



Cattle on Feed

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United States Cattle on Feed Up 2 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.8 million head on February 1, 2012. The inventory was 2 percent above February 1, 2011.

Placements in feedlots during January totaled 1.85 million, 2 percent below 2011. Net placements were 1.77 million head. During January, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 445,000, 600-699 pounds were 430,000, 700-799 pounds were 525,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 447,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during January totaled 1.82 million, 2 percent above 2011.

Other disappearance totaled 81,000 during January, 42 percent above 2011.

2011 Cattle on Feed and Annual Size Group Estimates

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head represented 84.0 percent of all cattle and calves on feed in the United States on January 1, 2012, up from 82.2 on January 1, 2011.

Marketings of fed cattle for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head during 2011 represented 87.7 percent of all cattle marketed from feedlots in the United States, up from 84.6 percent during 2010.

Special Note

This report contains the 2011 monthly cattle on feed estimates for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head. Also included are the United States number of feedlots, inventory, and annual marketings by size group for 2010 and 2011. Data for total United States capacity of 1,000 or more head feedlots are also published in this issue.

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Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: February 1, 2011 and 2012

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed January 1	11,513	11,861	103
Placed on feed during January	1,889	1,847	98
Fed cattle marketed during January	1,774	1,816	102
Other disappearance during January	57	81	142
On feed February 1	11,571	11,811	102

Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2011 and 2012

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed December 1	11,620	12,055	104
Placed on feed during December	1,789	1,673	94
Fed cattle marketed during December	1,830	1,776	97
Other disappearance during December	66	91	138
On feed January 1	11,513	11,861	103

Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2011 and 2012

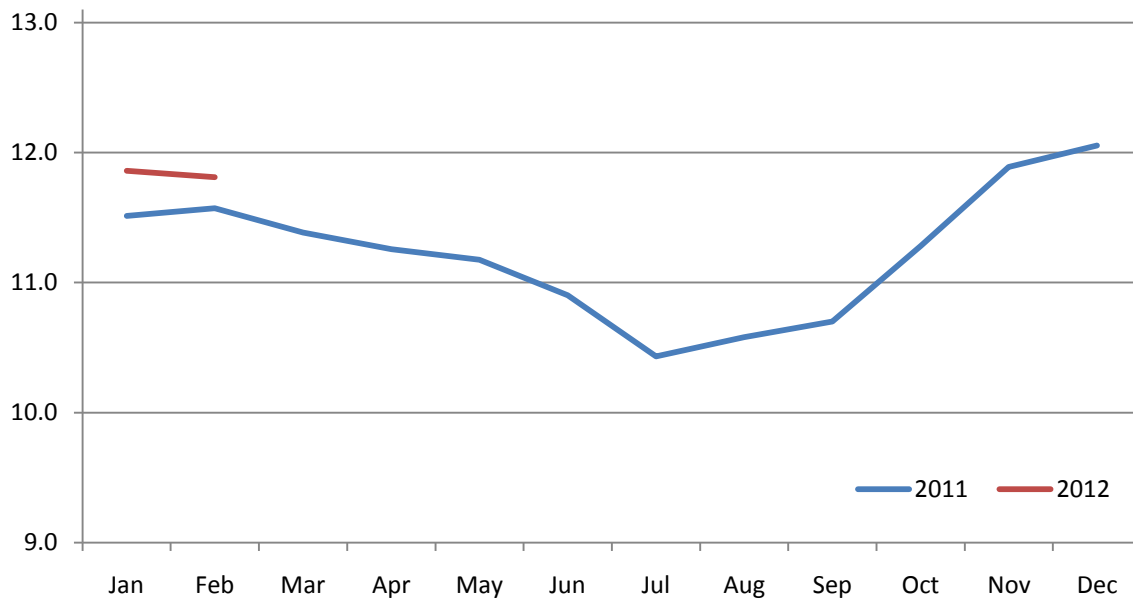
Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
Class on feed January 1			
Steers and steer calves	7,178	7,281	101
Heifers and heifer calves	4,259	4,496	106
Cows and bulls	76	84	111

Number of Cattle on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	February 1, 2011	January 1, 2012	February 1, 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	266	279	276	104	99
California	470	510	505	107	99
Colorado	1,070	1,150	1,140	107	99
Idaho	230	230	235	102	102
Iowa	660	620	650	98	105
Kansas	2,270	2,250	2,230	98	99
Nebraska	2,460	2,550	2,570	104	101
Oklahoma	375	375	355	95	95
South Dakota	270	260	260	96	100
Texas	2,870	2,940	2,900	101	99
Washington	207	232	227	110	98
Other States	423	465	463	109	100
United States	11,571	11,861	11,811	102	100

