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AG UPDATE

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USDA NASS Colorado Field Office
PO Box 150969 Lakewood, CO 80215 **Phone:** (303)236-2300 1-800-392-3202 **FAX:** (303)236-2299 1-800-643-6885

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LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER
OCTOBER 2008

Red meat production in **Colorado** during October 2008 totaled 177.1 million pounds, down 5 percent from a year earlier and virtually unchanged from the previous month. Cattle kill during October was down 5 percent from a year earlier to 201,100 head and the average live weight increased 6 pounds to 1,348 pounds per head. Hog slaughter remained unchanged at 1,000 head from a year earlier but the average live weight dropped 2 pounds to 258. Accumulated red meat production for the January-October period this year, at 1.82 billion pounds, is 16 percent above the same period last year.

Commercial red meat production for the **United States** totaled 4.53 billion pounds in October, down 2 percent from the 4.62 billion pounds produced in October 2007. Beef production, at 2.34 billion pounds, was 4 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.99 million head, down 4 percent from October 2007. The average live weight was up 3 pounds from the previous year, at 1,303 pounds. Veal production totaled 13.6 million pounds, 22 percent above October a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 95,700 head, up 47 percent from October 2007. The average live weight was down 44 pounds from last year, at 244 pounds.

Pork production totaled 2.16 billion pounds, up 1 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 10.8 million head, up 1 percent from October 2007. The average live weight was down 1 pound from the previous year, at 269 pounds. Lamb and mutton production, at 15.0 million pounds, was down 8 percent from October 2007. Sheep slaughter totaled 225,000 head, 9 percent below last year. The average live weight was 133 pounds, up 1 pound from October a year ago.

January to October 2008 commercial red meat production was 42.2 billion pounds, up 5 percent from 2007. Accumulated beef production was up 2 percent from last year, veal was up 2 percent, pork was up 8 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 4 percent.

Red Meat Production, Colorado and United States

Area and Species	Oct. 2007	Sept. 2008	Oct. 2008	January-October 2007	January-October 2008
	Million Pounds				
Colorado:	185.7	177.8	177.1	1,574.1	1,819.8
United States:	4,615.6	4,272.5	4,531.4	40,323.6	42,196.1
Beef	2,443.0	2,269.8	2,342.0	22,130.3	22,521.6
Veal	11.1	12.8	13.6	116.8	118.6
Pork	2,145.1	1,975.6	2,160.8	17,924.9	19,410.2
Lamb & Mutton	16.4	14.4	15.0	151.6	145.6

FARM LABOR
OCTOBER 12-18, 2008

There were 1,117,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 12-18, 2008, down 3 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 801,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 316,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of $10.70 per hour during the October 2008 reference week, up 32 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of $10.05 per hour, up 43 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned $10.19 per hour compared with $10.02 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at $10.08 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 41.3 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 2 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Pacific (Oregon and Washington), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Northeast I (New England and New York), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah) regions. In the Pacific region, increased acreage of cherries, berries, and grapes heightened the demand for hired workers. Despite wetter conditions in the Corn Belt II region, compared with the previous year's reference week, increased acreage of major field crops kept the demand for hired workers above last year. In the Northeast I region, drier conditions compared with the previous year's reference week led to a stronger demand for hired workers. In the Delta region, larger cattle and hog inventories increased the demand for livestock workers. Movement of cattle from summer pastures in the Mountain II region was increasing. Therefore, more livestock workers were necessary.

(Continued on next page)

