

THE Poultry and Egg SITUATION

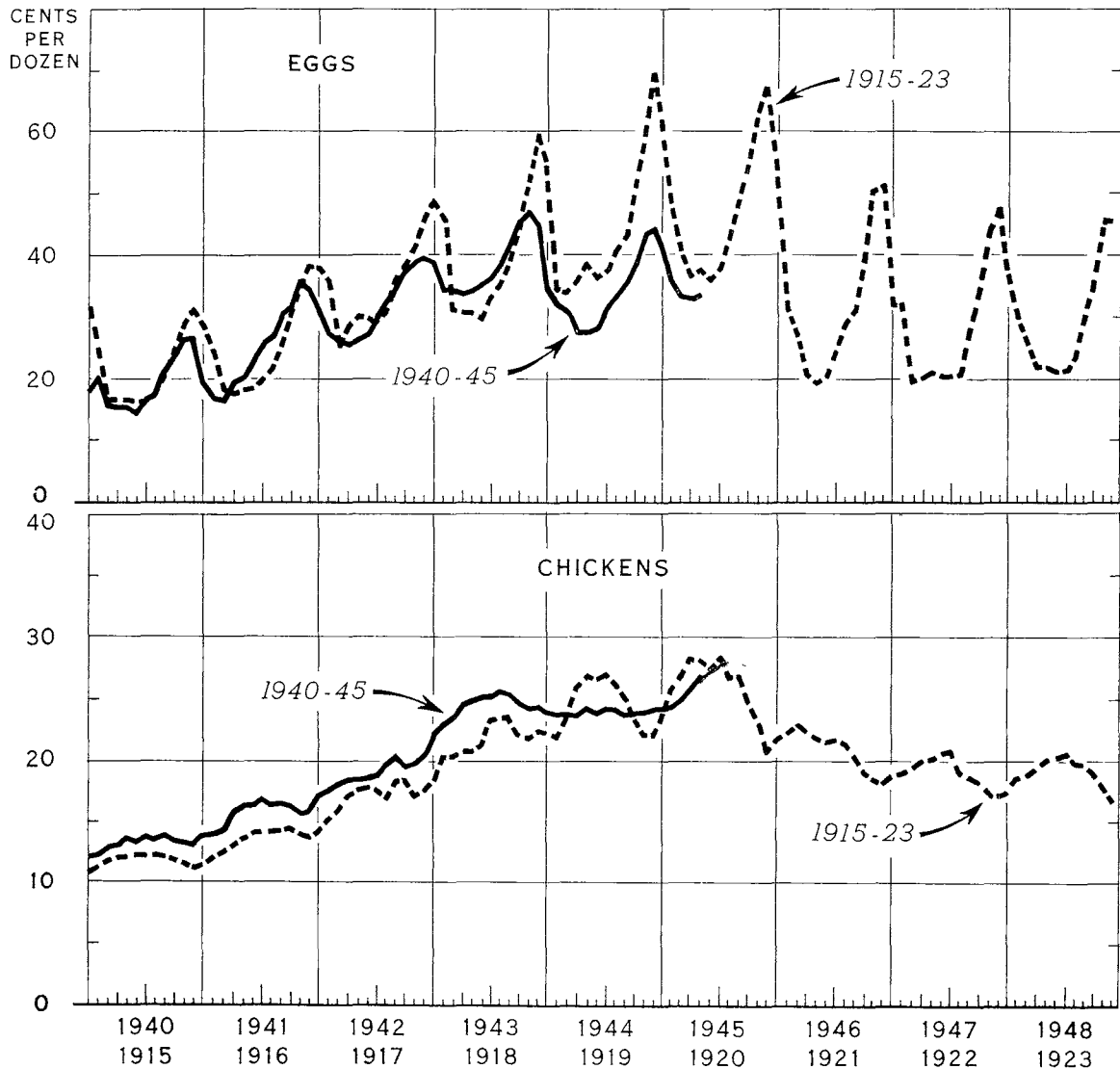
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
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EGGS AND CHICKENS: PRICES RECEIVED BY FARMERS,
 UNITED STATES, 1915-23 AND 1940-45



Prices received by farmers for eggs during World War II have not been as high, nor have they shown as much seasonal variation, as during World War I. This difference is probably due to increased supplies of eggs per capita and the leveling out of the seasonal swing in egg production. Chicken prices, on the other hand, have averaged higher during World War II than during World War I.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

