



# Cattle on Feed

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## United States Cattle on Feed Up Slightly

**Cattle and calves on feed** for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 10.8 million head on April 1, 2015. The inventory was slightly above April 1, 2014. The inventory included 7.46 million steers and steer calves, up 5 percent from the previous year. This group accounted for 69 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 3.34 million head, down 10 percent from 2014.

**Placements** in feedlots during March totaled 1.81 million, slightly above 2014. Net placements were 1.74 million head. During March, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 365,000, 600-699 pounds were 275,000, 700-799 pounds were 449,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 720,000.

**Marketings** of fed cattle during March totaled 1.63 million, 2 percent below 2014. March marketings are the lowest since the series began in 1996.

**Other disappearance** totaled 69,000 during March, 6 percent above 2014.

**Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: April 1, 2014 and 2015**

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2014	2015	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed March 1 .....	10,716	10,688	100
Placed on feed during March .....	1,801	1,809	100
Fed cattle marketed during March .....	1,660	1,631	98
Other disappearance during March .....	65	69	106
On feed April 1 .....	10,792	10,797	100

**Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: March 1, 2014 and 2015**

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2014	2015	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed February 1 .....	10,678	10,713	100
Placed on feed during February .....	1,658	1,551	94
Fed cattle marketed during February .....	1,549	1,516	98
Other disappearance during February .....	71	60	85
On feed March 1 .....	10,716	10,688	100

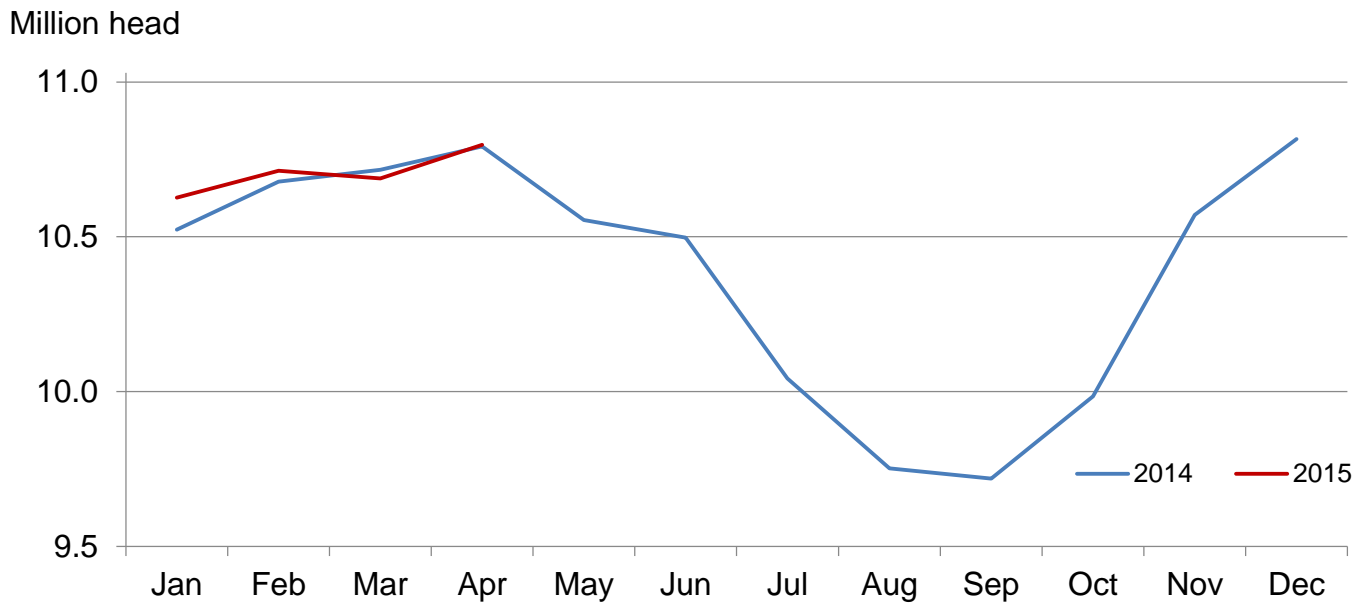
**Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: April 1, 2014 and 2015**

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2014	2015	
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(percent)
Class on feed April 1			
Steers and steer calves .....	7,075	7,455	105
Heifers and heifer calves .....	3,717	3,342	90

**Number of Cattle on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	April 1, 2014	March 1, 2015	April 1, 2015		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	277	243	241	87	99
California .....	475	440	445	94	101
Colorado .....	950	890	890	94	100
Idaho .....	205	230	230	112	100
Iowa .....	670	660	670	100	102
Kansas .....	2,090	2,080	2,110	101	101
Minnesota .....	135	145	146	108	101
Nebraska .....	2,470	2,500	2,530	102	101
Oklahoma .....	275	275	285	104	104
South Dakota .....	225	235	235	104	100
Texas .....	2,500	2,450	2,470	99	101
Washington .....	200	215	225	113	105
Other States .....	320	325	320	100	98
United States .....	10,792	10,688	10,797	100	101