Hired Workers: Wage Rates for Type of Workers and All Hired Workers, Number of Workers, and Number of Hours Worked by Region and United States, October 12-18, 2008 [1]						
U.S. and Region [2]	Type of Worker			All Hired Workers		
	Field	Livestock	Field & Lvstk Combined	Wage Rates	Number of Workers	Number of Hours Worked
	Dollars per Hour	Dollars per Hour	Dollars per Hour	Dollars per Hour	1,000	Hours per Week
Northeast I	10.66	10.08	10.45	10.95	42	42.1
Northeast II	9.67	9.24	9.57	10.25	33	36.8
Appalachian I	9.55	9.62	9.57	10.20	37	38.3
Appalachian II	9.22	9.82	9.45	10.32	23	35.1
Southeast	9.04	9.44	9.12	9.52	31	39.3
FL	8.90	9.30	8.95	10.09	38	39.7
Lake	11.43	10.20	11.00	11.49	66	36.2
Cornbelt I	10.31	10.05	10.25	10.60	38	37.2
Cornbelt II	10.62	11.37	10.90	11.50	32	37.0
Delta	8.51	8.83	8.60	8.90	36	42.4
Northern Plains	10.66	9.89	10.40	10.94	34	43.3
Southern Plains	9.44	9.58	9.50	10.10	60	36.7
Mountain I	9.71	9.50	9.61	10.10	23	45.6
Mountain II	9.35	10.13	9.70	10.53	18	39.2
Mountain III	9.44	10.80	10.00	10.70	21	44.5
Pacific	10.94	10.54	10.90	11.37	90	45.5
CA	9.95	11.95	10.21	10.95	173	45.8
HI [4]	11.00		11.21	13.24	6	38.9
US [3]	10.05	10.19	10.08	10.70	801	41.3

1 Excludes Agricultural Service Workers. [2] Regions consist of the following States. Northeast I: CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT. Northeast II: DE, MD, NJ, PA. Appalachian I: NC, VA Appalachian II: KY, TN, WV. Southeast: AL, GA, SC. Lake: MI, MN, WI. Cornbelt I: IL, IN, OH. Cornbelt II: IA, MO. Delta: AR, LA, MS. Northern Plains: KS, NE, ND, SD. Southern Plains: OK, TX. Mountain I: ID, MT, WY. Mountain II: CO, NV, UT. Mountain III: AZ, NM. Pacific: OR, WA. [3] Excludes AK. [4] Insufficient data for livestock.

Farm Labor-continued

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in California, the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions. In California, lack of available irrigation water caused much acreage to be left fallow. Planted acreage of cotton, dry beans, and sugar beets declined sharply from 2007. Therefore, the demand for field workers was considerably lower. Wet conditions in the Corn Belt I, Southern Plains, and the Appalachian I and II regions, compared with the previous year's drier reference week, decreased the need for field workers. Lower cattle inventories in the Appalachian regions led to fewer livestock workers being needed.

Hired worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), Appalachian I, Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Northeast I and Appalachian II regions. In the Mountain III and Appalachian II regions, the higher wages were due to more salaried workers working fewer hours which pushed the average wage up. The wage increases in the Appalachian I and Mountain I regions were because of a smaller proportion of part time workers in the work force. The higher wages in the Northeast I region were due to a higher percentage of dairy, equine, and nursery and greenhouse workers.

The 2008 U.S. all hired worker annual average wage rate was $10.59 per hour, up 4 percent from the 2007 annual average wage rate of $10.23 per hour. The U.S. field worker annual average wage rate was $9.78 per hour, up 38 cents from last year's annual average. The field and livestock worker combined annual average wage rate at the U.S. level was $9.89 per hour, up 4 percent from last year's annual average wage rate of $9.49 per hour.

AGRICULTURAL PRICES
NOVEMBER 15, 2008

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in November, at 139 percent, based on 1990-92=100, decreased 12 points (7.9 percent) from October. The Crop Index is down 16 points (9.5 percent) and the Livestock Index decreased 2 points (1.6 percent). Producers received lower prices for soybeans, corn, lettuce, and hogs and higher prices for tomatoes, potatoes, cucumbers, and cantaloups. In addition to prices, the overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased monthly marketings of milk, cattle, cotton, and cottonseed offset decreased marketings of soybeans, potatoes, peanuts, and lettuce.

The November Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates (PPITW) is 183 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index is down

4 points (2.1 percent) from October but 18 points (11 percent) above November 2007. Lower prices in November for diesel fuel, feed concentrates, complete feeds, and gasoline more than offset higher prices for feeder pigs, mixed fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides.

November all wheat price, at $6.13 per bushel, is down 54 cents from October and $1.26 below November 2007. The corn price, at $3.94 per bushel, is down 43 cents from last month but 50 cents above November 2007. The all hay price, at $147 per ton, is down $10.00 from October but up $18.00 from last November. Sorghum grain, at $5.63 per cwt, is $1.45 below October and 63 cents below November last year. The soybean price, at $9.20 per bushel, decreased 74 cents from October and 22 cents from November 2007. The all potato price, at $8.87 per cwt, is up $1.49 from October and $2.40 from last November. The all dry bean price, at $33.10 per cwt, is down $6.90 from the previous month but $5.00 above November 2007.

