

Heavier Fed Cattle Attributed To Corn Prices



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Fed cattle weights are above last year. For the two weeks ending August 15, steer carcass weights at 854.5 pounds were up 5.5 pounds from a year earlier. Heifer carcass weights at 782.5 pounds were 11.5 pounds above 12 months earlier.

Lower corn prices and feedlots running below capacity are probably the major reasons for the heavier weights.

Cow slaughter through the week ending August 22 was up 0.6 percent. All of the gain plus some was from dairy cows, which were up 13.6 percent. Beef cow slaughter for the year through August 22 was down 8.7 percent. For the four-week period ending August 22, total cow slaughter was down 4.7 percent, dairy cow slaughter was up 1.5 percent, and beef cow slaughter was down 9.3 percent from 12 months earlier.

The reduction in beef cow slaughter is probably due to more timely rain this summer through much of the beef cow areas of the country.

Live fed cattle prices this week through Thursday at \$82.64 per cwt were down \$13.60 per

cwt from a year earlier. The lower prices are due to a weak demand for both consumers in the U.S. and export demand. We are likely to see stronger fed cattle prices seasonally but stay below a year earlier. However, higher prices than a year earlier for fed cattle are expected this winter due to smaller production.

Feeder steers and heifers this week at Oklahoma City were \$1-2 per cwt lower and late in the sale were \$3 lower. Steer- and heifer-calves were \$1-3 lower than a week earlier.

The prices for medium- and large-frame Number One feeder steers were: 450-500 pounds \$107-110 per cwt, 500-600 pounds \$102-111.50 per cwt, 600-700-pound calves \$92-100 per cwt, 600-700-pound yearlings \$100-106.25 per cwt, 700-800 pounds \$96.50-103.50 per cwt and 800-1,000 pounds \$88-97.25 per cwt.

Wholesale beef prices Friday morning showed Choice beef at \$142.22 per cwt, down \$1.80 per cwt from a week earlier. Select beef at \$134.20 per cwt was down \$1.93 per cwt from seven days earlier.

The weighted average live fed cattle price through Thursday at \$82.64 per cwt was down \$1.79 per cwt from last week. The weighted average negotiated carcass price for the five-market area at \$129.73 per cwt was down \$1.94 per cwt from Thursday of last week.

Slaughter this week under Federal Inspection was estimated at 639 thousand head, up 7.2 percent from a year earlier. Δ

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