

## USDA Reports Red Meat Demand Up, Supply Down

The red meat problem in the first four months of 1972 has been one of very strong demand combined with a reduction in the supply of meat. Production of beef, veal, pork, and lamb in April was down 7 percent from a year ago. Total January-April production was 3.8 percent below a year ago, according to a recent USDA report.

Despite an increase of 8 percent in the number of cattle on feed at the beginning of the year, beef production during the first 4 months was the same as a year

ago. A slight increase in fed beef was offset by a decline in cow beef. In April beef production dropped 4 percent below a year ago despite a 10 pound increase in the average weight per animal.

Where are the cattle? The 23 major cattle feeding states reported on April 1 that they had 9 percent more cattle on feed than a year earlier. It appeared that marketing would increase 6 percent in the April-June period. Two of the three months have already passed and marketings have failed to increase this much.

There have been heavy placements on feed in recent months and marketings are still expected to increase. Strong demand should readily absorb most of the increase in beef supplies without sharp cuts in price this summer. It does seem likely that there will be problems in maintaining beef prices by early fall.

Nationally, pork production was 12 percent below a year ago in April. During the first four months of the year pork production was nearly 10 percent below last year. Pennsylvania pork production during this four month period dropped only 1 percent.

This year hog prices followed the same pattern as in early 1971, but at a higher level. During the coming weeks, hog prices should rise seasonally as marketings will be about 6 percent below a year ago. Even though marketings will fall in the next 2 months, total production will fall less than numbers marketed. Corn prices may fall a little from current levels now that sales to Russia seem some distance away. With lower corn prices and rising hog prices, hog producers are likely to continue to feed to heavier weights at least until fall. Hog prices at Pennsylvania

markets should peak near \$30 in July.

In April, veal production was 25 percent below the same month a year earlier. January-April veal production was down 14 percent, continuing a trend in decreased calf slaughter. Total veal production in 1971 was only 550 million pounds, just half what it was 10 years earlier.

Despite the record prices being paid for veal calves this spring, it is expected that production will continue to decline. Fewer dairy cows and more emphasis on placing the calves in feedlots will continue to cut the supply of veal.

With veal prices fully \$8 per hundred above a year ago, specialized veal feeding operations have been profitable enterprises. Their growth, however, may be limited as the supply of calves declines and procurement costs increase.

At the beginning of 1972 there were 7 per cent fewer sheep and lambs on U.S. farms than a year ago. This was the twelfth consecutive year of decline and brought numbers to a record low of 15.8 million. During 1971 Pennsylvania sheep numbers declined by 10,000 head to a low of 150,000. Some further liquidation in numbers is expected in 1972. Sheep and lamb slaughter

declined 4 percent in the first 4 months of 1972. April slaughter nationally dropped 12 percent, while Pennsylvania slaughter was off 35 percent during the month. The lamb market is expected to continue strong in the months ahead.

During the year ending April 30, 1972 a total of 217 plants began slaughter under Federal inspection, and slaughter under Federal inspection continues to increase. In April, 1972, 89.4 percent of the cattle, 92.8 percent of the hogs and 95.6 percent of the sheep and lambs slaughtered were under Federal inspection. Federal plants make up about 20 percent of the nation's total slaughter plants.

## Local Ayrshires Complete Records

Two local Registered Ayrshire herds have completed official records with the Ayrshire Breeders' Association, Brandon, Vermont.

In the herd of Charles H. Gable, Conebella Farm, Elverson, a senior-four-year-old, Conebella Betty Rue, has completed an official milk production record of 16,250 pounds with 666 pounds of butterfat in 305 days. This record is 1 1/2 times the national average for all dairy cows.

Also in the herd are the following cows and their records: Conebella Priscilla, Age 6-11, 16,090 pounds of milk and 660 pounds butterfat; Conebella Count's Linda, J-4, 14,950 pounds of milk, 611 pounds butterfat; Haz-Wald Joe's Pilgrim, S-2, 12,460 pounds milk, 575 pounds butterfat; Conebella Star Rose, J-2, 12,350 pounds milk, 510 pounds butterfat.

In the Masonic Homes Farms herd, Elizabethtown, managed by James Horton, a nine-year-old, Holholm Ninah B completed an official milk production record of 18,240 pounds of milk with 805 pounds butterfat in 305 days. Ninah's record is 1 3/4 times the national average for all dairy cows.

Also in the herd are the following cows and their records: Masonic Homes Glenda Ann, S-3, 16,930 pounds milk, 732 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Hi Dollie, S-3, 15,170 pounds milk, 695 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Hi Susan, J-3, 14,120 pounds milk, 591 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Great Faith, S-3, 14,120 pounds milk, 584 pounds butterfat; Reidina Betty Gift Charity, J-2, 13,570 pounds milk, 567 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Fashions Fancy, S-2, 13,490 pounds milk, 558 pounds butterfat; De Hart's Jackie B, J-3, 13,230 pounds milk, 534 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Martha P, J-2, 13,060 pounds milk, 564 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Ideal Clara, S-2, 12,300 pounds milk, 551 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Ideal Classic, S-2, 12,230 pounds milk, 549 pounds butterfat; Masonic Homes Ideal Bet, J-2, 12,050 pounds milk, 520 pounds butterfat.

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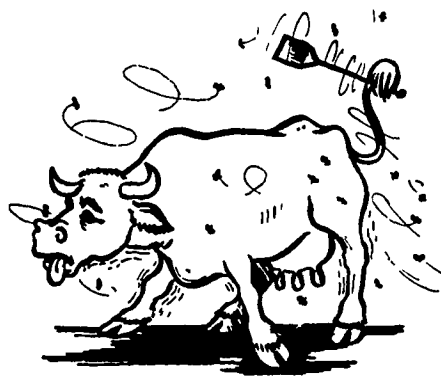
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