The November Livestock & Products Index, at 113, is down 2.6 percent from last month and 1.7 percent lower than last year. The November hog price, at $41.40 per cwt, is down $7.20 from October but $3.50 higher than a year ago. The November beef cattle price of $87.20 per cwt is down 70 cents from last month and $2.70 lower than November 2007.

Prices Received and Paid Summary United States

Index 1990-92 = 100	2007 Oct.	2007 Nov.	2008 Oct.	2008 Nov.
	Percent			
Prices Received	141	141	151	139
Prices Paid	163	165	187	183
Ratio 1/	87	85	81	76

1/ Ratio of Index of Prices Received to Index of Prices Paid by farmers.

Colorado mid-November prices for crop items averaged higher than a year ago except for wheat and other hay. Compared with October 2008, there was a decrease in all crop items except for alfalfa hay. Wheat, at $5.34 per bushel decreased 54 cents from the previous month and $1.23 below November 2007. Corn was down 26 cents from October to $3.84 per bushel but averaged 33 cents above November 2007. Potato prices, at $17.20 per cwt, decreased 90 cents from October but increased $9.45 from a year ago. Alfalfa hay prices increased $5.00 from October to $170.00 per ton but other hay decreased to $125.00 per ton.

All livestock items averaged lower than a year ago except cows. Steers and heifers remain unchanged at $95.00 per cwt from October but were $11.00 lower than November 2007. Cow prices decreased $3.00 from October to $44.50 per cwt but were $1.20 above a year earlier. Calves were up $1.00 to $103.00 per cwt but were $13.00 below November 2007. The all milk price, at $17.50, was down 30 cents from last month, and was down $4.30 from a year ago.

Average Prices Received By Farmers 1/

Item	Unit	Nov. 2007	Oct. 2008	Nov. 2008
		Colorado		
Crops		Dollars		
Wheat	Bu.	6.57	5.88	5.34
Corn	Bu.	3.51	4.10	3.84
Barley (All)	Bu.	3.45	5.00	2/
Potatoes	Cwt	7.75	18.10	17.20
Dry edible beans	Cwt	28.20	35.90	2/
Alfalfa hay (baled)	Ton	140.00	165.00	170.00
Other hay (baled)	Ton	125.00	130.00	125.00
Livestock & Products				
Beef Cattle	Cwt	105.00	94.10	94.00
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	106.00	95.00	95.00
Cows	Cwt	43.30	47.50	44.50
Calves	Cwt	116.00	102.00	103.00
Sheep	Cwt	28.00	27.00	3/
Lambs	Cwt	95.00	97.00	3/
Milk sold to plants	Cwt	21.80	17.80	17.50
		United States		
Crops		Dollars		
Wheat	Bu.	7.39	6.67	6.13
Corn	Bu.	3.44	4.37	3.94
Soybeans	Bu.	9.42	9.94	9.20
Barley (All)	Bu.	4.31	5.61	4.77
Barley (Feed)	Bu.	5.05	4.14	3.54
Sorghum	Cwt	6.26	7.08	5.63
Potatoes	Cwt	6.47	7.38	8.87
Dry edible beans	Cwt	28.10	40.00	33.10
Alfalfa hay (baled)	Ton	136.00	172.00	163.00
Other hay (baled)	Ton	118.00	122.00	116.00
Onions	Cwt	4.70	14.00	11.00
Livestock & Products				
Beef Cattle	Cwt	89.90	87.90	87.20
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	96.00	93.00	93.00
Cows	Cwt	43.90	48.30	44.70
Calves	Cwt	122.00	107.00	106.00
Sheep	Cwt	27.10	21.80	3/
Lambs	Cwt	97.10	97.50	3/
Hogs	Cwt	37.90	48.60	41.40
Milk sold to plants	Cwt	21.90	17.70	17.40
Broilers	Lb.	0.410	0.450	0.450

1/ Prices received by farmers refer to prices at the point of first sale out of farmer's hands and should not be confused with prices of specific grades or classes of a particular agricultural commodity. They do not include direct government payments. 2/ Insufficient sales to establish a price. 3/ Mid-Month prices discontinued.

