

Fed Cattle Prices Close Higher End Of Week



**GLENN GRIMES AND
RON PLAIN**

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Corn producers plan to plant 85 million acres this year, down one percent from 2008 but still the third largest acreage planted to corn since 1949. Soybean acreage in 2009 is expected to be 76 million acres, up slightly from 2008 and the largest of record.

The futures market responded Tuesday by increasing \$0.14-0.18 per bushel on corn at the close on Tuesday. Soybeans showed increases of \$0.44-0.52 per bushel at the end of the trading day on Tuesday.

Fed cattle prices at the close last week were a little higher than the price through Thursday's trade. Steer average weight prices for the five-market area through Friday at \$83.23 per cwt live were up \$0.18 from the price through Thursday and up \$0.35 per cwt from a week earlier. Weighted average negotiated carcass prices through Friday for the five-market area at \$132.67 per cwt were up \$0.32 per cwt from the average through Thursday and up 40.21 per cwt from the close a week earlier through Friday.

Feeder cattle and calves at Oklahoma City this week were steady to \$2 per cwt lower. The price ranges by weight groups for medium-

and large-frame Number One steers were: 400-500 pounds \$109-120 per cwt, 500-600 pounds \$105.25-112.50 per cwt, 600-700 pounds \$99-107.75 per cwt, 700-800 pounds \$90.75-99.50 per cwt and 800-1,000 pounds \$82.25-90.25 per cwt.

Four-hundred to five-hundred-weight steers are about \$15-17 per cwt and 700-800-pound yearlings are \$5-7 per cwt lower than at this time last year at Oklahoma City. The lower prices are due to both lower priced fed cattle and higher costs of production.

The weighted average live fed cattle price for the five-market area through Thursday at \$82.71 per cwt was down \$0.34 per cwt from a week earlier. The weighted average negotiated carcass price for the five-market area through Thursday at \$134.09 was up \$1.74 per cwt from seven days earlier.

Wholesale beef prices Friday morning had Choice beef at \$135.89 per cwt, up \$2.59 from last Friday. Select beef at \$135.43 per cwt was up \$1.30 per cwt from a week earlier.

Fed cattle weights continue to run 20-30 pounds per head above a year earlier. As a result, we have an oversupply of Choice beef relative to Select with little or no margin between the grades.

The heavier weight cattle are probably due to at least two things. The feeders were placed on feed at a heavier weight; and with the low fed cattle prices and big feeding losses, feeders are delaying marketing a week or so hoping for higher prices.

Slaughter this week under Federal Inspection was estimated at 606 thousand head, down 3.2 percent from a year earlier. Δ

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