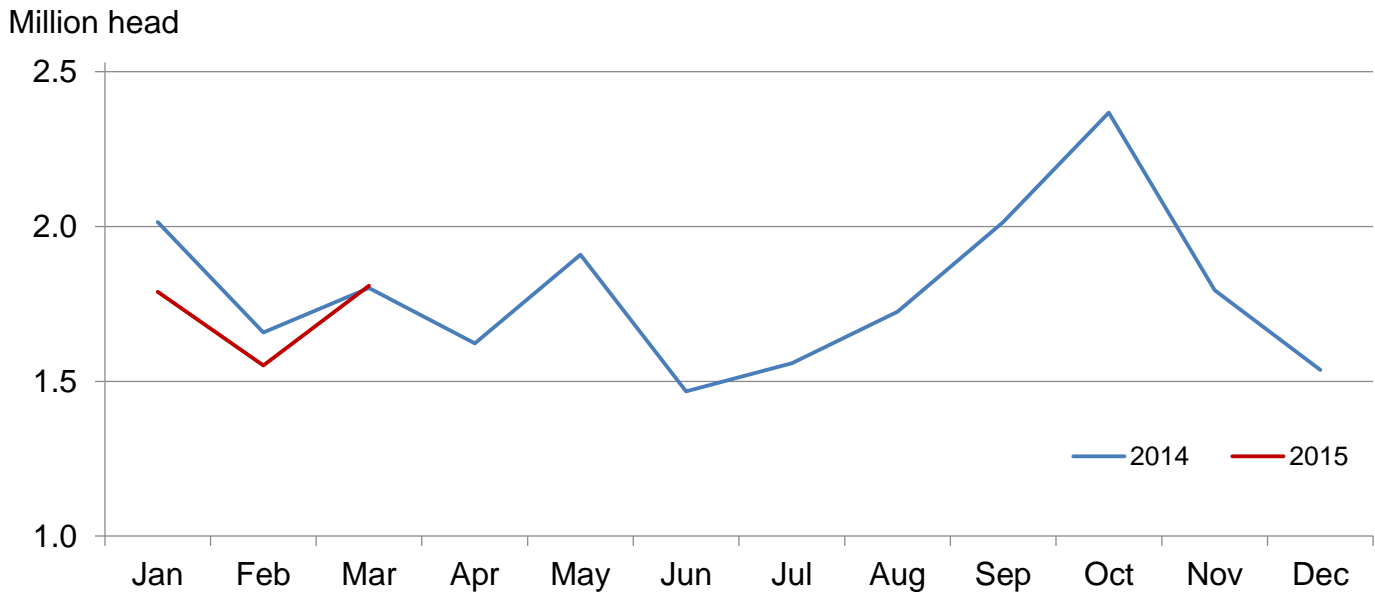
**Cattle on Feed Inventory on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States**



**Number of Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During March 2014	During February 2015	During March 2015		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	30	19	25	83	132
California .....	53	48	55	104	115
Colorado .....	165	150	150	91	100
Idaho .....	34	31	30	88	97
Iowa .....	71	85	90	127	106
Kansas .....	390	355	410	105	115
Minnesota .....	18	18	23	128	128
Nebraska .....	410	400	440	107	110
Oklahoma .....	52	42	49	94	117
South Dakota .....	42	41	33	79	80
Texas .....	470	285	420	89	147
Washington .....	31	43	39	126	91
Other States .....	35	34	45	129	132
United States .....	1,801	1,551	1,809	100	117

**Number of Cattle Placed on 1000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States**



**Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During March									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
	(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 .....	35	30	30	25	50	40	50	55	165	150
Kansas .....	65	60	55	65	110	110	160	175	390	410
Nebraska .....	55	55	65	65	105	100	185	220	410	440
Texas .....	170	115	90	70	125	120	85	115	470	420
Other States .....	100	105	50	50	76	79	140	155	366	389
United States .....	425	365	290	275	466	449	620	720	1,801	1,809

