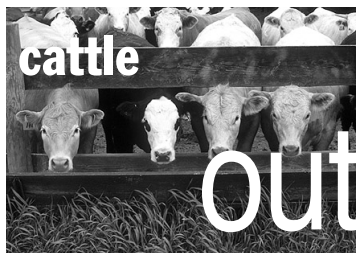


USDA's Latest Trade Data Is Not Encouraging



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Nationally, 50 percent of pastures were rated poor or very poor on July 8. That compares to 43 percent poor or very poor the week before and 29 percent a year ago. For Missouri, the number is 87 percent poor or very poor. Only 1 percent of Missouri pastures are rated in good or excellent condition. USDA estimates 40 percent of the corn crop was in good or excellent condition on July 8. That compares to 48 percent good or excellent the week before and 69 percent a year ago. The Crop Progress report says 40 percent of the soybean crop was rated good or excellent on July 8 compared to 45 percent a week earlier and 66 percent a year ago.

USDA's July crop report lowered predicted corn yield to 146 bushels per acre and raised the predicted marketing year price to \$5.90/bu. The July corn futures contract ended the week at \$7.5575/bu, up 13 cents from the week before and up \$1.76 from four weeks ago. December corn ended the week at \$7.405/bu.

USDA's latest trade data is not encouraging. Beef exports during May were down 11.6 percent from a year earlier and beef imports were up 22.4 percent. During May exports equaled 9.3 percent of U.S. production and imports equaled 10.8 percent of production. For the first 5 months of 2012, beef exports were down 10.8 percent and imports are up 22.4 percent. January-May exports were down 117 million pounds with South Korea accounting for 43 percent of the decline. January-May imports are up 190 million pounds with Australia accounting

for 71 percent of the increase.

The beef carcass cutout value is lower for the fourth consecutive week. On Friday morning, the choice boxed beef carcass cutout value was \$183.56/cwt, down \$10.24 from the previous Friday. The select carcass cutout was down \$1.77 from the previous week to \$173.29/cwt of carcass weight. This week the choice-select spread dropped from \$18.74/cwt to \$10.27/cwt.

Fed cattle prices were also lower this week on good volume. Through Thursday, the 5-area average price for slaughter steers sold on a live weight basis was \$114.69/cwt, down \$2.36 from last week, but up \$3.82/cwt from the same week last year. Steer prices on a dressed basis averaged \$182.16/cwt this week, down \$5.51 from a week ago, but up \$3.14 from a year ago.

This week's cattle slaughter totaled 641,000 head, up 11.7 percent from Independence Day week, but down 4.6 percent from a year ago. The average steer dressed weight for the week ending on June 30 was 856 pounds, up 3 pounds from the week before, up 18 pounds from a year ago, and above a year earlier for the 25th week in a row.

Oklahoma City feeder cattle prices were \$2 to \$10 lower this week with prices for medium and large frame #1 steers: 450-500# \$154.50-\$164, 500-550# \$148-\$159, 550-600# \$140-\$160, 600-650# \$138-\$154, 650-700# \$131.50-\$152.10, 700-750# \$132.25-\$148.50, 750-800# \$136.50-\$145.75, 800-900# \$135-\$143.35, and 900-1000# \$124.50-\$136.25/cwt.

The August live cattle contract settled at \$117.20/cwt, down \$2.00 from the previous Friday. The October contract settled at \$121.45/cwt, down \$2.20. December closed at \$124.90. August feeder cattle futures ended the week at \$139.00/cwt, \$7.52 lower than last Friday. △

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