I T E M	UNIT	AVERAGE			1944		1945		CURRENT MONTH AS PERCENT OF	
		PERIOD	APRIL	MAY	APRIL	MAY	APRIL	MAY	YEAR EARLIER	AVERAGE
Layers on farms, number	Million	1934-43	311.6	294.9	417.9	391.8	377.8	358.6	92	122
Number of eggs laid per hen	Number	1934-43	16.78	16.98	16.83	17.19	17.66	17.57	102	103
Total farm production of eggs	Mil. doz.	1934-43	436.1	417.9	586.2	561.2	555.8	525.0	94	126
Stocks, eggs, U. S.:										
Shell	1,000 case	1934-43	3,970	6,464	6,963	9,632	3,823	5,425	56	84
Frozen	1,000 case	1934-43	2,660	3,732	5,814	7,799	4,521	6,165	79	165
Total, shell and frozen	1,000 case	1934-43	6,630	10,196	12,777	17,431	8,344	11,590	66	114
Dried eggs	Mil. lb.	---	---	---	70.5	77.2	77.4	57.5	74	---
Apparent egg disappearance, civilian:										
Total shell egg equivalent	Mil. doz.	1934-43	309.7	301.1	332.3	300.0	391.6			
Dried egg production	Mil. lb.	---	---	---	32.1	34.6	15.7			
Commercial hatchery operations:										
Chicks hatched	Million	1934-43	230.6	199.6	317.6	239.0	346.6	311.2	130	156
Receipts:										
Poultry, dressed, four markets	Mil. lb.	1934-43	15.6	20.6	19.7	26.3	18.0	16.2	62	79
Poultry, live, Chicago	Mil. lb.	1939-43	3.8	4.8	2.2	4.3	.7	1.5	35	31
Poultry, live, New York	Mil. lb.	1939-43	10.9	9.7	12.6	13.0	8.7	3.9	30	40
Poultry, live, Midwest, per plant	1,000 lb.	1934-43	7.8	11.3	8.5	15.4	3.7	6.1	40	54
Poultry (hens), live, Midwest, per plant	1,000 lb.	1934-43	6.6	8.9	7.5	12.6	2.2	3.7	29	42
Young stock, live, Midwest, per plant	1,000 lb.	1934-43	---	---	.2	1.0	1.8	1.8	180	---
Stocks, poultry:										
Broilers	Mil. lb.	1934-43	5.6	4.4	6.4	4.8	2.1	1.7	35	39
Fryers	Mil. lb.	1934-43	5.2	3.4	9.1	7.1	5.5	5.8	82	171
Roasters	Mil. lb.	1934-43	13.9	9.6	20.8	15.2	22.5	19.3	127	201
Fowls (hens)	Mil. lb.	1934-43	10.6	9.3	35.0	30.4	23.8	16.9	56	182
Turkeys	Mil. lb.	1934-43	22.7	20.1	30.3	35.7	32.7	28.4	80	136
Ducks	Mil. lb.	1934-43	1.0	2.0	1.2	2.4	.3	.4	17	20
Miscellaneous and unclassified	Mil. lb.	1934-43	11.3	12.9	28.4	29.6	31.1	29.4	99	228
Total poultry	Mil. lb.	1934-43	70.2	59.7	130.0	122.7	117.8	101.6	83	170
Prices received by farmers:										
Eggs, per dozen	Cent	1934-43	19.6	19.9	27.1	27.2	33.0	33.7	124	169
Eggs, parity price per dozen ²	Cent	1934-43	22.9	22.7	29.8	30.5	31.2	31.6	104	139
Eggs, percentage of parity	Percent	1934-43	84	86	91	89	106	107	120	124
Chickens, per pound	Cent	1934-43	16.1	16.1	23.7	24.4	25.7	26.6	109	165
Chickens, parity price per pound	Cent	1934-43	15.2	15.2	19.3	19.3	19.7	19.7	102	130
Chickens, percentage of parity	Percent	1934-43	105	105	123	126	130	135	107	129
Turkeys, per pound	Cent	1939-43	18.9	18.4	30.7	30.5	33.6	31.2	102	170
Turkeys, parity price per pound	Cent	1939-43	19.7	19.8	24.3	24.3	24.9	24.9	102	126
Turkeys, percentage of parity	Percent	1939-43	96	93	126	126	135	125	99	134
All farm commodities (1910-14 = 100) ¹	Index no.	1934-43	120	118	196	194	203	200	103	169
Chickens and eggs (1910-14 = 100) ²	Index no.	1934-43	119	121	169	168	194	196	117	162
Wholesale prices, Chicago:										
Eggs, standards, per dozen	Cent	---	---	---	31.5	30.8	35.3	35.3	115	---
Live heavy hens, per pound	Cent	1939-43	19.7	18.7	25.9	26.2	27.3	28.1	107	150
Live broilers, per pound	Cent	1939-43	22.5	22.6	29.4	31.1	31.1	31.6	102	134
Live fryers, per pound	Cent	1939-43	23.3	23.5	29.4	31.1	30.8	31.6	102	134
Live roasters, heavy, per pound	Cent	1939-43	25.6	25.3	29.4	31.1	30.8	31.6	102	125
Wholesale prices, New York:										
Dressed broilers, 25-30 pounds per dozen, per pound	Cent	1934-43	24.2	25.6	38.4	39.7	39.8	39.4	99	154
Dressed roasters, 48-54 pounds per dozen, per pound	Cent	1934-43	26.6	27.8	38.4	39.7	39.3	39.4	99	142
Dressed fowls, 48-54 pounds per dozen, per pound	Cent	1934-43	24.7	24.4	34.4	35.7	35.3	36.3	102	149
Cash farm income:										
Total marketings	Mil. dol.	1939-43	816	854	1,402	1,452	1,416	1,390	96	163
Poultry and eggs	Mil. dol.	1939-43	113	115	181	203	204	202	100	176
Price ratios:										
Chicago, broiler-feed	Lb. feed	1939-43	15.7	16.3	13.0	13.7	---	---	---	---
Chicago, light roaster-feed	Lb. feed	1939-43	16.5	16.3	13.0	13.7	18.7	14.1	103	87
Farm, egg-feed	Lb. feed	1934-43	10.2	10.4	9.1	9.1	11.5	11.7	78	112
Farm, chicken-feed	Lb. feed	1934-43	8.5	8.5	8.0	8.1	9.0	9.3	115	109
Farm, turkey-feed	Lb. feed	1934-43	9.1	8.7	10.3	10.2	11.7	10.9	107	125
Farm, egg-laying mash	Lb. feed	---	---	---	7.5	7.5	9.3	9.5	127	---
Laying mash, cost per cwt.	Dollar	---	---	---	3.61	3.65	3.54	3.54	97	---
Feed cost per cwt., farm poultry ration	Dollar	1934-43	---	---	---	---	2.87	2.87	---	---
Wholesale food prices (1935-39 = 100)	Index no.	1934-43	102.9	102.9	132.6	132.7	133.8			
Retail food prices (1935-39 = 100)	Index no.	1934-43	104.6	105.3	134.6	135.5	136.6			
Prices paid by farmers including interest and taxes (1910-14 = 100)	Index no.	1934-43	133	134	169	169	173	173	102	
Retail prices (BLS):										
Roasters, dressed, per pound	Cent	1934-43	33.7	34.2	45.0	46.5	46.5			
Eggs, strictly fresh, per dozen	Cent	1934-43	32.6	33.2	45.0	44.9	49.5			
Nonagricultural employees compensation (1935-39 = 100)	Index no.	1934-43	122.9	124.3	263.7	264.2	272.7			

¹End of month. Frozen eggs converted to case equivalent.

