

Poultry Market Study Indicates Slight Drop in Egg And Broiler Prices for Period Oct. 1958-June 1959

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS — "U S farm egg prices from October, 1958 through June, 1959 will probably average around six cents a dozen lower than the same period a year before. The October-December price will average about 38 cents, and the January through June price will average about 31 cents a dozen. Farm prices for broilers from October through December, 1958 will probably average 15 cents to 16 cents per lb.—one to two cents below the same period last year. The average August farm turkey price of about 25 cents a pound was two cents above a year ago.

This strong early market reflects a reduction in market supplies. Prices for November and December will rise less than normal for the season due to increased late marketings. There may be little or no change in price then from the August average."

So stated the Poultry Survey Committee in its seventh report to the nation's poultry and allied industries at the conclusion of a two-day meeting in Chicago. Committee members are Dr. S. K. Christensen, Oregon State College, Dr. William R. Enry, North Carolina State, Dr. R. L. Kohls, Purdue Univ., and Dr. Henry Larzelere, Michigan State. These outstanding college economists were assisted in their studies by industry and USDA economists, serving ex-officio, in an advisory capacity.

Cosponsors of the study group are American Broiler Council, Poultry and Egg National Board, National Turkey Federation, American Poultry and Hatchery Federation, and American Feed Manufacturers' Association.

Following is the committee's complete report:

EGGS

Egg prices from October, 1958 thru June, 1959 will probably average around six cents per dozen lower than the same period a year before. U S farm prices Oct. through Dec. will average about 38 cents per dozen.

The fall peak in egg prices will probably occur either in Sept. or early Oct. Prices for the 1st six months of 1959 will average about 31 cents with the lowest prices next spring likely occurring between April and June.

The large current production will more than offset the effect of record small stocks of shell eggs in storage. There were one per cent more layers in farm flocks Aug. 1, 1958 than a year earlier.

In addition, the larger number of replacement pullets raised this year indicates that the U S laying flock will be three to five per cent larger on Jan. 1, 1959, than it was at the start of this year.

The rate of lay per hen during the 1st six months next year is expected to continue upward as it has in the past. Due to all these factors egg production during the 1st half of 1959 will likely be four to six per cent above the same period in 1958.

The low prices this winter and next spring will probably influence farmers to order fewer egg-type chicks during next year's hatching season.

BROILERS

U S farm prices for broilers from Oct. through Dec. will probably average 15 to 16 cents. This is one to two cents below the same period last year. Marketings will be about 10 per cent higher than a year ago, even though chick placements have been cut sharply from the summer peak.

During the 1st three months of 1959, average farm prices may be 17 to 18 cents. This will be two to three cents under a year earlier. This assumes five to ten per cent more broilers may be sold during this period than in the same three months of 1958.

It is expected that two factors which strengthened the early 1958 market will be missing. These were the unusual mortality which sharply reduced broiler supplies, and the relatively short supply of competing red meats early this year.

Pullet replacements in broiler supply flocks from Jan. through July, 1958 were increased 30 per cent over the same period in

1957. There will be more broiler chicks available the 1st three months of 1959, compared to the same period in 1958, but the increase will be less than the 30 per cent pullet replacement figure would suggest.

Broiler chick prices dropped sharply in August and are expected to continue low. This will encourage liquidation of broiler breeder flocks.

TURKEYS

The August price of live turkeys averaged 25 cents a lb.—two cents more than last year. This strong early market reflects a reduction in market supplies. The heavy breed poult hatch from January through April which is the principal source of early season supplies was off about 10 per cent. Storage holdings in August were high but below year ago levels.

Prices during November and December will rise less than normal for the season. In fact, there may be little or no change from August prices. The number of turkeys going to market in November and December will exceed those sold last year during the same period. They will be the birds hatched between May and July when heavy breed poult production was five per cent above 1957.

Government purchasing of turkeys for the school lunch program no doubt helped strengthen season opening prices. Whether such purchase activity will be continued late in the season is unknown.

Storage holdings on February 1, 1959 will be equal to or larger than the record levels of early 1958. There will be a substantially larger post-holiday slaughter coming from the increased late summer hatch.

It appears more turkeys will be raised next year. Profits will probably be better this year

U. S. FARM PRODUCTS ON DISPLAY IN LONDON

During the British Food Fair which opened in London August 28 to run through September 11, it is expected that more than 300,000 British consumers and others will see U S farm products on display. An exhibit for this purpose has been arranged by the USDA and U S private organizations. Products from this country to be featured include wheat, flour, rice, corn products, tobacco, fruits, poultry, lard, and meats.

than last. There are more potential breeder hens now. There will be plenty of feed next year and at about the same prices paid in 1958.

Increased population plus an expected increase in consumer income indicate that about three per cent more turkeys could be marketed in late 1959 at about 1958 prices. Production increases in excess of this amount would move at lower prices.

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