



Released July 21, 2017, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

July 1 Cattle Inventory Up 4 Percent from 2015

All cattle and calves in the United States, as of July 1, 2017, totaled 103 million head. This is 4 percent above the 98.2 million head on July 1, 2015.

All cows and heifers that have calved, at 41.9 million head, are 5 percent above the 39.8 million head on July 1, 2015. Beef cows, at 32.5 million head, are up 7 percent from two years ago. Milk cows, at 9.40 million head, are up 1 percent from 2015.

All heifers 500 pounds and over, as of July 1, 2017, totaled 16.2 million head. This is 3 percent above the 15.7 million head on July 1, 2015. Beef replacement heifers, at 4.70 million head, are down 2 percent from two years ago. Milk replacement heifers, at 4.20 million head, are unchanged from 2015. Other heifers, at 7.30 million head, are 9 percent above two years earlier.

Calves under 500 pounds in the United States, as of July 1, 2017, totaled 28.0 million head. This is 5 percent above the 26.7 million head on July 1, 2015. Steers weighing 500 pounds and over totaled 14.5 million head, up 3 percent from two years ago. Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over totaled 2.00 million head, up 5 percent from 2015.

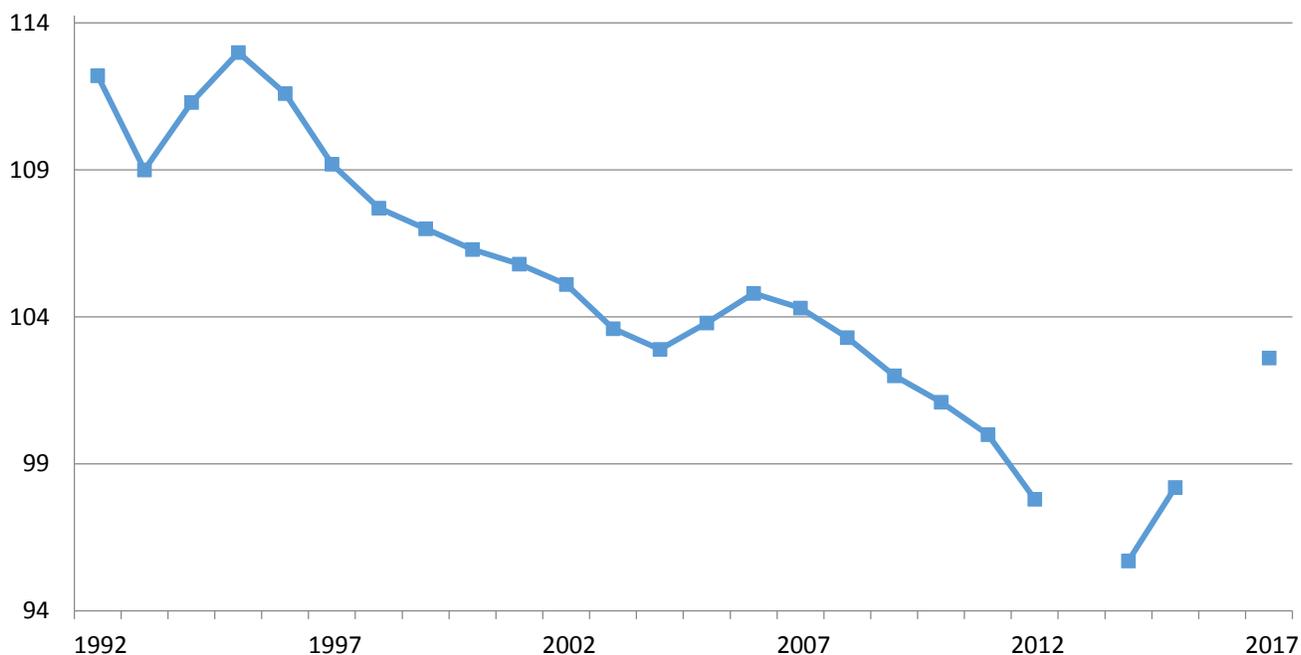
Calf Crop Up 3 Percent from 2016

The 2017 calf crop in the United States is expected to be 36.3 million head, up 3 percent from last year's calf crop and up 6 percent from 2015. Calves born during the first half of 2017 are estimated at 26.5 million head. This is up 4 percent from the first half of 2016 and 8 percent above 2015. An additional 9.80 million calves are expected to be born during the second half of 2017.

Cattle and calves on feed for the slaughter market in the United States for all feedlots totaled 12.8 million head on July 1, 2017. The inventory is up 6 percent from the July 1, 2015 total of 12.1 million head. Cattle on feed, in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head, accounted for 84.5 percent of the total cattle on feed on July 1, 2017. This is down 0.1 percent from 2015. The combined total of calves under 500 pounds and other heifers and steers over 500 pounds (outside of feedlots) is 37.0 million head. This is 5 percent above the 35.4 million head on July 1, 2015.

