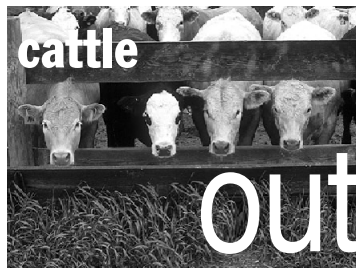


Beef Demand Continues To Be Weak



**GLENN GRIMES AND
RON PLAIN**

Agricultural Economists,
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Feeder steers and heifers at Oklahoma City this week were steady with a week earlier. Steer and heifer calves were steady to \$3 per cwt lower than seven days earlier.

The prices by weight group for medium- and large-frame Number One steers were: 400-500 pounds \$103.50-121.50 per cwt, 500-600 pounds \$97.50-\$114.50 per cwt, 600-700-pound calves \$84-102.25 per cwt, 600-700-pound yearlings \$95-\$105.25 per cwt, 700-800 pounds \$94-101 per cwt and 800-1,000 pounds \$87.75-95.75 per cwt.

Demand for beef continues weak with a two percent loss in our demand index for January-August. Demand for beef through the hotel and restaurant trade is believed to be down more than the demand for beef eaten at home. The demand for live fed cattle for January-August was down sharply in 2009 compared to 2008. Our demand index for live fed cattle shows a loss of 8.5 percent for January-August this year

compared to last year.

Breeding cow prices are showing a very modest premium to slaughter cows. Cows pretested for pregnancy and age, average quality blacks, 2-3 years old weighing 1,000-1,175 pounds sold from \$730-770 per head this week at Oklahoma City.

Cow slaughter continues to run near a year earlier with dairy cow slaughter up and beef cow slaughter down. For the year through the week ending September 15, total cow slaughter was up 0.2 percent, dairy cow slaughter up 13.3 percent and beef cow slaughter down 9.2 percent compared to the same period last year.

Wholesale beef prices this Friday morning showed Choice beef at \$134.95 per cwt, down \$4.14 per cwt from a week earlier. Select beef at \$130.74 per cwt was down \$1.85 per cwt from seven days earlier.

The weighted average live fed cattle prices for the five-market area through Thursday at \$82.07 per cwt was down \$1.44 per cwt from last week. The weighted average negotiated carcass price for the five-market area through Thursday at \$127.63 per cwt was down \$1.95 per cwt from a week earlier.

Slaughter this week under Federal Inspection was estimated at 635 thousand head, no change from a year earlier. Δ

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