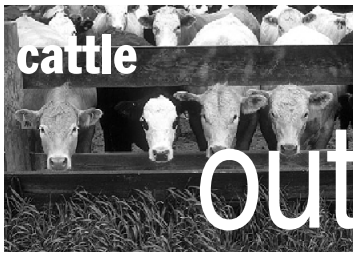


# Japan And South Korea Purchasing More U.S. Beef



**GLENN GRIMES AND  
RON PLAIN**  
Agricultural Economists,  
University of Missouri

**U**S. beef exports are continuing at a fast pace. January beef exports totaled 190.6 million pounds, up 37 million pounds (24 percent) compared to January 2010. Japan and South Korea both purchased at least 10 million pounds more U.S. beef than during January 2010. Japan and South Korea are our third and fourth largest foreign markets. The devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan may severely hurt our exports in coming weeks.

U.S. beef imports in January totaled 147.8 million pounds, down 37 million pounds (20 percent) compared to a year earlier.

During January the U.S. exported 9 percent of our beef production. Beef imports equaled 7 percent of our production. This was the fifth consecutive month that U.S. beef exports exceeded imports.

Cattle imports during January were up 21 percent with Mexico sending 37,014 more cattle north than in January 2010 and Canada sending 9,578 fewer cattle south.

Fed cattle prices are at a record level for the third consecutive week. The 5-area daily weighted average price for slaughter steers sold through Thursday of this week on a live weight basis was \$117.92/cwt, up \$5.53 from last week's record. Steers sold on a dressed weight basis this week averaged \$189.33/cwt, \$9.00

higher than the week before. This week last year, slaughter steer prices averaged \$89.82/cwt live and \$144.82/cwt dressed. The U.S. per capita beef supply was down nearly 8 percent in January which is the primary reason for the high cattle prices thus far this year.

The boxed beef cutout value was also record high this week. On Friday morning the choice boxed beef carcass cutout value was \$180.83/cwt, up \$7.36 for the week. The select cutout was up \$7.16/cwt from the previous Friday to \$177.70 per hundred pounds of carcass weight.

This week's cattle slaughter totaled 637,000 head, down 0.9 percent from the week before, but up 2.1 percent compared to the same week last year. Steer carcass weights averaged 830 pounds during the week ending February 26. That was down 4 pounds from the week before but 5 pounds heavier than a year ago.

Cash bids for feeder cattle around the country this week were mostly \$2 lower to \$5 higher. Oklahoma City prices were steady to \$3 higher than the previous week. The price ranges for medium and large frame #1 steers were: 400-450# \$170.50-\$176.50, 450-500# \$161-\$173, 500-550# \$155-\$167.25, 550-600# \$145-\$163.25, 600-650# \$137.50-\$152, 650-700# \$132.75-\$140, 700-750# \$128-\$134.50, 750-800# \$123.50-\$129, and 800-1000# \$113.50-\$125.60/cwt.

The April fed cattle futures contract ended the week at \$117.12/cwt, up \$3.07 from a week ago. The June contracted closed out the week at \$116.95/cwt. August ended the week at \$118.02/cwt. The October and December contracts settled above \$120/cwt.  $\Delta$

*GLENN GRIMES AND RON PLAIN: Agricultural Economists, University of Missouri*



Link Directly To: **VERMEER**