

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CATTLE ON FEED, JANUARY 1, 1949

The number of cattle on feed for market in the United States on January 1, 1949 was 19 percent larger than a year ago and the largest on record, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. The estimated number on January 1 this year was 4,548,000 head, compared with 3,821,000 head a year earlier and 4,445,000 head on January 1, 1943, the previous high. The 1943-47 average was 4,278,000 head. Record numbers on feed in the Western States placed the U. S. total on feed January 1 above any other year in 19 years of record.

The number on feed in the North Central States, which includes the Corn Belt, was 22 percent larger than the relatively low number last year. The total on January 1, 1949 was estimated at 3,463,000 head. This number is the third highest on record for the area and compares with 2,844,000 head on January 1, 1948. However it is only 1 percent above the 5-year average of 3,416,000 head. All of the Corn Belt States show substantial increases over last year, except Wisconsin where the number on feed was down 4 percent.

Shipments of stocker and feeder cattle into the 11 Corn Belt States during November and December increased sharply over the same months in the previous year, being up 36 percent. Records on inshipments for 11 Corn Belt States for the period July-December amounted to about 2,441,000 head. This was 12 percent larger than last year and was exceeded only by the record high inshipments for the last half of 1946.

Outside the North Central States the number of cattle on feed on January 1 this year was 11 percent larger than last year and the largest number on record. This over all increase is mainly due to record numbers on feed in California. There were substantial increases in several of the other Western States although in Colorado, an important Western feeding State, the number on January 1 was down 7 percent from last year's record high number. Montana and Wyoming also have less cattle on feed this year than last. The number of cattle in Texas and Oklahoma being finished for market was increased substantially, compared with the small number a year ago. There were comparatively few cattle on wheat pastures in the Southern Plains States.

Reports from cattle feeders in the Corn Belt on the weight of cattle on feed on January 1 this year show a larger proportion of cattle weighing over 900 pounds than last year. The proportion of cattle in this class was 34 percent, compared with 31 percent last year. The proportion of cattle in the 600-900 class was less than last year, being 43 percent compared with 46 percent. The proportion of cattle on feed January 1, 1949 weighing less than 600 pounds was about the same as last year. This weight distribution is about in line with the records from the 4 markets showing shipments of stocker and feeder cattle by kinds and steers by weight groups.

Corn Belt feeders report a substantial increase in the proportion of cattle that have been on feed from 3 to 5 months. The number in this category amounted to 23 percent of the total on January 1, compared with 18 percent last year. Fewer cattle on January 1 had been on feed over 5 months than was the case a year ago. The tendency toward short-time feeding is indicated to be somewhat less than was the case last year. Corn Belt feeders intend to market 42 percent of the January 1 number on feed before April 1. This was about the same as intended last year. However, actual marketings of fed cattle in the first 3 months of 1948 were much more rapid than reported intentions. Even so, indications are that the number of fed cattle at Corn Belt Markets during the next few months will be larger than last year and the proportion of these that are better grade cattle is expected to be slightly larger than the proportion last year.

The accompanying table shows the estimated number of cattle on feed by States on January 1 for the years 1942 to 1949.

CATTLE AND CALVES ON FEED ^{1/}
BY STATES AS OF JANUARY 1, 1942-49

State	5-year Average (1943-47)	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	% ^{3/}
Thousand head										
Pa.	79	70	80	75	70	82	90	85	88	104
Ohio	117	127	135	119	102	107	120	110	120	109
Ind.	172	175	184	171	156	165	183	155	186	121
Ill.	478	500	505	455	478	454	500	425	475	114
Mich.	89	85	95	90	94	85	81	77	86	112
Wis.	<u>75</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>96</u>
E.N.C.	931	961	993	905	907	888	961	850	947	111
Minn.	270	307	295	251	261	261	282	240	312	130
Iowa	994	924	1,007	987	1,056	950	970	770	955	124
Mo.	300	290	310	279	325	239	300	240	300	129
N.Dak.	63	70	50	62	76	64	64	58	62	107
S.Dak.	166	137	160	120	200	178	170	136	177	130
Nebr.	402	300	400	340	422	435	413	350	450	129
Kans.	<u>290</u>	<u>265</u>	<u>318</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>322</u>	<u>271</u>	<u>257</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>260</u>	<u>131</u>
W.N.C.	2,485	2,293	2,540	2,319	2,662	2,448	2,456	1,994	2,516	126
N.Cent.	<u>3,416</u>	<u>3,254</u>	<u>3,533</u>	<u>3,224</u>	<u>3,569</u>	<u>3,336</u>	<u>3,417</u>	<u>2,844</u>	<u>3,463</u>	<u>122</u>
Okla.	55	66	70	42	60	51	50	50	70	140
Texas	142	185	194	130	150	115	121	115	144	129
Mont.	41	34	27	35	44	50	48	35	29	83
Idaho	52	57	37	45	55	55	70	80	95	119
Wyo.	17	18	16	14	16	21	20	20	18	90
Colo.	160	162	160	158	160	176	146	180	168	93
N.Mex.	11	30	17	12	9	6	11	22	33	150
Ariz.	48	64	60	38	42	50	50	65	62	99
Utah	35	43	30	35	33	38	37	44	45	102
Nev.	22	24	22	17	22	28	22	24	26	108
Wash.	26	24	21	28	28	25	27	24	26	108
Oreg.	28	26	24	28	28	29	32	24	32	133
Calif.	<u>146</u>	<u>128</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>149</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>249</u>	<u>119</u>
Western	783	861	832	716	772	793	800	892	997	112
Total										
U. S.	<u>4,278</u>	<u>4,185</u>	<u>4,445</u>	<u>4,015</u>	<u>4,411</u>	<u>4,211</u>	<u>4,307</u>	<u>3,821</u>	<u>4,548</u>	<u>119</u>

^{1/} Estimates include only cattle being fattened for market as a more or less distinct agricultural enterprise, and excludes small operations incidental to dairy and general farming. Cattle thus fed are presumed to produce carcasses that will grade commercial or better.

In addition there have been a number of cattle finished on distillery slop, mostly in Kentucky, and on by-product feeds in other States not shown as well as large numbers being winter fed in W. Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and some other States to be marketed as grass fat in late summer.

^{2/} Revised estimates.

^{3/} 1949 as a percent of 1948.