²Adjusted for seasonal.

³No quotation.

T H E P O U L T R Y A N D E G G S I T U A T I O N

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SUMMARY

Supplies of chicken and turkey will increase seasonally from now until fall, but demand is expected to remain unusually strong for the remainder of 1945, reflecting scarcity of meat, a high level of consumer purchasing power, and large Army procurement. Prices received by farmers for chickens and turkeys probably will be higher for the rest of 1945 than in the corresponding period of 1944.

In 1946, demand for chicken and turkey may weaken somewhat, as a result of some decline in consumer income and increased supplies of red meat for civilians beginning in late spring next year. Production of both chickens and turkeys probably will be at least as large next year as this. Prices may decline somewhat from 1945 levels. But the gap between civilian supply and demand for poultry is so great, that a decline in prices, should it occur next year, probably would not be pronounced, at least not until the fall of 1946.

Production of chicken meat probably will be as large in 1946 as in 1945. With prices received for eggs at a high level at least until early 1946, commercial hatching operations are likely to be at least as large as in the early part of 1945.

Turkey meat production in 1946 may exceed the prospective record output in 1945. Production this year probably will be at least 10 percent higher than the 547 million pounds produced in 1944. Favorable returns for the past

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3 years will tend to keep turkey production at a high level in 1946, assuming that feed supplies will be adequate. Civilian consumption of turkey prior to the war was on an upward trend. This is expected to continue.

The number of chicks and young chickens on farms June 1 was 621 million birds, 1 percent above last year. Based on past relationships, the number of hens and pullets on farms January 1, 1946, will be about the same as or slightly larger than on January 1, 1945. Commercial hatchery operations during May were 30 percent above May 1944, and except for May 1943, were the highest ever reported. Largest increases were reported in areas in and surrounding commercial broiler producing territories, especially in the North Atlantic and Middle Atlantic States.

Processing of eggs thus far in 1945 has been far below the last 3 years. This is primarily due to the strong current consumer demand, and the resultant large reductions in dried egg purchases by WFA. No dried eggs have been purchased by WFA since May 5, and no contracts have been let for delivery after June 30.

Commercial stocks of shell eggs on June 1 were estimated at 4 million cases, the lowest on record for that date. Frozen egg holdings, however, although lower than in any of the 3 preceding years, exceeded those of any year prior to 1942. Stocks of frozen eggs to be used in processing of foods are near the highest levels on record. Dried-egg stocks are being rapidly depleted, with a decline of over 50 million pounds occurring from January 1 to June 1.

