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## July 1 Cattle Inventory Down 2 Percent

**All cattle and calves** in the United States as of July 1, 2012, totaled 97.8 million head, 2 percent below the 100.0 million on July 1, 2011. This is the lowest all cattle and calves inventory for July 1 since the series began in 1973.

**All cows and heifers that have calved**, at 39.7 million, were down 2 percent from July 1, 2011.

- Beef cows, at 30.5 million, were down 3 percent from July 1, 2011.
- Milk cows, at 9.2 million, unchanged from July 1, 2011.

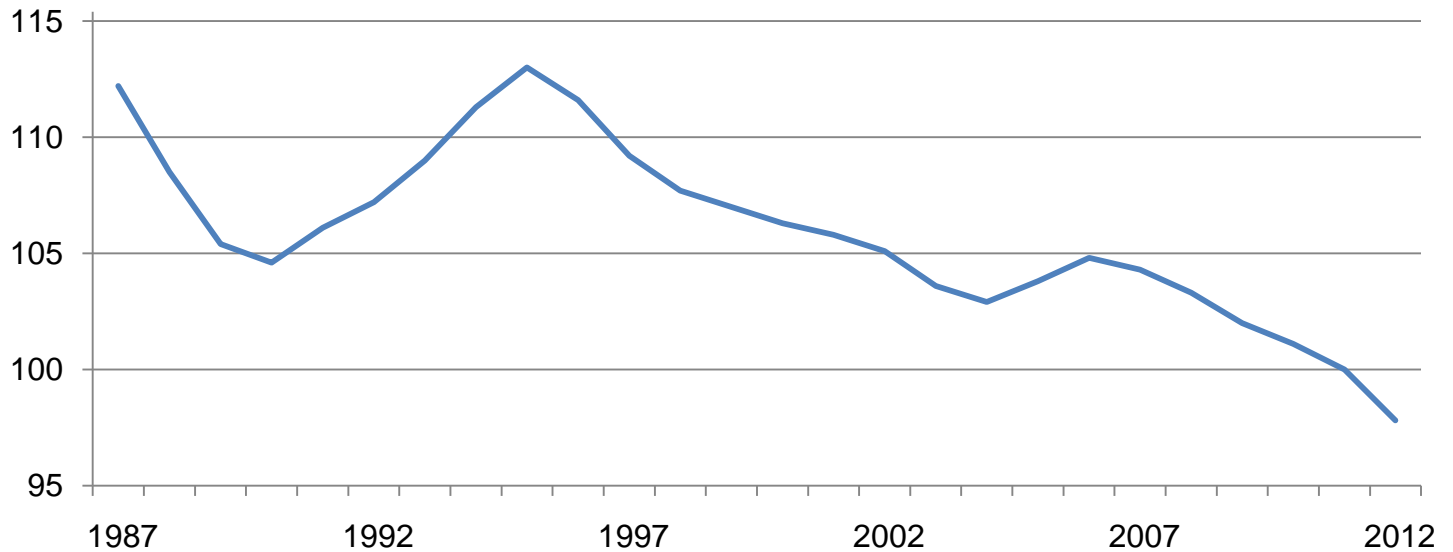
**Other class estimates** on July 1, 2012 and the changes from July 1, 2011, are as follows:

- All heifers 500 pounds and over, 15.7 million, down 2 percent.
- Beef replacement heifers, 4.2 million, unchanged.
- Milk replacement heifers, 4.1 million, down 2 percent.
- Other heifers, 7.4 million, down 3 percent.
- Steers, weighing 500 pounds and over, 14.0 million, down 1 percent.
- Bulls, weighing 500 pounds and over, 1.9 million, down 5 percent.
- Calves under 500 pounds, 26.5 million, down 3 percent.
- All cattle and calves on feed for slaughter, 12.3 million, up 1 percent.

**The 2012 calf crop** is expected to be 34.5 million, down 2 percent from 2011. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 25.1 million, down 2 percent from 2011.

# Cattle Inventory – United States: July 1

Million head



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This report was approved on July 20, 2012.

