

Exports Rise, Imports Drop In July



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Beef exports during July totaled 272 million pounds, up 33.3 percent compared to a year ago and quite likely the largest monthly beef exports ever. It is the largest in my data series which begins in January 1989. For the third month this year, Canada was the largest foreign buyer of U.S. beef. July U.S. beef imports were down 16.9 percent compared to a year ago. The first month since August 2003, U.S. beef exports to Canada during July were larger than beef imports from Canada.

During the first 7 months of 2011, U.S. beef exports were up 26.8 percent and beef imports were down 16.6 percent compared to a year ago. During January-July, we exported 10.6 percent of U.S. beef production and imported an amount equal to 8.3 percent of production.

Compared to a year earlier, feeder cattle imports from Mexico were down 3.2 percent during July. Imports from Canada were down 48.1 percent compared to July 2010.

Boxed beef prices were lower this week. Friday morning the choice boxed beef carcass cutout value was \$180.12/cwt, down \$1.46 from last week. The select carcass cutout was down \$1.92 from the previous Friday to \$171.12 per hundred pounds of carcass weight.

Fed cattle sales were light for the second week in a row. The 5-area average price for slaughter steers sold through Thursday of this week on a live weight basis was \$116.74/cwt, up \$4.02

from last week. Steers sold on a dressed weight basis this week averaged \$186.79/cwt, \$9.61 higher than the week before.

Because of the Labor Day holiday, this week's cattle slaughter totaled only 577,000 head, down 12.7 percent from the week before and down 1.0 percent compared to the same week last year. The average steer dressed weight for the week ending August 27 was 845 pounds, down 4 pounds from the week before, 3 pounds heavier than for the same week in 2010, and above year-earlier for the 38th consecutive week.

Cash bids for feeder cattle around the country this week mostly ranged from \$1 higher to \$4 lower than the week before. There was no Oklahoma City auction this week because of Labor Day. Prices this week at Missouri auctions were steady to \$10 lower with price ranges for medium and large frame #1 steers: 400-450# \$136-\$171, 450-500# \$131-\$165, 500-550# \$130-\$160.50, 550-600# \$122.50-\$154, 600-650# \$125-\$147.75, 650-700# \$122.50-\$146.75, 700-750# \$122.50-\$138, 750-800# \$118-\$134.35, 800-900# \$115-\$134.50 and 900-1000# \$117.60-\$125.25/cwt.

The October fed cattle futures contract ended the week at \$118.45/cwt, up \$3.65 from last week's close. December cattle gained \$1.78 to end the week at \$118.25/cwt. February live cattle settled at \$121.82/cwt, up \$2.02 from the previous Friday.

The September corn futures contract ended the week at \$7.26/bu, down 24 cents from the previous Friday. December corn settled at \$7.365. The September feeder cattle contract gained 57 cents for the week to end at \$133.22/cwt. October feeder cattle futures ended at \$134.85/cwt. Δ

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