Cattle on Feed Inventory on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

Million head



Number of Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During January 2011	During December 2011	During January 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	36	26	28	78	108
California	54	61	55	102	90
Colorado	185	160	190	103	119
Idaho	31	36	47	152	131
Iowa	93	77	103	111	134
Kansas	435	350	410	94	117
Nebraska	430	380	430	100	113
Oklahoma	66	45	50	76	111
South Dakota	51	37	45	88	122
Texas	430	400	400	93	100
Washington	31	44	35	113	80
Other States	47	57	54	115	95
United States	1,889	1,673	1,847	98	110

Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2010 and 2012

State	During January									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	25	30	50	50	65	60	45	50	185	190
Kansas	55	70	120	100	165	155	95	85	435	410
Nebraska	70	60	105	110	130	120	125	140	430	430
Texas	160	150	115	85	100	105	55	60	430	400
Other States	150	135	85	85	84	85	90	112	409	417
United States	460	445	475	430	544	525	410	447	1,889	1,847

State	During December									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	30	50	50	35	40	30	40	45	160	160
Kansas	75	75	115	100	130	105	90	70	410	350
Nebraska	55	60	110	90	105	100	110	130	380	380
Texas	180	225	120	75	80	55	40	45	420	400
Other States	135	140	100	85	84	70	100	88	419	383
United States	475	550	495	385	439	360	380	378	1,789	1,673

Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During January 2011	During December 2011	During January 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	27	36	30	111	83
California	51	52	57	112	110
Colorado	190	160	190	100	119
Idaho	40	40	41	103	103
Iowa	69	63	70	101	111
Kansas	435	445	415	95	93
Nebraska	385	380	395	103	104
Oklahoma	64	52	68	106	131
South Dakota	40	37	44	110	119
Texas	390	420	415	106	99
Washington	30	45	39	130	87
Other States	53	46	52	98	113
United States	1,774	1,776	1,816	102	102

Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During January 2011	During December 2011	During January 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	1	1	1	100	100
California	3	4	3	100	75
Colorado	5	10	10	200	100
Idaho	1	1	1	100	100
Iowa	4	4	3	75	75
Kansas	10	15	15	150	100
Nebraska	15	10	15	100	150
Oklahoma	2	3	2	100	67
South Dakota	1	5	1	100	20
Texas	10	30	25	250	83
Washington	2	3	1	50	33
Other States	3	5	4	133	80
United States	57	91	81	142	89

Number of Cattle on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011

State	January 1	February 1	March 1	April 1	May 1	June 1
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Arizona	258	266	269	276	282	290
California	470	470	460	450	450	460
Colorado	1,080	1,070	1,070	1,090	1,100	1,080
Idaho	240	230	220	220	230	230
Iowa	640	660	650	650	640	610
Kansas	2,280	2,270	2,220	2,190	2,170	2,110
Nebraska	2,430	2,460	2,430	2,380	2,370	2,190
Oklahoma	375	375	360	355	355	355
South Dakota	260	270	265	265	255	235
Texas	2,840	2,870	2,830	2,770	2,730	2,760
Washington	208	207	205	207	200	193
Other States	432	423	407	404	393	389
United States	11,513	11,571	11,386	11,257	11,175	10,902
	July 1	August 1	September 1	October 1	November 1	December 1
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Arizona	287	287	283	280	292	290
California	470	480	475	490	490	505
Colorado	1,000	970	990	1,070	1,140	1,160
Idaho	215	195	195	220	225	235
Iowa	590	550	530	550	570	610
Kansas	2,030	2,180	2,210	2,320	2,400	2,360
Nebraska	2,020	1,980	2,010	2,210	2,470	2,560
Oklahoma	350	360	365	370	390	385
South Dakota	210	195	190	205	240	265
Texas	2,690	2,830	2,890	2,940	3,000	2,990
Washington	192	190	193	208	226	236
Other States	379	362	369	419	446	459
United States	10,433	10,579	10,700	11,282	11,889	12,055