CATTLE ON FEED

NOVEMBER 1, 2008

The number of cattle and calves on feed for the slaughter market in **Colorado** feedlots with a capacity of 1,000 head or larger was estimated at 960,000 head as of November 1, 2008. The latest inventory was up 10 percent from October 1, 2008 but down 7 percent from the 1,030,000 on feed on November 1, 2007. Cattle feeders with 1,000 head or larger capacity marketed an estimated 150,000 head of fed cattle during October 2008. This equals the marketings of the previous month but is 9 percent below a year ago. An estimated 245,000 cattle and calves were placed on feed during October, down 4 percent from the September 2008 placements, and 6 percent below last year's placements of 260,000.

Of the October placements, 20 percent weighed less than 600 pounds, 29 percent weighed from 600 to 699 pounds, 18 percent weighed from 700 to 799 pounds, and 33 percent weighed 800 pounds and greater. Other disappearance for October, at 5,000 head, equals the 5,000 head from last month and the 5,000 head from last year.

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the **United States** for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.0 million head on November 1, 2008. The inventory was 7 percent below November 1, 2007 and 8 percent below November 1, 2006.

Placements in feedlots during October totaled 2.44 million, 11 percent below 2007 but slightly above 2006. Net placements were 2.37 million head. During October, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 700,000, 600-699 pounds were 615,000, 700-799 pounds were 543,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 580,000 Marketings of fed cattle during October totaled 1.81 million, 3 percent below 2007 but 3 percent above 2006. Other disappearance totaled 67,000 during October, 43 percent above 2007 but 17 percent below 2006.

Cattle on Feed, Colorado and United States
1,000+ Capacity Feedlots
October 1 to November 1, 2007-2008

Item	Colorado		United States	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
	1,000 head			
On Feed Oct. 1	940	870	10,967	10,415
Placements During Oct.	260	245	2,725	2,438
< 600 pounds	65	50	865	700
600 - 699 Pounds	65	70	745	615
700 - 799 Pounds	55	45	555	543
800 Plus Pounds	75	80	560	580
Marketings During Oct.	165	150	1,876	1,814
Other Disap. During Oct.	5	5	47	67
On Feed November 1	1,030	960	11,769	10,972

CHICKENS AND EGGS
OCTOBER 2008

Colorado laying flocks produced 91 million eggs during October 2008, up 3 million from the previous month but remained unchanged from October 2007. The number of layers during October 2008 totaled 3.73 million, up 2 percent from the previous month and 3 percent below October 2007. The rate of lay, at 2,442 eggs per 100 layers increased 2 percent from a month earlier and up 3 percent during October a year ago.

U.S. egg production totaled 7.61 billion during October 2008, down 1 percent from last year. Production included 6.54 billion table eggs, and 1.08 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.01 billion were broiler-type and 69 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during October 2008 averaged 335 million, down 2 percent from last year. October egg production per 100 layers was 2,276 eggs, up 1 percent from October 2007.

All layers in the U.S. on November 1, 2008 totaled 336 million, down 2 percent from last year. The 336 million layers consisted of 280 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 53.3 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.84 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on November 1, 2008, averaged 73.4 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from November 1, 2007.

UPCOMING REPORTS

Colorado and U.S. data from most of the following reports will appear in subsequent issues of AG UPDATE. However, those who have an immediate need for the data may call this office on the day of release - toll free 1-800-392-3202. The complete USDA report is also available on the Worldwide Web at: **http://www.nass.usda.gov**

Dec. 11 - Crop Production
Dec. 15 - Potato Stocks
Dec. 18 - Milk Production
Dec. 19 - Cattle on Feed
Dec. 22 - Chickens and Eggs
Dec. 22 - Cold Storage
Dec. 26 - Livestock Slaughter
Dec. 30 - Hogs and Pigs
Dec. 30 - Agricultural Prices
Jan. 8 - Vegetables
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Jan. 11 - Winter Wheat Seedings

R. Reneé Picanso
Director

Steve Anderson
Deputy Director