Fall grazing on Native ranges during September provided good forage supplies in most western range areas, according to the Crop Reporting Board.

Late season grass growth was stimulated by rains during September in some sections of the 17 State area. Cured grass was made more palatable by the needed precipitation, following drought conditions throughout the summer in many areas. Prospects for late fall and winter grazing were improved in southern sections. However, additional moisture and favorable weather is still needed in portions of some western States. Hay and roughage supplies are expected to be adequate for winter feeding requirements except in some areas where drought conditions existed during the summer. Fall cattle movement is running behind previous years -- sheep marketings have been active.

Improvement in Range Feed: October 1 grazing conditions, although improved for the 17 Western State area, were below a month ago in 11 of the 17 Western States. Compared with a year earlier, condition of range feed was lower in 14 of the 17 States.

The northern Plains grazing feed supply was adequate on October 1 as cured forage was being utilized in all sections. Range feed in central and southern Plains areas benefited from September precipitation. New growth of native grasses was evident in western sections of Kansas and Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle. Livestock benefited from the improved feed conditions. Grazing of fall seeded wheat in this area was limited on October 1 as most acreage had insufficient growth for pasturing. In western Nebraska and eastern areas of Colorado and New Mexico, dry soil conditions prevailed and some supplemental feeding was necessary.

Forage supplies are good in some areas of the northern Intermountain States. Grasses were becoming brittle by October 1 in eastern sections of Montana and Wyoming and throughout much of Utah and Nevada. High elevation ranges were experiencing frost and some snows which reduced the grazing feed supply. Arizona low elevation ranges were much improved by September precipitation and were furnishing good forage supplies, except in areas near the California border.

High elevation ranges continued to furnish good forage supplies in the Pacific northwest. Grazing supplies are reduced in eastern sections of Oregon and Washington where below normal temperatures and little rainfall prevailed. High elevation ranges in northern California continued to be grazed in some areas. Prolonged dry weather in southern California has resulted in short forage supplies.

The October 1 range feed condition, at 77, was 2 points above a month earlier, but 2 points below a year earlier and 3 points less than the 1958-62 average.
CATTLE TRADING SLOW: Slightly over 40 percent of the expected fall movement of cattle and calves was sold or contracted for by October 1, according to reports from stockmen in the 17 Western States. This is similar to last year's movement but is less than in 1961 and 1962 when about 50 percent of the movement had occurred by October 1. September moisture prompted late season growth of range grass in the southern Plains which delayed marketings.

Condition of cattle and calves was good on October 1. Cured forage was contributing to the firm flesh being carried by livestock in many western range areas. Most cattle and calves are expected to go into the winter season in good condition.

The October 1 condition of cattle and calves was 83, up 2 points from a month earlier, the same as a year earlier, but 2 points below average.

SHEEP CONDITION IMPROVED: The improved grazing feed supply in some sections along with adequate forage at high elevations contributed to a slight increase in the condition of sheep and lambs. Movement from high elevation range grass was active during the month. Fall and winter pastures are in good condition. Irrigated pastures in California and Arizona are expected to be utilized extensively.

Over two-thirds of the expected fall movement of sheep and lambs had been sold or contracted for by October 1. This is above last year's movement when slightly over one-half of the marketing and contracting was completed by October 1.

Sheep and lamb condition on October 1 was 83. This is a 1 point increase over a month ago, the same as a year earlier, but 1 point below average.

TEXAS GOAT CONDITION: The October 1 goat condition in Texas was 81, up 3 points from both a month earlier and a year earlier. The 5-year average is 83 percent.

Goats are responding well to the improved range feed conditions. Winter forage is expected to be good. Fall shearing of goats has been virtually completed and ranchers are culling herds before winter.

CONDITIONS, OCTOBER 1, 1964, WITH COMPARISONS

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1/ Excludes Kansas.

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- 2 -
WESTERN RANGE AND LIVESTOCK REPORT, October 1, 1964

DETAILED BY STATES

NORTH DAKOTA: Rains in most areas during September helped maintain range feed in good condition. Grasses were curing during September but rains softened forage and feed was palatable on October 1. Crop residues are furnishing additional forage, delaying the need for supplemental feeding until winter. Feed grain and roughages are in adequate supply for the winter feeding season. Livestock continued in good condition. Marketings increased during the month and by October 1, were about equal to the levels of recent years.

SOUTH DAKOTA (WESTERN): Range feed conditions declined seasonally during September; cured grasses on October 1 were quite brittle as the result of light precipitation. Prospects for fall and winter grazing are only fair; however, hay and feed supplies are plentiful for the winter feeding season. Livestock remain in good flesh for this time of year. Cattle marketings and contracts for fall delivery have been relatively slow. Marketings of sheep and lambs increased during the month and were about normal for October 1.

NEBRASKA (WESTERN): Range feed conditions in Nebraska were varied. In central sections, most pastures were providing abundant forage even though rainfall was spotted during the month. In the Panhandle and the southwest, ranges continued to be plagued by poor soil moisture conditions and dry weather. Rainfall was insufficient to promote grass growth or replenish soil moisture. Winter forage feed supplies are expected to be adequate in central areas but short in other sections. Supplemental feeding continued in southern sections of the Panhandle and culling of herds was common. Range cattle continue in good condition with fall marketings running ahead of a year earlier. Demand for breeding stock has been inactive.