— June 21, 1945 •

THE EGG SITUATION

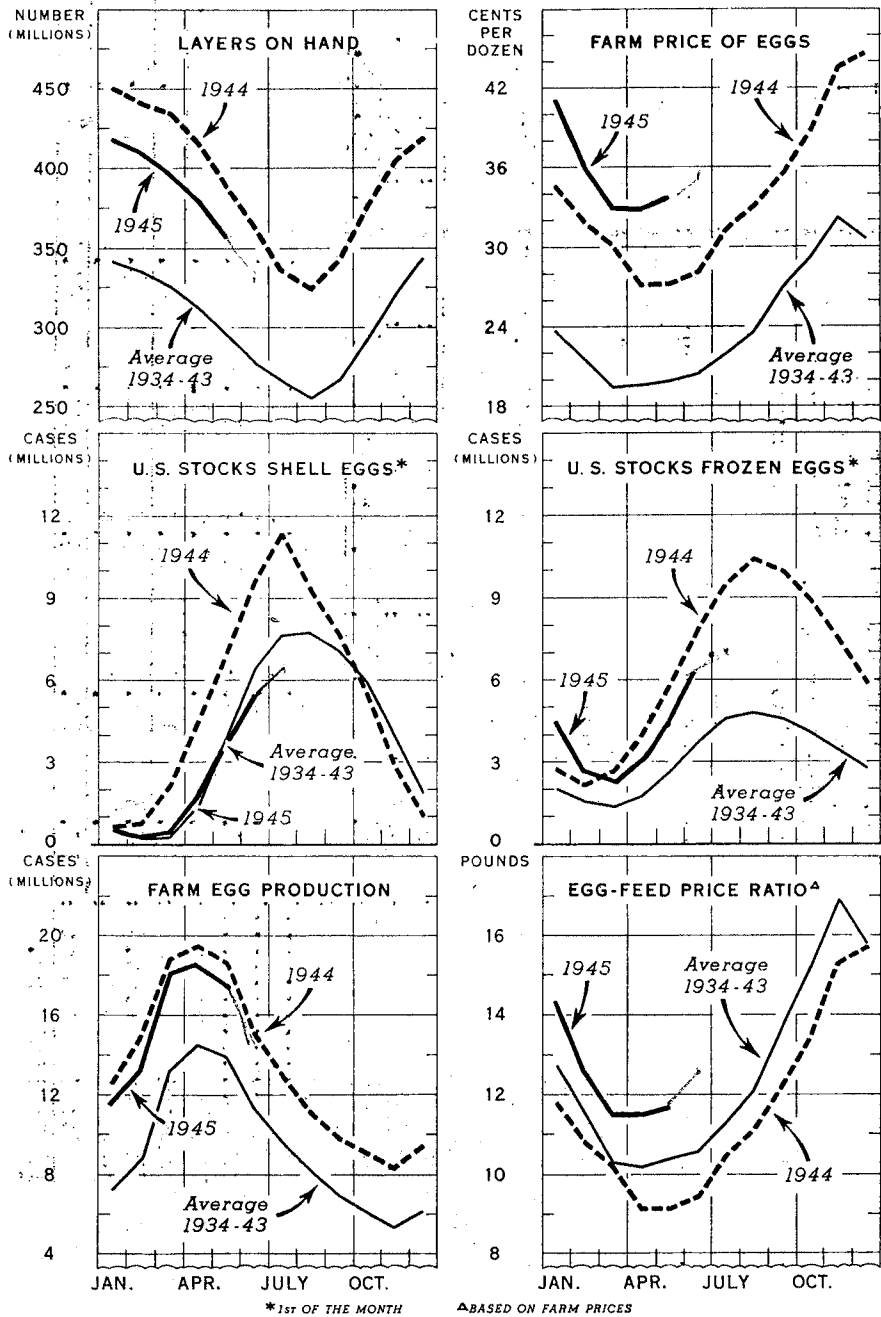


FIGURE 1

THE POULTRY SITUATION

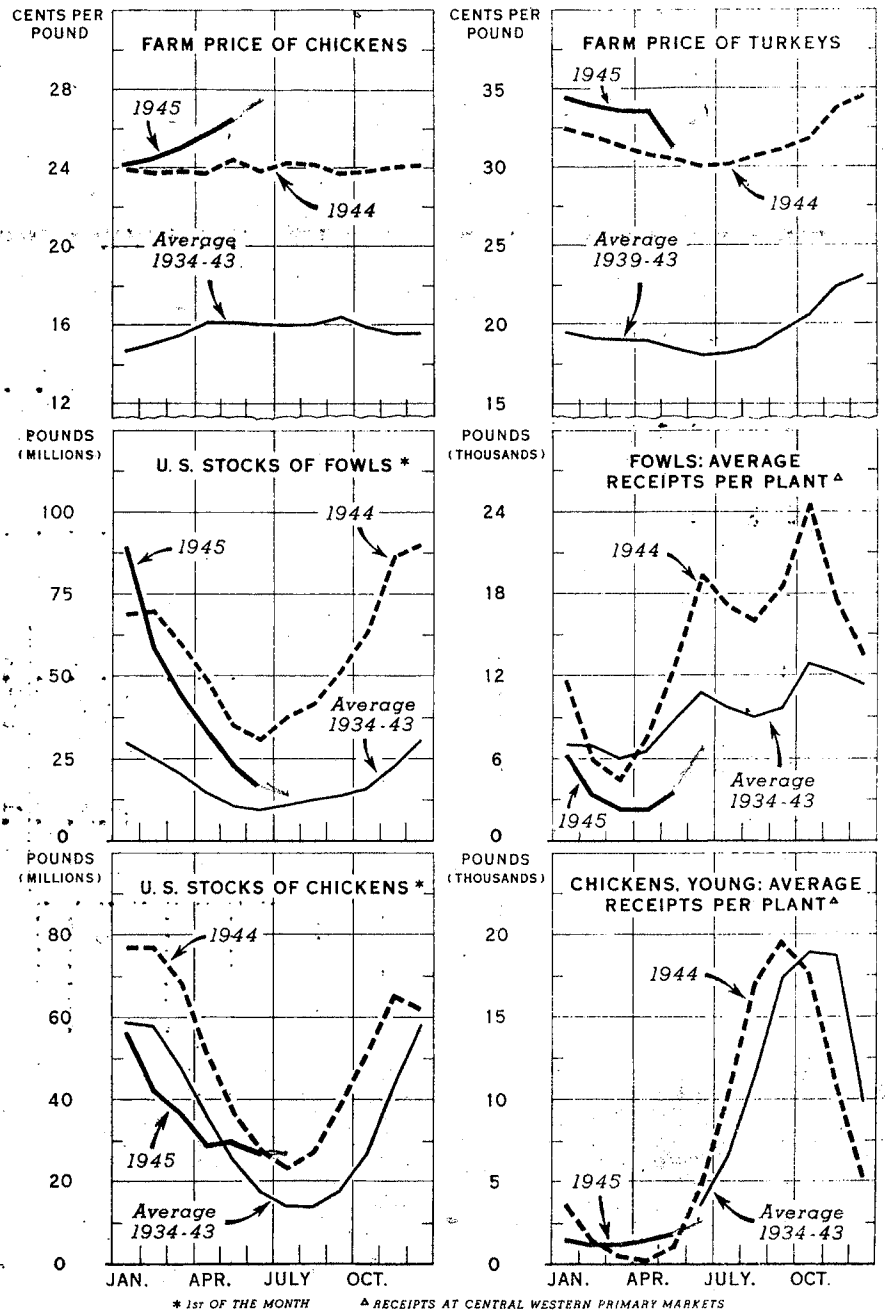


FIGURE 2

OUTLOOK

BACKGROUND: Chicken and turkey meat consumption during 1944 was far above pre-war. The 1944 per capita consumption of chicken meat--23.6 pounds--was 5.7 pounds above pre-war but was 4.4 pounds below the record high consumption reached in 1943. Turkey meat consumption in 1944 of 3.4 pounds per capita was about 30 percent above that in the pre-war period. Per capita consumption of red meats in 1944 of 150 pounds was 19 percent above the 1935-39 average. But demand, even at this high rate of consumption, exceeded supply.