Number of Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011

State	During					
	December ¹	January	February	March	April	May
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Arizona	36	36	29	33	25	28
California	61	54	43	48	57	71
Colorado	160	185	215	215	165	140
Idaho	42	31	31	35	34	36
Iowa	93	93	71	81	69	47
Kansas	410	435	365	415	380	375
Nebraska	380	430	350	390	370	340
Oklahoma	55	66	60	75	76	66
South Dakota	45	51	45	46	31	33
Texas	420	430	380	490	500	560
Washington	36	31	31	33	28	39
Other States	51	47	47	53	50	75
United States	1,789	1,889	1,667	1,914	1,785	1,810
	During					
	June	July	August	September	October	November
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Arizona	25	24	19	19	32	27
California	70	62	56	70	54	66
Colorado	105	170	230	275	230	175
Idaho	34	24	43	67	55	46
Iowa	64	55	77	115	137	143
Kansas	390	580	520	500	440	375
Nebraska	310	390	445	560	665	480
Oklahoma	62	86	75	88	86	60
South Dakota	31	22	45	51	75	70
Texas	500	630	620	560	560	470
Washington	41	42	48	54	59	54
Other States	63	50	68	110	99	71
United States	1,695	2,135	2,246	2,469	2,492	2,037

¹ December prior year.

Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011

State	During December prior year				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	30	50	40	40	160
Kansas	75	115	130	90	410
Nebraska	55	110	105	110	380
Texas	180	120	80	40	420
Other States	135	100	84	100	419
United States	475	495	439	380	1,789
	During January				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	25	50	65	45	185
Kansas	55	120	165	95	435
Nebraska	70	105	130	125	430
Texas	160	115	100	55	430
Other States	150	85	84	90	409
United States	460	475	544	410	1,889
	During February				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	30	45	65	75	215
Kansas	55	80	150	80	365
Nebraska	60	85	100	105	350
Texas	160	85	85	50	380
Other States	95	70	92	100	357
United States	400	365	492	410	1,667

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Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 (continued)

State	During March				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	40	35	70	70	215
Kansas	55	70	145	145	415
Nebraska	60	70	120	140	390
Texas	135	110	150	95	490
Other States	90	75	104	135	404
United States	380	360	589	585	1,914
	During April				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	35	30	45	55	165
Kansas	60	60	130	130	380
Nebraska	60	60	100	150	370
Texas	190	95	120	95	500
Other States	100	65	90	115	370
United States	445	310	485	545	1,785
	During May				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	30	25	35	50	140
Kansas	65	70	110	130	375
Nebraska	50	55	80	155	340
Texas	170	150	165	75	560
Other States	100	55	90	150	395
United States	415	355	480	560	1,810

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Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 (continued)

State	During June				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	20	25	30	30	105
Kansas	75	95	120	100	390
Nebraska	50	60	70	130	310
Texas	210	130	120	40	500
Other States	105	70	80	135	390
United States	460	380	420	435	1,695
	During July				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	45	25	40	60	170
Kansas	95	115	190	180	580
Nebraska	60	70	100	160	390
Texas	300	140	95	95	630
Other States	120	50	70	125	365
United States	620	400	495	620	2,135
	During August				
	Under 600 lbs (1,000 head)	600-699 lbs (1,000 head)	700-799 lbs (1,000 head)	800+ lbs (1,000 head)	Total (1,000 head)
Colorado	45	30	45	110	230
Kansas	105	105	165	145	520
Nebraska	90	65	100	190	445
Texas	365	115	85	55	620
Other States	110	50	81	190	431
United States	715	365	476	690	2,246

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Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 (continued)

State	During September				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	40	25	60	150	275
Kansas	120	110	140	130	500
Nebraska	100	80	110	270	560
Texas	280	125	85	70	560
Other States	145	75	109	245	574
United States	685	415	504	865	2,469
	During October				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	60	50	50	70	230
Kansas	115	120	115	90	440
Nebraska	185	180	110	190	665
Texas	250	125	115	70	560
Other States	230	115	97	155	597
United States	840	590	487	575	2,492
	During November				
	Under 600 lbs	600-699 lbs	700-799 lbs	800+ lbs	Total
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	55	40	30	50	175
Kansas	85	100	120	70	375
Nebraska	130	135	85	130	480
Texas	270	100	60	40	470
Other States	210	125	82	120	537
United States	750	500	377	410	2,037

