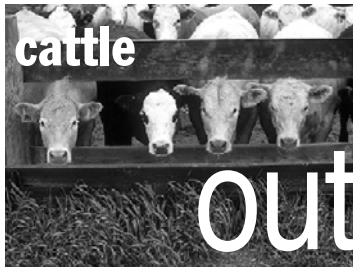


# Low Exports, Weak Restaurant Demand For Beef Cause Decline



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**D**emand for beef at the consumer level for January-November was down 2.7 percent based on our demand index. Demand for pork at the consumer level was up 3.1 percent. Demand for broilers for the first 11 months of 2009 was down 3.2 percent, but turkey demand at the consumer level was up 4.5 percent.

Demand for live fed cattle for January-November was down 7.8 percent, and demand for live hogs for this period was down 4.4 percent. The bigger decline in live cattle demand than consumer demand is believed to be due to lower exports and a weak hotel and restaurant demand for beef.

Cow slaughter for the year through the week ending December 12 was down 0.2 percent from a year earlier. Dairy cow slaughter for this period was up 9.8 percent, but beef cow

slaughter was down 7.3 percent. For the four-week period ending December 12, total cow slaughter was up 0.5 percent, dairy cow slaughter was up 0.8 percent and beef cow slaughter was up 0.3 percent from 12 months earlier.

The odds appear to be high that the beef and dairy cow herds will be down a little on January 1, 2010, compared to a year earlier.

The cattle market at Oklahoma City was closed this week for the holidays; therefore, we have no market prices for feeder cattle at Oklahoma City this week.

Live fed cattle prices this week through Wednesday showed the weighted average price for the five-market area at \$84.11 per cwt, up \$2.07 per cwt from a week earlier. The weighted average negotiated carcass price for the five-market area at \$135.17 per cwt was up \$3.72 per cwt from seven days earlier.

Wholesale beef prices Thursday morning showed Choice beef at \$138.77 per cwt, up \$0.69 per cwt from a week earlier. Select beef at \$133.08 per cwt was up \$2.04 per cwt from seven days earlier.

Slaughter through Thursday this week at 469 thousand head was up 34 percent from a year earlier. △

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