Table 1.- Civilian per capita meat and poultry consumption, wholesale dressed-weight basis, average 1935-39, annual 1941-44 and forecast 1945

Item	Average	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
	:1935-39					:(forecast)
	: Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
Beef	54.8	60.5	61.2	49.6	55.1	
Veal	8.0	7.6	8.0	7.9	11.2	
Pork	56.1	66.6	61.5	72.4	76.6	
Lamb and mutton	6.7	6.8	7.2	6.4	6.6	
Total red meat	125.6	141.4	137.9	136.3	149.5	120-125
Chicken	17.9	19.4	21.5	28.0	23.6	20.5
Turkey	2.6	3.6	3.7	3.4	3.3	3.6
Total all meat	146.1	164.4	163.1	167.7	176.4	144-149

Increases in the production of red meat and poultry meat were far greater, percentage wise, than the increases in civilian consumption. Output of red meat in 1944 was about 50 percent above the 1935-39 average. Production of both chicken meat and turkey meat was also about 50 percent above pre-war.

Noncivilian takings of red meats during 1944 were equivalent to about 23 percent of production. Army procurement, the only important noncivilian outlet for turkey and chicken, was equivalent to one-eighth of the chicken production and almost one-fifth of the turkey production.

Table 2.- Estimated meat and poultry production, average 1935-39, annual 1941-44 and forecast, 1945

Item	Average	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
	:1935-39				1/	:(forecast)
	: Bil. lb.	Bil. lb.	Bil. lb.	Bil. lb.	Bil. lb.	Bil. lb.
Beef	6.9	8.1	8.8	8.5	9.1	
Veal	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.6	
Pork	7.3	9.4	10.7	13.3	12.9	
Lamb and mutton	.9	.9	1.0	1.1	1.0	
Total red meat	16.2	19.5	21.7	24.1	24.6	22.5
Chicken (dr.wt.)	2.3	2.6	3.0	3.8	3.5	3.3
Turkey " "	.4	.5	.5	.5	.5	.6
Total all meat	18.9	22.6	25.2	28.4	28.7	26.4

1/ Preliminary.

Demand for Chicken Meat to Remain Strong
in 1945; May Weaken in 1946

The demand for chicken meat is, to a large extent, dependent upon the level of national income. Also, during the past 2 years, limited supplies of red meats and procurement by the armed forces have been contributing factors to the strong demand for chicken.

National income is expected to remain at high levels for the remainder of 1945. Supplies of red meat available for civilians for 1945 as a whole will total about 120 to 125 pounds per capita, wholesale basis, far less than the potential demand for about 170 pounds per capita. Military requirements for chicken meat for the remainder of the year will be large. Demand for poultry meat will continue strong and will exceed supply through the rest of 1945. However, with production of poultry meats and red meats increasing seasonally in the fall, the excess of demand over supply may not be as wide at that time as at present. Prices received by farmers probably will remain at the highest levels since 1920.

During the early part of 1946, the supply of chicken meat may continue to be insufficient to fulfill all demands. But if income declines from present levels during 1946, consumer demand for chicken meat would weaken.

Also, civilian supplies of red meats will probably increase in the late spring and summer of 1946, compared with the late spring and summer this year (reflecting a prospective increase of 13 percent in the fall pig crop of 1945). This would materially affect the demand for chicken meat. Hence, some decrease in prices received by farmers for chickens may come about next year.

Production of chicken meat during 1946 will probably be somewhat greater than in 1945. The number of chickens raised in 1945 will probably be slightly larger than in 1944. Furthermore, with high egg prices in prospect for the remainder of 1945, at least as many chickens may be raised in 1946 as in 1945.

Except in 1944 chicken meat production from commercial broilers has increased each year since 1934. Output in 1934 was 34 million birds. By 1943, output reached 251 million birds. In 1944, commercial broiler production was about 231 million birds. This decrease was due to an unfavorable feed situation, and also to a drop in prices during the summer of 1944 when buying by the armed forces was reduced. With a stronger demand in prospect, commercial broiler production in 1945 may be close to 275 million birds. Changes in commercial broiler production can be brought about quickly, as the birds can be raised in 12 to 16 weeks. For the first part of 1946, output of commercial broilers will probably be relatively high, reflecting favorable returns in 1945.

Turkey Meat Consumption in 1945 and 1946
To Continue Pre-war Upward Trend

The turkey industry has shown remarkable growth in the last 15 years. Production on a dressed-weight basis in 1929 was 213 million pounds, and by 1939 it had reached 422 million pounds. During 1941-43, production was between 450 million and 500 million pounds annually. In 1944, output was 547 million pounds. This year production may reach 600 million pounds. Based on a sample survey of commercial hatcheries, hatching of turkey poults this year is running about 20 percent ahead of last year.

Consumption also has increased. Per capita consumption of turkey rose from about 2.5 pounds, wholesale dressed weight, in the early 1930's to 3.7 pounds in 1942. Wartime restrictions resulted in a slight reduction from 1942 levels in per capita consumption in 1943 and 1944. Purchases by the armed forces accounted for about 20 percent of turkey production in 1944. For 1945, it appears that with large Army procurement, turkey supplies, though greater than in previous years, will be insufficient to fulfill civilian demand. Prices received by farmers, although restrained by wholesale and retail price ceilings, will probably be somewhat higher than in 1944. From October 1944 through January 1945, prices received by farmers for turkeys averaged 34 cents per pound.

Turkey meat production in 1946 will probably show further increases. Favorable returns for the past 3 years will probably result in a record production in 1946, if feed supplies are adequate. Some decreases may occur in noncivilian takings in 1946, compared with 1945. Civilian demand may weaken, if national income declines. Accordingly, prices in 1946 will probably decline from the prospective 1945 levels, but such declines are not expected to be great.

