

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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CATTLE ON FEED - APRIL 1, 1949

The number of cattle on feed for market on April 1 in the 11 Corn Belt States showed a substantial increase from the low number last year, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. The increase, estimated to be 23 percent, was probably equivalent to about 480,000 head. However, the number on feed on April 1 is estimated to be 8 percent less than the number on feed April 1, 1947.

The increase in numbers on feed was general in all of the Corn Belt States, with the Western Corn Belt States showing somewhat larger increases than the Eastern Corn Belt States. Iowa and Nebraska, the two leading western Corn Belt cattle feeding States, show increases of 25 percent and 31 percent respectively. Illinois, the leading eastern Corn Belt cattle feeding State, shows an increase of 12 percent over last year.

Reports from Colorado indicate there are slightly more cattle on feed April 1 than a year earlier. The movement of replacement cattle into the feeding areas since January 1 has been larger than last year. In the important cattle feeding area of Northern Colorado, marketing of fed cattle since January 1 has been at a slower rate than last year due, in part, to the effects of the severe winter weather. Colorado had 7 percent less cattle on feed January 1, 1949 than on January 1, 1948.

The increase of 23 percent on April 1 for the 11 Corn Belt States compares with an increase of 22 percent on January 1. During the period January-March the number of replacement cattle shipped into the Corn Belt States showed a marked increase of 35 percent over last year. Reports from cattle feeders show that for the entire Corn Belt cattle were marketed during the January-March period at about the rate that was planned in January. However, the marketing pattern by States was quite variable with cattle feeders in Iowa, Illinois and Kansas marketing cattle more rapidly during January-March than they intended last January, while in the remaining States feeders marketed their cattle at a slower rate than intended.

Cattle feeders who reported the month in which they expect to market fed cattle said that only a slightly smaller percentage will be marketed before July 1 this year than was reported in April last year. The reported percentage to be marketed before July 1 this year is 49 percent, compared with 50 percent last year, 51 percent two years ago, and the 1939-48 average of 49 percent. About 71 percent of the total cattle on feed April 1 were reported to have been on feed over 3 months, compared with 67 percent last April and 65 percent two years ago. The proportion on feed over 3 months was the highest for the date since 1944.

The proportion of steers on feed this year was smaller than last, being reported at 71 percent compared with 74 percent last year. Heifers comprised 16 percent of the total in both years while calves constituted 12 percent this year compared with 9 percent on April 1, 1948.

The increased supply of corn on cattle feeders' farms on April 1 supported the increase in the number of cattle on feed. In 8 of the States where corn stocks were reported the supply of corn on feeders' farms on April 1 was up about double the supply last year.

Shipments of stocker and feeder cattle into the Corn Belt States during the first 3 months of this year are sharply higher than last year's record low inshipments. For the 8 Corn Belt States for which complete records are available both for markets and for direct inshipments, the number during the period January-March was 35 percent higher than last year. Shipments into Iowa were up 41 percent and into Illinois up 43 percent. Nebraska showed a 1 percent increase, whereas Wisconsin showed no change. The remaining Corn Belt States all showed substantial increases.

January-March average cost of feeder and stocker cattle shipped from the four markets for which records are available was \$22.52 per hundred pounds, compared with \$24.68 last year and \$18.43 two years ago.

The following table shows, by States, the estimated percentage of cattle on feed April 1, this year compared with April 1, 1948.

Ohio	125	Minnesota	128
Indiana	125	Iowa	125
Illinois	112	Missouri	120
Michigan	125	South Dakota	110
Wisconsin	115	Nebraska	131
		Kansas	130
Eastern Corn Belt	117	Western Corn Belt	125
Corn Belt	123		