Cattle on Feed: Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011

State	During					
	December ¹ (1,000 head)	January (1,000 head)	February (1,000 head)	March (1,000 head)	April (1,000 head)	May (1,000 head)
Arizona	26	27	25	25	18	19
California	57	51	50	55	55	59
Colorado	165	190	210	190	150	150
Idaho	35	40	40	34	23	35
Iowa	80	69	79	78	76	73
Kansas	480	435	405	435	385	420
Nebraska	400	385	365	430	370	495
Oklahoma	58	64	73	78	74	65
South Dakota	39	40	48	44	39	50
Texas	400	390	405	540	530	520
Washington	39	30	30	28	33	44
Other States	51	53	61	53	54	72
United States	1,830	1,774	1,791	1,990	1,807	2,002
	During					
	June (1,000 head)	July (1,000 head)	August (1,000 head)	September (1,000 head)	October (1,000 head)	November (1,000 head)
Arizona	27	23	22	21	19	28
California	58	48	56	49	49	46
Colorado	175	195	205	185	155	145
Idaho	47	41	42	41	48	35
Iowa	80	93	95	92	115	100
Kansas	460	420	475	375	340	395
Nebraska	465	415	400	350	390	375
Oklahoma	65	74	67	79	63	61
South Dakota	46	35	48	35	39	41
Texas	560	470	540	490	465	450
Washington	39	41	44	38	40	43
Other States	70	63	59	58	64	55
United States	2,092	1,918	2,053	1,813	1,787	1,774

¹ December prior year.

Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011

State	During					
	December ¹ (1,000 head)	January (1,000 head)	February (1,000 head)	March (1,000 head)	April (1,000 head)	May (1,000 head)
Arizona	1	1	1	1	1	1
California	4	3	3	3	2	2
Colorado	5	5	5	5	5	10
Idaho	2	1	1	1	1	1
Iowa	3	4	2	3	3	4
Kansas	10	10	10	10	15	15
Nebraska	10	15	15	10	10	25
Oklahoma	2	2	2	2	2	1
South Dakota	1	1	2	2	2	3
Texas	20	10	15	10	10	10
Washington	3	2	3	3	2	2
Other States	5	3	2	3	7	7
United States	66	57	61	53	60	81
	During					
	June (1,000 head)	July (1,000 head)	August (1,000 head)	September (1,000 head)	October (1,000 head)	November (1,000 head)
Arizona	1	1	1	1	1	1
California	2	4	5	6	5	5
Colorado	10	5	5	10	5	10
Idaho	2	3	1	1	2	1
Iowa	4	2	2	3	2	3
Kansas	10	10	15	15	20	20
Nebraska	15	15	15	10	15	15
Oklahoma	2	2	3	4	3	4
South Dakota	10	2	2	1	1	4
Texas	10	20	20	20	35	30
Washington	3	3	1	1	1	1
Other States	3	4	2	2	8	3
United States	72	71	72	74	98	97

¹ December prior year.

Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Quarter – States and United States: 2011

State	Steers & steer calves				Heifers & heifer calves			
	January 1 (1,000 head)	April 1 (1,000 head)	July 1 (1,000 head)	October 1 (1,000 head)	January 1 (1,000 head)	April 1 (1,000 head)	July 1 (1,000 head)	October 1 (1,000 head)
Arizona	255	268	283	277	3	8	4	3
California	405	390	410	425	65	59	60	63
Colorado	710	740	690	730	365	345	305	335
Idaho	116	120	110	136	108	94	104	82
Iowa	440	460	410	380	199	190	180	169
Kansas	1,220	1,220	1,070	1,220	1,055	965	955	1,090
Nebraska	1,520	1,480	1,190	1,290	895	890	820	905
Oklahoma	210	210	210	205	165	145	140	165
South Dakota	129	135	107	114	107	114	86	81
Texas	1,750	1,680	1,630	1,750	1,089	1,090	1,059	1,189
Washington	130	135	120	123	71	68	71	83
Other States	293	281	272	285	137	122	106	133
United States	7,178	7,119	6,502	6,935	4,259	4,090	3,890	4,298
	Cows and bulls							
	January 1 (1,000 head)	April 1 (1,000 head)	July 1 (1,000 head)	October 1 (1,000 head)				
Arizona	0	0	0	0				0
California	0	1	0	0				2
Colorado	5	5	5	5				5
Idaho	16	6	1	2				2
Iowa	1	0	0	1				1
Kansas	5	5	5	10				10
Nebraska	15	10	10	15				15
Oklahoma	0	0	0	0				0
South Dakota	24	16	17	10				10
Texas	1	0	1	1				1
Washington	7	4	1	2				2
Other States	2	1	1	1				1
United States	76	48	41	49				

Number of Feedlots, Inventory, and Marketings by Size of Feedlot – United States: 2010 and 2011