Young Chickens on Farms June 1
One Percent Above Last Year

Chicks and young chickens on farms June 1, 1945 totaled 621 million birds, 1 percent above last year. The increase from May 1 to June 1 was much larger than in 1944. During May, 164 million chicks were added to laying flocks this year, compared with 144 million in 1944, and a pre-war average of 156 million.

The number of young chickens on farms June 1 is usually a good indication as to the number of hens and pullets on farms at the end of the year. Based on past relationships, the number of hens and pullets on farms December 31, 1945 probably will be about the same as or slightly larger than on December 31, 1944. However, high prices for poultry are an offsetting factor, and might possibly lead to some liquidation of flocks.

Table 3.- Chicks and young chickens on farms June 1, and hens and pullets on farms following December 31 and percentage change from preceding year

Year	Chicks and young chickens on farms June 1	Hens and pullets on farms December 31	Percentage change from preceding year	
	Thousands	Thousands	Chicks and young chickens Percent	Hens and pullets Percent
1931	502,217	385,826		
1932	520,380	390,743	+ 3.6	+ 1.0
1933	542,412	385,341	+ 4.2	- 1.4
1934	491,240	350,407	- 9.4	- 9.1
1935	481,279	362,619	- 2.1	+ 3.4
1936	541,259	379,754	+ 12.5	+ 4.7
1937	464,742	352,964	- 14.1	- 7.1
1938	508,893	376,141	+ 9.5	+ 6.6
1939	530,782	392,655	+ 4.3	+ 4.3
1940	477,468	381,372	- 10.0	- 2.9
1941	514,328	426,226	+ 7.7	+ 11.2
1942	587,712	487,837	+ 14.2	+ 14.4
1943	678,066	518,582	+ 15.3	+ 6.3
1944	612,251	469,161	- 10.3	- 9.5
1945	620,742		+ 1.4	

Commercial Hatchery Operations in May
30 Percent Above Last Year

The number of chicks hatched by commercial hatcheries during May totaled 311 million, 30 percent above May 1944 and, except in 1943, the highest on record for May. Hatchings in the South Atlantic and New England States were far above last year--about 40 percent--indicating that commercial broiler output for the next few months will continue materially ahead of 1944. During the summer of 1944, prices received by broiler growers were below ceiling levels, because of a drop in Army procurement at that time. As a result, production decreased. At present, however, there does not appear to be any let-up in the demand for broilers, so that output should continue far ahead of last year, probably 15 to 20 percent higher.

Hatchery operations this May in the areas where chicks are purchased primarily for flock replacement purposes were also far ahead of last year. Increases in the East North Central States were 27 percent and West North Central States 20 percent.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Egg Production Below Last Year:
Consumption Ahead

Egg production during May totaled 525 million dozen, 6 percent below May 1944, but otherwise the highest on record for the month. The average

number of layers on farms during the month was 8 percent less than last year, but the rate of lay was 2 percent higher. The number of eggs produced per average layer during May was 17.6 eggs, equaling the previous May record of 1942. Thus far in 1945, January through May, the rate of lay has been at an all-time high. The number of eggs produced per average layer was 73.4 compared with 71.7 eggs in the same period last year. Factors entering into this high rate of lay are improvement in the type of bird, better feeds, and improved poultry husbandry practices.

Although production has been below last year, civilian consumption of eggs has been larger, and probably is continuing at a record rate. Dehydrating operations have been materially reduced, and the into-storage movement of eggs has been smaller this year than last.

Dried egg production is far below last year, because of the decreases in WFA procurement. Since May 4, no dried eggs have been purchased by WFA. Deliveries for the month of June total a half million pounds. No contracts have been let by WFA for deliveries after June. This is in sharp contrast to the procurement programs in effect during the past 3 years. The quantity of dried eggs purchased by WFA for delivery June through December in 1942 was 138 million pounds; in 1943, it was 131 million pounds; and in 1944, it was 147 million pounds.

Egg consumption during the second quarter of 1945 apparently was somewhat less than the 100 to 105 eggs consumed during the first quarter. For the third and fourth quarters of 1945, egg consumption per capita will probably be 15 to 20 percent less than in the first 2 quarters, because of the seasonally reduced supply. However, per capita consumption in the second half of 1945 will probably equal the relatively high rate of consumption for the same period in 1944.

Regionally, supplies of eggs for the next few months will be shortest in the Northeast and probably in the West Coast areas. The northeastern area has always been a net importing region, and ordinarily produces only about two-thirds of required supplies. The West Coast became an importing region with the outbreak of the war, and at present probably one-fifth to one-sixth of the consumption on the West Coast is supplied by other areas. The West North Central area is a large exporter of eggs, and ordinarily produces about double the number consumed. With a tight supply situation in the egg markets, supplies will stay close to the areas of production. Hence the Northeast and the Pacific Coast will probably be in relatively shorter supply than in the Midwest.

Processing of Eggs Below That of Previous Two Years

Reflecting the strong demand for eggs for immediate use, processing of eggs thus far during 1945 has been far below that of 1943 and 1944. In 1943 and 1944, large quantities of eggs were used for dehydrating purposes to satisfy lend-lease requirements. Also, last year, some dried egg production was carried on for price-support purposes. This year, however, very little drying of eggs has been going on to fulfill lend-lease requirements. Thus far, WFA purchases for deliveries for January through June 1945 have totaled 35 million pounds of dried eggs. For the remainder of the year, the only drying operations which will be carried on will be in fulfillment of army contracts. Dried egg production in 1945 will probably be about 100 million pounds, compared with 321 million pounds in 1944, and 262 million pounds in 1943.

