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## July 1 Cattle Inventory Down Slightly

**All cattle and calves** in the United States as of July 1, 2008, totaled 104.3 million head, slightly below the 104.8 million on July 1, 2007 and down 1 percent from the 105.2 million two years ago.

**All cows and heifers** that have calved, at 42.4 million, was down slightly from both July 1, 2007 and July 1, 2006.

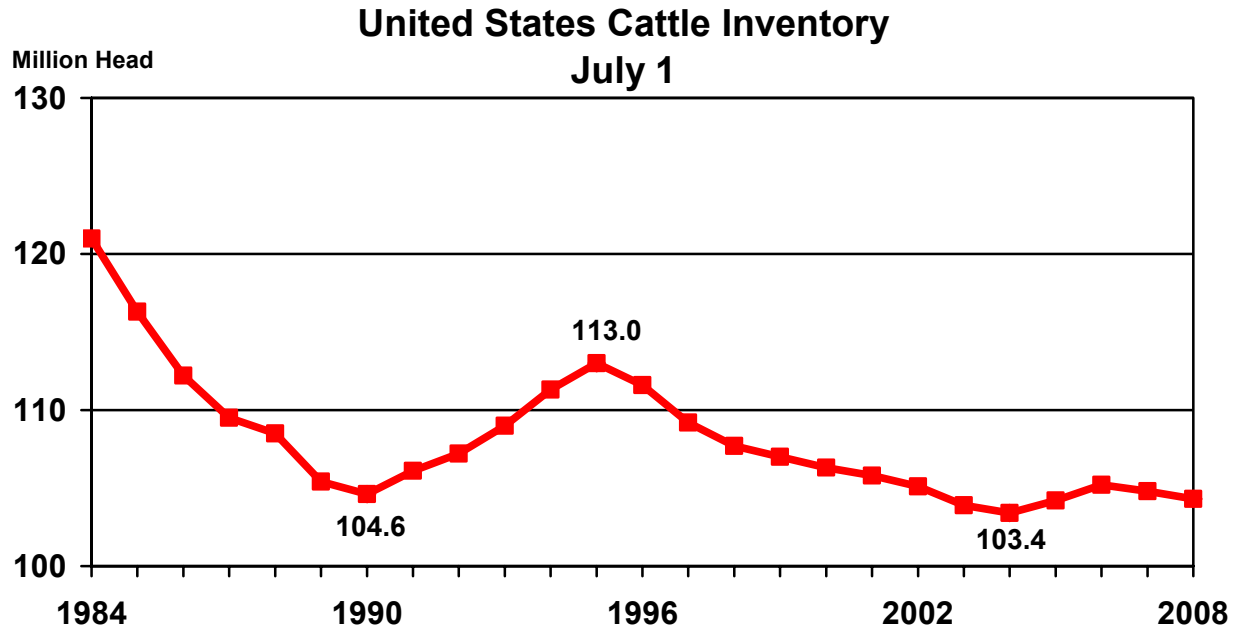
- **Beef cows**, at 33.2 million, were down 1 percent from July 1, 2007 and 1 percent below two years ago.
- **Milk cows**, at 9.25 million, were up 1 percent from July 1, 2007 and 1 percent above two years ago.

Other class estimates on July 1, 2008 and the changes from July 1, 2007, are as follows:

- **All heifers** 500 pounds and over, 16.5 million, down 1 percent.
- **Beef replacement heifers**, 4.6 million, down 2 percent.
- **Milk replacement heifers**, 3.9 million, unchanged.
- **Other heifers**, 8.0 million, unchanged.
- **Steers** weighing 500 pounds and over, 14.7 million, down 1 percent.
- **Bulls** weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.1 million, unchanged.
- **Calves under 500 pounds**, 28.6 million, down slightly.
- **All cattle and calves on feed** for slaughter, 11.7 million, down 5 percent.

## Calf Crop Down Slightly

The 2008 calf crop is expected to be 37.3 million, down slightly from 2007 and 1 percent below 2006. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 27.1 million, down slightly from 2007 and 1 percent below 2006.



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This report was approved on July 25, 2008.

Secretary of  
Agriculture  
Edward T. Schafer

Agricultural Statistics Board  
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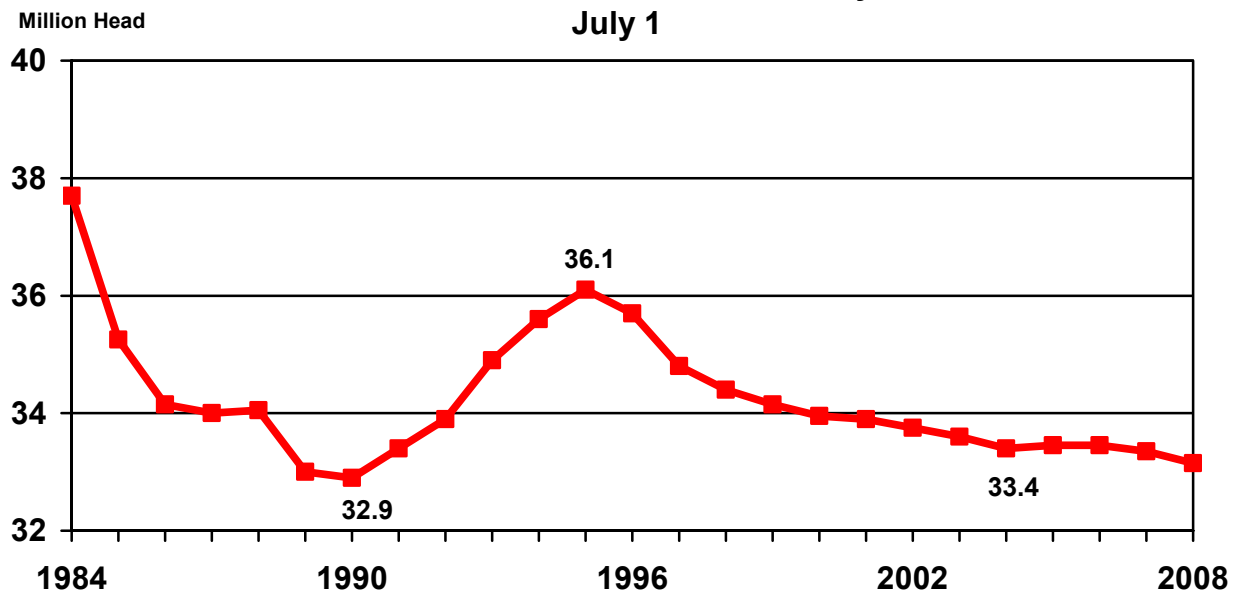
**Cattle and Calves: Number by Class and Calf Crop,  
United States, July 1, 2006-2008**

