



THE PRICE OF feeder cattle remains high, due mostly, the experts say, to the rebuilding of herds in the west. These cattle, part of the lot of 24 head grading choice

brought S. Blaine Lehman, R4 Carlisle, \$27.25 a hundred at the Lancaster Yards Monday. The steers averaged 985 pounds. (LF Photo)

## Cattle Numbers Fail to Rise Despite Better Feed, Prices

Revived grass and rising prices were not sufficient to turn cattle numbers upward during 1957, according to the latest figures from the federal department of agriculture. The inventory of cattle and calves on U.S. farms on Jan. 1 of this year showed a decline for the second successive year.

The decrease from January a year ago was half a million. From their high in January 1956, numbers have declined almost three million. This year's inventory is the smallest since 1952.

Only two regions, the West North Central and the South Atlantic, increased their cattle numbers this January over last. Kansas led the increase with 14 per cent. Nebraska and South Dakota, neighboring states, moved upward as did Iowa. Florida, with a five per cent gain, contributed most of the increase in the South Atlantic region.

Numbers decreased in 33 other states, held steady in four. Most reductions were of three to five per cent. No state had a drop of more than seven per cent.

The continued decline in cattle numbers, during 1957, despite more favorable conditions, is typi-

cal of a cattle cycle. Once started, a cyclical downward trend is hard to stop.

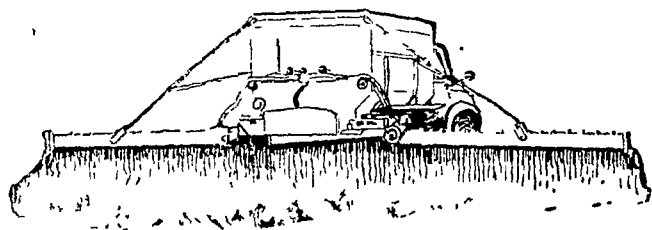
This is true first because cattlemen themselves don't want change then minds immediately with the first shower or the first extra dollar added to prices. Next should they, the cattle business is no place for impulsive decisions.

Second, after breeding stock have been sold for slaughter, they can't be replaced quickly. It takes some time to rebuild cattle herds.

The third factor is that milk cattle numbers have declined. Last year's reduction in milk cows—almost half a million and the fourth reduction in a row—left the milk cow inventory at the lowest figure in 30 years. The decline is due to a large increase in rates of milk production per cow and to loss of demand for butterfat.

Milk cow numbers were cut this January from last in all regions except the South Atlantic and the West. The North Central and the North Atlantic regions, which contain almost two-thirds of the nation's total, were reduced three per cent.

Milk calf and milk heifer numbers (Continued on page eleven)



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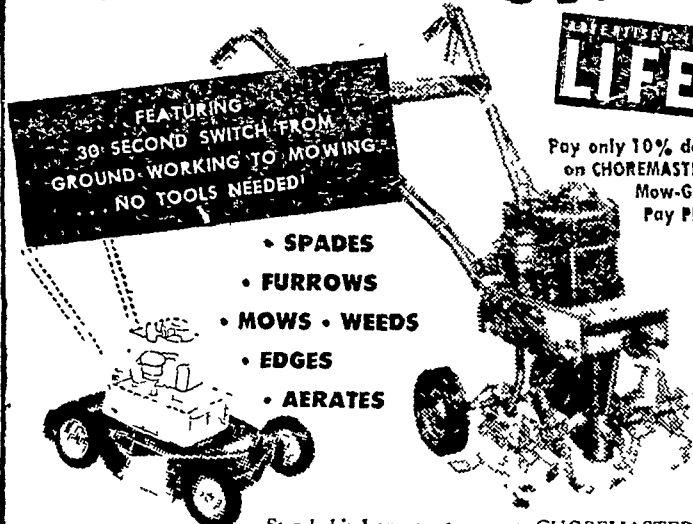
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