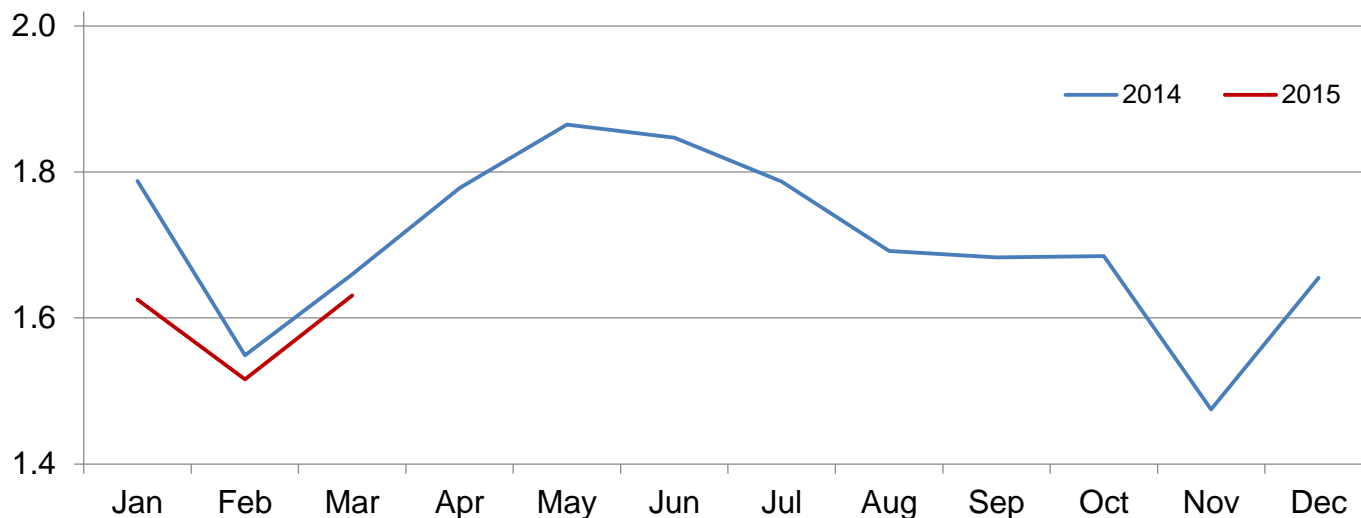
State	During February									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado .....	30	25	25	25	35	40	45	60	135	150
Kansas .....	60	60	60	65	90	95	125	135	335	355
Nebraska .....	65	60	90	65	105	100	170	175	430	400
Texas .....	155	100	90	45	100	75	65	65	410	285
Other States .....	80	85	65	65	88	86	115	125	348	361
United States .....	390	330	330	265	418	396	520	560	1,658	1,551

**Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During March 2014	During February 2015	During March 2015		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
			(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	24	19	21	88	111
California .....	70	43	46	66	107
Colorado .....	130	145	140	108	97
Idaho .....	33	29	29	88	100
Iowa .....	69	74	79	114	107
Kansas .....	345	355	370	107	104
Minnesota .....	16	13	21	131	162
Nebraska .....	395	385	395	100	103
Oklahoma .....	46	30	38	83	127
South Dakota .....	35	35	32	91	91
Texas .....	430	315	385	90	122
Washington .....	29	36	28	97	78
Other States .....	38	37	47	124	127
United States .....	1,660	1,516	1,631	98	108

# Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

Million head



## Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015

State	During March 2014	During February 2015	During March 2015		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	1	4	6	600	150
California .....	8	5	4	50	80
Colorado .....	5	5	10	200	200
Idaho .....	1	2	1	100	50
Iowa .....	2	1	1	50	100
Kansas .....	15	10	10	67	100
Minnesota .....	1	1	1	100	100
Nebraska .....	15	15	15	100	100
Oklahoma .....	1	2	1	100	50
South Dakota .....	2	1	1	50	100
Texas .....	10	10	15	150	150
Washington .....	2	2	1	50	50
Other States .....	2	2	3	150	150
United States .....	65	60	69	106	115

**Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Quarter – States and United States:  
2014 and 2015**

State	Steers and steer calves			Heifers and heifer calves		
	Apr 1, 2014	Jan 1, 2015	Apr 1, 2015	Apr 1, 2014	Jan 1, 2015	Apr 1, 2015
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)
Arizona .....	272	246	237	5	3	4
California .....	435	395	410	40	30	35
Colorado .....	630	580	610	320	320	280
Idaho .....	120	140	150	85	90	80
Iowa .....	490	490	520	180	150	150
Kansas .....	1,130	1,100	1,190	960	950	920
Minnesota .....	103	109	128	32	28	18
Nebraska .....	1,690	1,620	1,830	780	840	700
Oklahoma .....	180	170	200	95	85	85
South Dakota .....	135	145	150	90	85	85
Texas .....	1,550	1,600	1,680	950	900	790
Washington .....	125	123	140	75	87	85
Other States .....	215	230	210	105	110	110
United States .....	7,075	6,948	7,455	3,717	3,678	3,342

## Terms and Definitions of Cattle on Feed Estimates

**Cattle on feed** are steers and heifers 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 steers and heifers 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 steers and heifers 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 approximately 98 percent of the cattle on feed in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head. Individual State estimates are published monthly for 12 of the 16 States. Data collected from the remaining 4 States are used to establish the "Other States" estimates. These 4 States include Illinois, 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 0.6 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 10.8 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 on the following 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 53,000 head, ranging from 0 to 97,000 head. During this period the initial estimate has been above the latest estimate 19 times and has been below the latest estimate 4 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 .....	0.6	1.0	53	0	97	4	19
Placements .....	1.1	2.0	14	1	55	11	13
Marketings .....	0.9	1.6	8	0	47	0	8

## 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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Sherry Bertramsen – Livestock Slaughter .....	(202) 720-3240
Doug Bounds – Hogs and Pigs .....	(202) 720-3106
Donnie Fike – Dairy Products .....	(202) 690-3236
Mike Miller – Milk Production and Milk Cows .....	(202) 720-3278
Evan Schulz – Sheep and Goats .....	(202) 720-6147

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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](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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