Acting Secretary of  
Agriculture  
Karis T. Gutter

Agricultural Statistics Board  
Chairperson  
Hubert Hamer

## Cattle Inventory by Class and Calf Crop – United States: July 1, 2011 and 2012

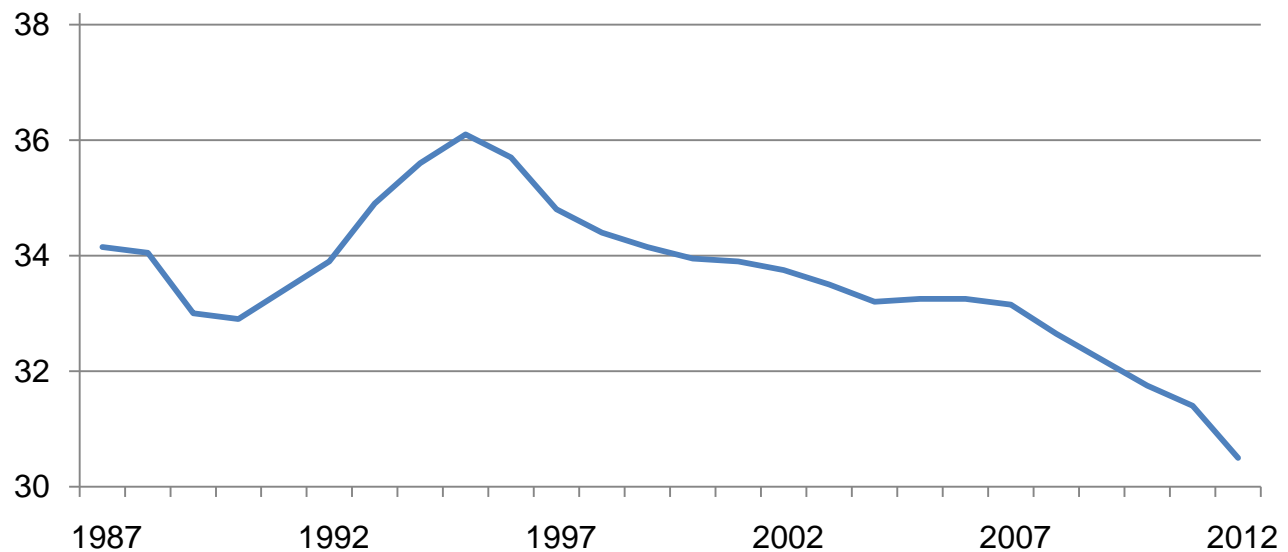
| Class                                   | 2011         | 2012         | Percent of previous year |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|
|   | (1,000 head) | (1,000 head) | (percent)                |
| Cattle and calves .....                 | 100,000.0    | 97,800.0     | 98                       |
| Cows and heifers that have calved ..... | 40,600.0     | 39,700.0     | 98                       |
| Beef cows .....                         | 31,400.0     | 30,500.0     | 97                       |
| Milk cows .....                         | 9,200.0      | 9,200.0      | 100                      |
| Heifers 500 pounds and over .....       | 16,000.0     | 15,700.0     | 98                       |
| For beef cow replacement .....          | 4,200.0      | 4,200.0      | 100                      |
| For milk cow replacement .....          | 4,200.0      | 4,100.0      | 98                       |
| Other heifers .....                     | 7,600.0      | 7,400.0      | 97                       |
| Steers 500 pounds and over .....        | 14,200.0     | 14,000.0     | 99                       |
| Bulls 500 pounds and over .....         | 2,000.0      | 1,900.0      | 95                       |
| Calves under 500 pounds .....           | 27,200.0     | 26,500.0     | 97                       |
| Calf crop .....                         | 35,313.2     | 34,500.0     | 98                       |
| Cattle on feed .....                    | 12,200.0     | 12,300.0     | 101                      |

## Calf Crop and Percent of Total by Six-Month Period – United States: 2011 and Preliminary 2012

| Period                     | 2011         |                  | 2012         |                  |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|
|                            | Number       | Percent of total | Number       | Percent of total |
|                            | (1,000 head) | (percent)        | (1,000 head) | (percent)        |
| January 1 - June 30 .....  | 25,700.0     | 72.8             | 25,100.0     | 72.8             |
| July 1 - December 31 ..... | 9,613.2      | 27.2             | 9,400.0      | 27.2             |
| Total .....                | 35,313.2     | 100.0            | 34,500.0     | 100.0            |

## Beef Cow Inventory – United States: July 1

Million head



## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** A random sample of United States 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 2012.

**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 revisions 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 July cattle inventory estimates over the past 10 years is 0.6 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 97.8 million head by more than 0.6 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 1.0 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 470,000 head, ranging from 0 to 1,000,000 head. During this period the initial inventory estimate has been below the latest estimate 2 times and has been above the latest estimate 7 times. This does not imply that the July 1 estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

### Reliability of July 1 Cattle Estimates

[Based on data from the past 10 years]

| Item             | Root mean square error | 90 percent confidence level |              | Difference between first and latest estimates |              |              | Number of years    |                    |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                  |                        |                             |              | Average                                       | Smallest     | Largest      | First above latest | First below latest |
|                  | (percent)              | (percent)                   | (1,000 head) | (1,000 head)                                  | (1,000 head) | (1,000 head) | (number)           | (number)           |
| All cattle ..... | 0.6                    | 1.0                         | 978          | 470   | 0            | 1,000        | 7                  | 2                  |
| All cows .....   | 0.7                    | 1.3                         | 516          | 220   | 0            | 600          | 6                  | 1                  |
| Calf crop .....  | 1.6                    | 3.0                         | 1,035        | 516   | 176          | 1,098        | 8                  | 2                  |

## Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov)

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| Vacant – Sheep and Goats .....                    | (202) 720-4751 |

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