Class	2006	2007	2008	2008 as % of 2007
	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cattle and Calves	105,200	104,800	104,300	100
Cows and Heifers That Have Calved	42,600	42,500	42,400	100
Beef Cows	33,450	33,350	33,150	99
Milk Cows	9,150	9,150	9,250	101
Heifers 500 Pounds and Over	16,600	16,600	16,500	99
For Beef Cow Replacement	5,000	4,700	4,600	98
For Milk Cow Replacement	3,800	3,900	3,900	100
Other Heifers	7,800	8,000	8,000	100
Steers 500 Pounds and Over	15,000	14,900	14,700	99
Bulls 500 Pounds and Over	2,100	2,100	2,100	100
Calves Under 500 Pounds	28,900	28,700	28,600	100
Calf Crop	37,519	37,361	37,250	100
Cattle on Feed	12,500	12,300	11,700	95

**Calf Crop: Number and Percent of Total by Six-Month Period,  
United States, 2006-2007 and Preliminary Calf Crop, 2008**

Period	2006		2007		2008	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Jan 1 - Jun 30	27,300	72.8	27,150	72.7	27,050	72.6
Jul 1 - Dec 31	10,219	27.2	10,211	27.3	10,200	27.4
Total	37,519	100.0	37,361	100.0	37,250	100.0

**United States Beef Cow Inventory  
July 1**



## Reliability of July 1 Cattle and Calves Estimates

**Survey Procedures:** A random sample of U.S. producers was surveyed to provide data for these estimates. Survey procedures ensured that all cattle producers, regardless of size, had a chance to be included in the survey. Data were collected during the first half of June from about 40,000 small and medium sized operations. These operators were contacted by face-to-face personal interviews. About 10,000 large producers and feedlots were contacted during the first half of July by mail, telephone, and face-to-face personal interviews. Operators were asked to report inventories as of the first of the month and calf crop for the entire year of 2008.

**Estimating Procedures:** These cattle estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing National and State indications and analysis. National and State survey data were reviewed for reasonableness with each other and with estimates from the previous year using a balance sheet. The balance sheet begins with the previous inventory estimate, adds to it estimates of births and imports for the first six months, and subtracts estimates of slaughter, exports, and deaths for the first six months of the current year. This indicated ending inventory level is compared to the Agricultural Statistics Board estimate for reasonableness.

**Revision Policy:** Revisions to previous estimates are made to improve year to year and item to item relationships. Estimates for the previous year are subject to revision when current estimates are made and when the January 1 cattle inventory estimates are made. The reviews are primarily based on livestock slaughter and additional foreign trade and survey data. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the five-year Census of Agriculture are available. No revisions will be made after that date.

**Reliability:** Since all cattle operators are not included in the sample, survey estimates are subject to sampling variability. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplications, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. The effects of these errors cannot be measured directly. They are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and through a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

To assist users in evaluating the reliability of estimates in this report, the "Root Mean Square Error" is shown for selected items in the following table. The "Root Mean Square Error" is a statistical measure based on past performance and is computed using the differences between first and latest estimates. The "Root Mean Square Error" for cattle inventory estimates over the past 10 years is 0.3 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 104.3 million head by more than 0.3 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 0.5 percent.

The table below also shows a 10 year record of the range of differences between first and latest estimates for selected items. Using estimates of all cattle and calves as an example, changes between the first inventory estimate and the latest estimate during the past 10 years have averaged 190,000 head, ranging from 0 to 700,000 head. During this period the initial inventory estimate has been below the latest estimate 1 time, above the latest estimate 5 times, and unchanged 4 times. This does not imply that the July 1 estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

**Reliability of July 1 Cattle Estimates <sup>1</sup>**

Item	Root Mean Square Error	90 Percent Confidence Level		Difference Between First and Latest Estimates			Number of Years	
		Percent	Head	Average	Smallest	Largest	First Above Latest	First Below Latest
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
All Cattle	0.3	0.5	522	190	0	700	5	1
All Cows	0.4	0.8	339	110	0	400	3	1
Calf Crop	0.9	1.6	596	214	0	912	7	2

<sup>1</sup> Based on data from the past 10 years.

### Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information.

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