Feedlot capacity	2010			2011		
	Lots	Inventory ¹	Cattle marketed	Lots	Inventory ¹	Cattle marketed
	(number)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(number)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Less than 1,000 head	75,000	2,498.9	4,032	75,000	2,260.4	3,170
1,000 head or more	2,140	11,513	22,078	2,120	11,861	22,577
1,000 - 1,999	790	453	778	770	416	727
2,000 - 3,999	560	800	1,400	560	770	1,360
4,000 - 7,999	335	1,030	1,760	345	1,070	1,870
8,000 - 15,999	180	1,250	2,470	170	1,220	2,320
16,000 - 23,999	85	1,130	2,040	86	1,130	2,160
24,000 - 31,999	55	1,050	2,050	52	970	1,880
32,000 - 49,999	71	2,050	4,110	71	2,125	4,100
50,000 and Over	64	3,750	7,470	66	4,160	8,160
All feedlots	77,140	14,011.9	26,110	77,120	14,121.4	25,747

¹ Inventory estimates as of January 1 of the following year.

Total Feedlot Capacity of 1000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2011 and 2012

Item	Feedlot capacity in number of head	
	2011	2012
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
United States	17,000	17,000

Terms and Definitions of Cattle on Feed Estimates

Number of feedlots is the number of lots operating at the end of the year with inventory of cattle on feed.

Cattle on feed are animals being fed a ration of grain, silage, hay and/or protein supplement for slaughter market that are expected to produce a carcass that will grade select or better. It excludes cattle being "backgrounded only" for later sale as feeders or later placement in another feedlot.

Placements are cattle put into a feedlot, fed a ration which will produce a carcass that will grade select or better, and are intended for the slaughter market.

Marketings are cattle shipped out of feedlots to a slaughter market.

Other disappearance includes death loss, movement from feedlots to pasture, and shipments to other feedlots for further feeding.

Reliability of Cattle on Feed Estimates

Survey Procedures: During January and July all known feedlots in the United States with capacity of 1,000 or more head are surveyed to provide data for cattle on feed estimates. During the other months, all known feedlots from 16 States are surveyed. The 16 States account for 98 percent of the cattle on feed in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head. Individual State estimates are published monthly for 11 of the 16 States. Data collected from the remaining 5 States are used to establish the "Other States" estimates. These 5 States include Illinois, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wyoming. The "Other States" category represents all cattle on feed with a capacity of 1,000 or more head for the rest of the United States.

Estimating Procedures: These cattle on feed estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing recommendations and analysis submitted by each State office. Regional and State survey data were reviewed for reasonableness with each other and with estimates from the previous month when establishing the current estimates.

Revision Policy: Revisions to previous estimates are made to improve month to month relationships. Estimates for the previous month are subject to revision in all States each month when current estimates are made. In February, all monthly estimates for the previous year, and the number of feedlots and annual marketings from two years ago are reviewed and subject to revisions. The reviews are primarily based on slaughter data, state check-off or brand data, and any other data that may have been received after the original estimate was made. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the Census of Agriculture are available. No revisions will be made after that date and estimates become final.

Reliability: Since all 1,000+ capacity cattle on feed operators in every State are not included in the monthly survey, 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 table on the following page. 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 on feed inventory estimates over the past 24 months is 0.2 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 11.8 million head by more than 0.2 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 0.3 percent.

The table on this page shows a 24 month record of the range of differences between first and latest estimates for selected items. Using estimates of number on feed as an example, changes between the first estimate and the latest estimate during the past 24 months have averaged 17,000 head, ranging from 0 to 47,000 head. During this period the initial estimate has been above the latest estimate 16 times and has been below the latest estimate 7 times. This does not imply that the initial estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

Reliability of Monthly Cattle on Feed Estimates

[Based on data for the past 24 months]

Item	Root mean square error	90 percent confidence level	Difference between first and latest estimate				
			Average	Smallest	Largest	Months	
						Below latest	Above latest
	(percent)	(percent)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(number)	(number)
Number on feed	0.2	0.3	17	0	47	7	16
Placements	0.3	0.6	4	0	18	10	10
Marketings	0.3	0.5	3	0	20	9	7

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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Doug Bounds – Hogs and Pigs, Goats	(202) 720-3106
Mike Miller – Milk Production and Milk Cows	(202) 720-3278
Everett Olbert – Dairy Products Prices	(202) 720-4751
Lorie Warren – Dairy Products, Sheep	(202) 690-3236

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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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