Table 4.- Dried egg production, United States, 1941-45

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Total	Total
	Jan.-	May	Dec.				
	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.
1941	: 73	680	2,539	3,518	2,857	9,667	45,280
1942	: 10,775	14,566	19,691	22,524	22,191	89,747	235,649
1943	: 12,000	20,878	23,885	29,560	28,472	114,795	261,972
1944	: 21,565	26,037	31,982	32,056	34,579	146,219	320,743
1945	: 15,192	14,134	17,845	15,716	12,523	75,410	

Because of the negligible quantities of eggs required for later drying, frozen egg production during 1945 has been far below that of the past 2 years. In 1943 and 1944 a good portion, probably about 80 percent, of the eggs dried September through December were from frozen eggs. Accordingly, dehydrators were required to store eggs in frozen form for later use. With WFA procurement for future deliveries at a standstill, there is little need for this type of processing.

Frozen egg production this year has been carried on primarily for use in processed foods, and to a small extent for later dehydrating in fulfillment of army contracts. Frozen egg production for the year probably will total in the neighborhood of 350 million pounds. The quantity of frozen eggs utilized in food processing in 1945 will probably be greater than in any year prior to 1942. In the years immediately prior to the war, 150 to 200 million pounds of frozen eggs were used in processed foods. This year, about 250 million pounds probably will be so utilized.

Table 5.- Frozen egg production, United States, 1941-45

Year	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Total	Total
	Jan.-	May	Dec.				
	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.	: 1,000 lb.
1941	: 915	8,140	39,386	46,826	53,303	148,570	237,182
1942	: 3,075	13,626	42,686	59,001	57,090	175,478	257,631
1943	: 3,140	18,168	59,760	79,000	95,600	255,668	412,615
1944	: 11,796	38,480	74,793	89,000	105,676	319,745	511,791
1945	: 7,200	28,877	60,582	83,393	87,288	267,340	

Commercial shell egg stocks at lowest levels:

Frozen egg holdings high

Total stocks of shell eggs on June 1 were 5.4 million cases, of which 1.4 million cases were Government owned. Commercial holdings of 4 million cases were the lowest for June 1 on record (since 1916); reflecting the strong current demand for shell eggs.

Commercial shell egg holdings this year are not strictly comparable to the stocks in recent war years, because in 1942, 1943 and 1944 there were large holdings for later drying. However, comparisons with a recent 5-year average prior to the war indicate that cold storage stocks of shell eggs are only about 2/3 normal. Regionally, stocks in the East North Central and North Atlantic States are far below average.

Table 6.- Shell Eggs: Cold storage holdings by regions, June 1, 1937-41 average, 1941-45

Year	N.A.	E.N.C.	W.N.C.	S.A.	S.C.	West.	Total U.S.	Govt. owned	Commercially owned
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	cases	cases	cases	cases	cases	cases	cases	cases	cases
1937-41 average	1,491	2,222	980	152	413	719	5,977	---	5,977
1942	1,209	2,554	1,502	178	644	817	6,904	---	6,904
1943	1,184	2,532	1,839	223	1,360	1,122	8,260	1/	1/
1944	2,045	2,862	1,391	409	1,011	1,904	9,632	1/	1/
1945	1,275	1,391	958	236	418	1,147	5,425	1,325	4,100

1/ Not available.

Total June 1 frozen egg holdings of 231 million pounds were 61 million pounds below June 1, 1944, but were 119 million pounds above pre-war (1935-39) holdings for June 1. For all commercial uses, excluding dehydrating, frozen egg stocks are probably at the highest levels on record. Although the June 1 frozen egg stocks this year were below those of the previous 2 years, it is estimated that about 70 to 80 million pounds of the frozen egg stocks held on June 1, 1943, and June 1, 1944, were for later drying. This year a negligible quantity of frozen eggs are held for that purpose.

Dried egg stocks during May were reduced 20 million pounds, and on June 1 totaled 57 million pounds. Since January 1, there has been a depletion of 50 million pounds of dried eggs for lend-lease purposes. On June 1, 1944 dried egg stocks totaled 77 million pounds.

Commercial Stocks of Poultry
Nearly Depleted

Total stocks of poultry, including turkeys, on June 1 were 101 million pounds, of which only 30 million pounds were reported as commercially owned. Except for 1943 and 1916, these are the lowest commercial holdings on record for the first of June. With price ceilings on poultry reaching their peak during May, withdrawals during the month were very heavy, amounting to 16.2 million pounds, compared with 7.3 million pounds in May last year.

Import Controls Extended to Poultry

War Food Administration extended controls to cover importations of poultry meat. After June 15 no one could import poultry from Canada, New Mexico, Guatemala and San Salvador, without authorization from the WFA. Prior to 1944, imports of chicken and turkey were of negligible proportions. High prices in this country, together with a tight supply situation, have resulted in sizeable imports, especially from Canada. From January through April, imports of chicken (dressed-weight basis) totaled 12 million pounds.

In the 1920's, chicken imports averaged about 5 million pounds annually, but declined to less than 1 million pounds a year in the early 1930's. The only year in the 1930 decade in which there was any appreciable quantity of chicken imported was 1937 - a drought year - when 5-1/2 million pounds were shipped into the United States. From 1937 through 1943, imports ranged from 1 to 3 million pounds. In 1944, a total of 22 million pounds was imported.

Imports of turkey meat have been negligible, from the point of view of over-all supplies. Through 1941, imports were above 1 million pounds (dressed-weight equivalent) in only 2 years, in 1930 when 1-1/4 million pounds of turkey were imported, and in 1931 when imports totaled 5-1/4 million pounds. In 1943 the quantity of turkey shipped into the United States reached nearly 3 million pounds, and in 1944 about 4-1/2 million pounds.

