments in 1944 were relatively much less favorable than returns for whole milk. On the general purpose farm, which contributes the bulk of the milk supply in this area, there has been less incentive to push milk cows than on the more specialized dairy farm in whole milk selling areas. Moderate to strong increases in milk production per cow were evident in New England, Illinois, Missouri, the Virginias, several States in the lower Mississippi Valley, and in the Western States other than Montana, Colorado, and New Mexico.

In early 1944 milk production started out at a level below that of the previous year. Farmers were faced with the necessity of spreading limited grain supplies over the large number of livestock on hand and had difficulty in obtaining high protein or other purchased feeds. Lack of good quality hay also held down production per cow in some areas. In January and February milk production on a daily basis was down about 1 percent from the previous year, although in February total production was up 3 percent because of leap year. In March, April, and May, production was close to the 1943 level, with farmers making good use of feed supplies conserved during the rather mild winter period. In June, production dropped slightly below the record high monthly production of the previous year. In July and August drought, which first became severe in Kentucky and Tennessee and later spread over most of the important Eastern and Great Lake dairy areas, cut milk production to a level 2 percent lower than in 1943. Rapid recovery of pastures after fall rains, mild weather that made possible the late use of grass, large supplies of concentrates from a good 1944 feed crop, and the additional economic incentive of higher dairy production payment rates brought an unprecedented flow of milk in the fall months of 1944. In September production rose slightly above the 1943 level and in October, November, and December more milk was produced than in those months of any previous year.

MILK COWS AND MILK PRODUCTION ON FARMS, BY STATES, 1943 AND 1944

State and Division	Milk Cows		Milk Production		Total Milk Production		
	on Farms 1/		Per Cow 2/		on Farms 2/		
	1943 3/	1944 4/	1943 3/	1944 4/	1943 3/	1944 4/	1944 as % of 1943
	Thousands		Pounds		Million Pounds		Percent
Maine	124	127	4,980	5,150	618	654	106
N.H.	66	67	5,050	5,080	333	340	102
Vt.	273	281	5,320	5,330	1,452	1,498	103
Mass.	130	132	5,820	5,890	757	777	103
R.I.	21	21	6,100	6,150	128	129	101
Conn.	120	123	5,830	5,830	700	717	102
N.Y.	1,330	1,350	5,800	5,720	7,714	7,722	100
N.J.	154	155	6,560	6,550	1,010	1,015	100
Pa.	909	930	5,350	5,350	4,863	4,976	102
N. ATL.	3,127	3,185	5,620	5,596	17,575	17,828	101.4
Ohio	1,077	1,115	4,620	4,640	4,976	5,174	104
Ind.	785	799	4,400	4,370	3,454	3,492	101
Ill.	1,115	1,123	4,800	4,900	5,352	5,503	103
Mich.	995	1,020	5,360	5,270	5,333	5,375	101
Wis.	2,389	2,461	6,000	5,950	14,334	14,643	102
E. N. CENT.	6,361	6,518	5,258	5,245	33,449	34,187	102.2
Minn.	1,748	1,747	5,040	4,870	8,810	8,508	97
Iowa	1,461	1,425	4,830	4,720	7,057	6,726	95
Mo.	1,020	1,065	3,770	3,840	3,845	4,090	106
N. Dak.	543	539	4,170	4,050	2,264	2,183	96
S. Dak.	485	475	3,720	3,600	1,804	1,710	95
Nebr.	675	660	4,540	4,220	3,064	2,785	91
Kans.	804	793	4,100	4,000	3,296	3,172	96
W. N. CENT.	6,736	6,704	4,474	4,352	30,140	29,174	96.8
Del.	35	36	4,310	4,220	151	152	101
Md.	204	209	4,630	4,600	945	961	102
Va.	436	445	3,730	3,800	1,626	1,691	104
W. Va.	232	232	3,440	3,550	798	824	103
N.C.	371	390	3,950	3,950	1,465	1,540	105
S.C.	166	170	3,550	3,550	589	604	103
Ga.	359	366	3,200	3,130	1,149	1,146	100
Fla.	112	115	3,750	3,800	420	437	104
S. ATL.	1,915	1,963	3,730	3,747	7,143	7,355	103.0
Ky.	595	610	3,550	3,520	2,112	2,147	102
Tenn.	615	627	3,570	3,560	2,196	2,232	102
Ala.	409	416	3,200	3,270	1,309	1,360	104
Miss.	520	530	2,580	2,660	1,342	1,410	105
Ark.	490	485	2,880	2,980	1,411	1,445	102
La.	293	296	2,340	2,350	686	696	101
Okla.	836	832	3,220	3,240	2,692	2,696	100
Texas	1,425	1,454	3,080	3,030	4,389	4,406	100
S. CENT.	5,183	5,250	3,113	3,122	16,137	16,392	101.6
Mont.	159	155	4,780	4,650	760	721	95
Idaho	248	250	5,520	5,520	1,369	1,405	103
Wyo.	67	68	4,570	4,620	306	314	103
Colo.	229	229	4,800	4,610	1,099	1,056	96
N. Mex.	74	73	4,060	3,700	300	270	90
Ariz.	48	47	5,250	5,300	252	249	99
Utah	112	119	5,850	5,960	655	709	108
Nev.	20	19	5,650	5,710	113	108	96
Wash.	363	354	5,970	6,160	2,167	2,242	103
Oregon	264	264	5,500	5,540	1,452	1,463	101
Calif.	757	775	6,900	7,070	5,223	5,479	105
WEST.	2,341	2,363	5,850	5,931	13,696	14,016	102.3
U.S.	25,663	25,984	4,604	4,578	118,140	118,952	100.7

1/ Average number on farms during year, heifers that have not freshened excluded.
 2/ Excludes milk sucked by calves and milk produced by cows not on farms.
 3/ Revised.
 4/ Preliminary.

TABLE 2 - MONTHLY MILK PRODUCTION ON FARMS, UNITED STATES
1933-42 AVERAGE, 1943, 1944, AND 1945

Month	: Average : : 1933-42 :	1943	:	1944 <u>1/</u>	:	1945 <u>2/</u>	:
	Mil.lbs.	Mil.lbs.	Mil.lbs.	Percent of Average	1943	Mil.lbs.	Percent of 1944
January	7,759	8,773	8,651	111	99	8,892	103
February	7,385	8,380	8,612	<u>3/</u> 117	<u>3/</u> 103		
March	8,589	9,734	9,765	114	100		
April	9,140	10,245	10,240	112	100		
May	10,858	11,873	11,908	110	100		
June	11,280	12,576	12,498	111	99		
July	10,517	11,765	11,570	110	98		
August	9,525	10,571	10,322	108	98		
September	8,507	9,255	9,334	110	101		
October	8,145	8,711	9,022	111	104		
November	7,484	7,980	8,372	112	105		
December	7,687	8,277	8,658	113	105		
Year	106,876	118,140	118,952	111	101		

1/ Revised.

2/ Preliminary.

3/ Comparisons influenced by the extra day in February 1944, due to leap year.