Cattle Inventory – United States: July 1

Million head



This report was approved on July 21, 2017.

Secretary of Agriculture
Designate
Michael L. Young

Agricultural Statistics Board
Chairperson
Joseph L. Parsons

Cattle Inventory by Class and Calf Crop – United States: July 1, 2015 and 2017

[July 2016 *Cattle* report suspended due to budgetary constraints]

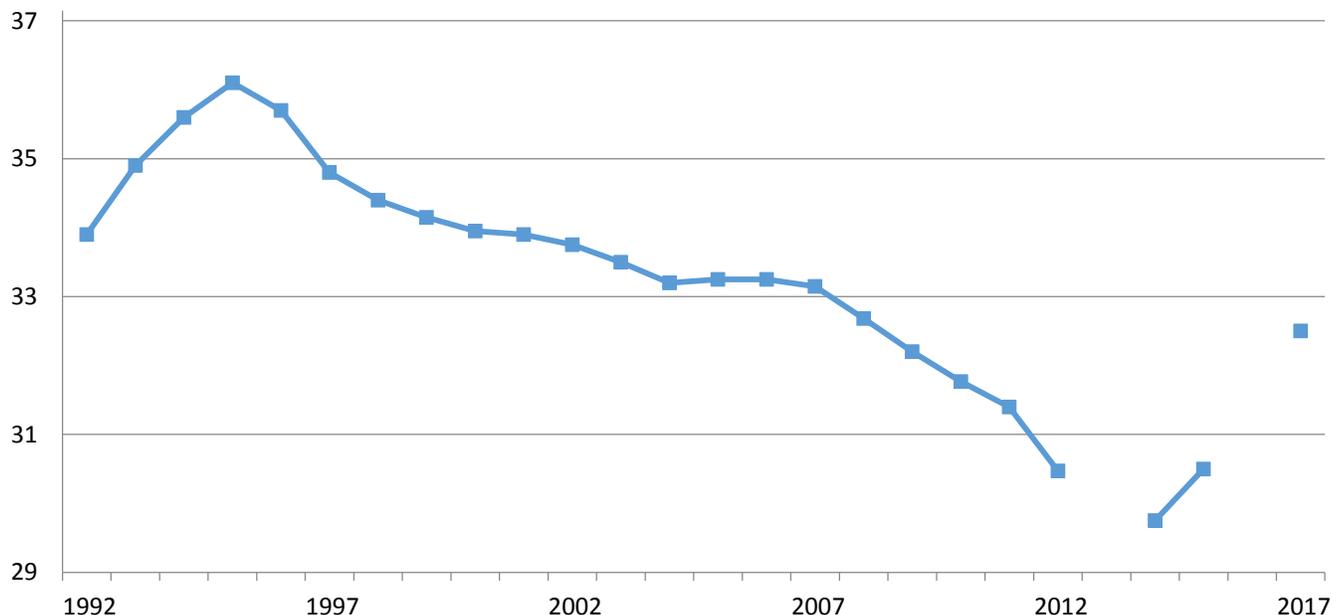
Class	2015	2017	Percent of 2015
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
Cattle and calves	98,200	102,600	104
Cows and heifers that have calved	39,800	41,900	105
Beef cows	30,500	32,500	107
Milk cows	9,300	9,400	101
Heifers 500 pounds and over	15,700	16,200	103
For beef cow replacement	4,800	4,700	98
For milk cow replacement	4,200	4,200	100
Other heifers	6,700	7,300	109
Steers 500 pounds and over	14,100	14,500	103
Bulls 500 pounds and over	1,900	2,000	105
Calves under 500 pounds	26,700	28,000	105
Calf crop	34,087	36,300	106
Cattle on feed	12,100	12,800	106

Calf Crop and Percent of Total by Six-Month Period – United States: 2015, 2016, and Preliminary 2017

Period	2015		2016		2017	
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
January 1 - June 30	24,650.0	72.3	25,550.0	72.8	26,500.0	73.0
July 1 - December 31	9,436.7	27.7	9,532.7	27.2	9,800.0	27.0
Total	34,086.7	100.0	35,082.7	100.0	36,300.0	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 38,000 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 and 76 percent of the reports were usable. Operators were asked to report inventories as of the first of the month and calf crop for the entire year of 2017.

Estimating Procedures: These cattle estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing National indications and analysis. National survey data was reviewed for reasonableness 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. Class estimates are rounded to the nearest 100,000 head with the exception of beef and milk cows which are rounded to the nearest 50,000 head.

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 103 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 on the following page 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 450,000 head, ranging from 0 to 1,000,000 head. During this period the initial inventory estimate has been below the latest estimate 3 times and has been above the latest estimate 5 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	1,026	450	0	1,000	5	3
All cows	0.7	1.2	503	180	0	600	4	1
Calf crop	1.2	2.2	799	308	0	1,093	7	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.

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For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: nass@nass.usda.gov.

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