Prices Received By Farmers For Poultry
Products Continue High

Reflecting the strong current demands for poultry products, prices received by farmers in mid-May were near record levels. The average price received for eggs on May 15 was 33.7 cents per dozen, 107 percent of parity, and 6 cents above May 15, 1944. This was exceeded only in mid-May 1919 and 1920. The average price received by farmers for chickens - 26.6 cents per pound - was the highest in over 2 decades. The increase in chicken prices from mid-April to mid-May was 0.9 cents.

Demand for eggs during the past 2 months has been moderately in excess of supply. Wholesale price quotations for Current Receipts and U. S. Standards at Chicago have been discontinued by WFA, because open trading in those grades is not taking place. Indications are that upgrading is prevalent, especially in northeastern markets. For about 6 months, supplies of poultry have been insufficient to meet demands.

Relationships between feed prices and prices received by farmers for chicken and eggs are favorable for the poultry and egg enterprise. The egg-feed price ratio of 11.7 in mid-May was 9.3 percent above the 1934-43 average for mid-May, and the chicken-feed price ratio of 9.3 on May 15 was 9 percent above average. Prices of feed are somewhat lower than they were last year.

Table 7.- Eggs: Price per dozen received by farmers, United States, 1914-23, 1940-45.

(Data for cover chart)

Year	Jan. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 15	Apr. 15	May 15	June 15	July 15	Aug. 15	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Nov. 15	Dec. 15	Wtd. Av.
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1915	31.7	23.7	16.5	16.6	16.5	16.1	16.3	17.3	20.6	24.6	29.4	31.1	19.4
1916	28.8	24.2	18.2	17.7	18.5	18.9	19.9	21.6	25.3	30.4	34.9	38.3	22.1
1917	38.1	35.7	25.3	28.5	30.2	29.9	29.0	30.5	25.8	28.5	41.2	45.9	31.8
1918	48.9	45.8	30.9	30.4	30.6	29.5	33.0	35.2	39.1	44.9	51.7	59.3	36.0
1919	55.3	34.8	33.9	36.0	38.9	36.1	37.9	40.6	43.1	51.0	59.1	69.6	41.3
1920	60.9	48.5	40.5	36.6	37.5	35.9	37.8	42.5	48.6	54.6	62.9	67.1	43.5
1921	54.5	31.0	26.8	20.5	19.4	20.1	24.3	28.9	30.9	39.4	50.0	51.1	28.3
1922	31.7	31.4	19.5	20.0	20.9	20.2	20.3	20.6	27.3	34.6	43.6	47.2	25.0
1923	37.8	29.9	25.4	21.6	21.8	20.9	21.3	23.6	29.8	34.6	45.6	45.5	26.5
1940	18.3	20.2	15.4	15.0	15.1	14.4	16.4	17.2	21.0	23.7	26.2	26.8	18.0
1941	19.7	16.8	16.4	19.7	20.1	23.2	25.6	26.8	30.3	31.8	35.5	34.1	23.5
1942	31.3	27.5	25.8	25.6	26.5	27.4	29.5	32.2	34.7	37.4	38.9	39.7	29.9
1943	39.0	34.2	34.0	33.7	34.2	35.2	36.3	38.8	41.6	45.2	47.1	44.9	37.1
1944	34.6	31.9	30.1	27.1	27.2	28.1	31.2	33.0	35.5	38.8	43.4	44.5	32.4
1945	41.0	35.8	33.1	33.0	33.7								

Table 8.- Chickens: Price per pound received by farmers, United States, 1915-23, 1940-45.

(Data for cover chart)

Year	Jan. 15	Feb. 15	Mar. 15	Apr. 15	May 15	June 15	July 15	Aug. 15	Sept. 15	Oct. 15	Nov. 15	Dec. 15	Wtd. Av.
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
1915	10.9	11.3	11.7	11.9	12.0	12.2	12.2	12.2	12.0	11.8	11.5	11.2	11.8
1916	11.5	12.1	12.5	13.1	13.6	14.0	14.1	14.1	14.2	14.4	13.9	13.6	13.5
1917	14.1	15.1	15.7	17.3	17.5	17.7	17.4	16.7	18.4	18.5	17.0	17.5	16.9
1918	18.4	20.3	20.2	20.7	20.6	21.3	23.2	23.4	23.6	22.2	21.7	22.4	21.7
1919	22.1	21.8	23.4	25.7	26.7	26.4	26.3	26.1	25.0	23.3	22.0	22.0	24.6
1920	23.3	25.7	26.9	28.4	28.0	27.4	28.4	26.6	26.9	24.6	22.9	20.6	26.3
1921	21.7	22.3	22.8	22.2	21.8	21.5	21.7	21.4	20.2	19.1	18.6	18.2	20.9
1922	18.9	19.0	19.4	20.0	20.2	20.6	20.7	18.9	18.6	18.1	17.2	17.2	19.2
1923	17.3	18.6	18.8	19.4	20.1	20.3	20.6	19.8	19.7	19.0	17.7	16.6	19.1
1940	12.0	12.2	12.8	12.9	13.6	13.3	13.6	13.4	13.7	13.3	13.1	13.0	13.3
1941	13.7	14.0	14.4	15.7	16.2	16.3	16.8	16.3	16.3	16.0	15.5	15.8	15.8
1942	17.0	17.4	18.0	18.4	18.4	18.5	18.7	19.6	20.3	19.5	19.6	20.5	18.9
1943	22.1	22.8	23.5	24.6	24.7	25.1	25.3	25.6	25.2	24.6	24.3	24.4	24.4
1944	23.9	23.7	23.8	23.7	24.4	23.8	24.2	24.1	23.7	23.8	24.0	24.1	23.9
1945	24.2	24.5	25.0	25.7	26.6								