KANSAS (WESTERN): Range feed conditions in the Western two-thirds of Kansas improved as the result of mid-September rains over most of the area. Native range grass remained short in many sections and more moisture is needed. Stockmen in many western sections pastured drought damaged sorghum during September. In a few localities, winter feed supplies were already being utilized by cattle. Volunteer wheat pastures improved during September, but were furnishing only limited forage on October 1. Due to the inadequate range feed supply in some areas, sales and contracting of fall cattle were ahead of last year's rate.

OKLAHOMA: Above average rainfall during September improved range and pasture conditions. Improvement was noted in all areas except the Panhandle. Native grasses continued to grow and were furnishing good forage supplies for livestock on October 1. Hay and forage supplies appear adequate and the outlook for winter wheat grazing later this fall is good in all areas outside the Panhandle. Condition of cattle improved, but was slightly below average for October 1. Movement of cattle to market in September was running parallel to recent years' marketing patterns.

TEXAS: Range feed throughout most of the State benefited from plentiful September moisture. Subsoil moisture supplies were partially replenished and the outlook for late fall and winter grazing was greatly improved. Grasses that survived the dry summer months respond to the additional moisture. The amount of forage available for winter grazing is now dependent on the first frost date. Additional moisture and favorable temperatures would be beneficial in some areas of the Panhandle, Lower Valley, and east Texas where drought conditions have prevailed the past few months. Cattle, sheep, and goats respond to the improved range feed conditions. Condition for all 3 species, although below average, was above both a year earlier and a month ago.
MONTANA: Ranges and pastures were furnishing adequate forage on October 1, although ranges in eastern areas were dry and grass was becoming brittle. Supplies of feed grains and hay are generally ample for the winter feeding period. Livestock continues in good condition. Marketing activity has increased along with the movement of livestock from summer ranges to lower elevations.

IDAHO: Range feed conditions throughout the State remain above average. Frosts during the past month slowed forage growth in southern and eastern areas and feed in these areas is beginning to cure. Precipitation stimulated forage growth in the northern panhandle areas. Cattle and sheep remain in good condition and are moving off summer ranges in firm flesh. Prospects for fall and winter feed are good. Marketings of cattle and calves remain slow while fall movements of sheep and lambs are moderately active.

WYOMING: Range feed conditions declined slightly during September as a result of below normal rainfall. Moisture is needed to soften forage and improve palatability. Prospects for winter grazing are only fair and stock water is short in several areas. Hay supplies are adequate to abundant. Cattle and lambs maintained good condition except in the southeast where range feed was extremely dry. Marketings of both cattle and lambs as of October 1 are above the low levels for the same period a year earlier.

COLORADO: Range feed conditions declined on the Eastern Slope during September. Limited rainfall and heavy grazing of ranges contributed to the decline. On the Western Slope grazing conditions remained good although some freezing temperatures and snow caused cattle and sheep to be moved from high elevation ranges. October moisture would improve grazing prospects from fall seeded grains in eastern areas. Hay supplies are inadequate as supplemental feeding continued. Lack of adequate forage and inadequate feed supplies forced some liquidation during the month. Condition of livestock held up well on the Western Slope but declined in the dry eastern areas. Marketings of cattle were running slightly behind a year earlier on the Western Slope, but Eastern Slope movement was quite heavy.

NEW MEXICO: Scattered showers during the month improved range feed condition over much of the State but for many areas the moisture came too late to improve winter forage feed. Moisture in southern areas promoted new growth of grass and weeds. Cattle and sheep are being maintained in fair to good condition with some continued supplemental feeding. Cattle marketing lagged behind last year. Marketing of lambs was active during September.

ARIZONA: Range feed and stock water supplies are exceptionally good in most areas of the State excepting the western one-third. Continued showers fell during the month over much of the State making ideal conditions for growth of late fall and winter feed. Condition of cattle and sheep continued relatively high. Marketings of cattle remained slow but contracting of lambs was active. The annual fall movement of sheep and lambs from northern ranges into the central irrigated valleys and to Yuma County for winter grazing and lambing was underway by October 1.
UTAH: Range feed condition declined during September due to below normal temperatures and lack of moisture. Native grasses were dry and brittle in many sections and forage supplies were becoming short on October 1. Livestock movement from higher elevations was active during the month. Fall and winter ranges need moisture; forage is in poor supply except in southwestern sections where rains promoted growth. Cattle and sheep continued in good condition. Demand for calves has been slow; sales and contracts for lambs was nearly completed.

NEVADA: Range and pasture feed conditions declined slightly during the month. Movement of livestock is well underway from high summer ranges to lower elevations. Forage on fall ranges is quite dry and fire hazards still exist in many areas. Hay supplies are adequate for the winter. Livestock remain in good condition. Marketing and contracting of cattle for fall delivery continues below the usual levels for this time of year. Sheep and lamb marketings and contracting for fall delivery are running above a year earlier.

WASHINGTON: Condition of range feed deteriorated during September as cool weather and poor moisture conditions slowed growth. However, high ranges in the Cascades continued to provide good forage. Feed condition west of the Cascades was still good, but dry, cool weather retarded growth on the east side. Overall, the average condition of feed supplies was slightly better than usual for October 1. Stubble and hay fields provided the best feed during September. Condition of cattle and sheep remained seasonally good. Cattle marketings have accelerated but sheep marketings slowed after heavy early season activity.

OREGON: Grazing conditions were good on October 1 in coastal areas due to frequent September rains. In other areas west of the Cascades, range forage was curing but furnishing adequate feed. East of the Cascades, forage supplies are short and supplemental feeding has already started in many areas. Cattle are currently being grazed on wheat grain stubble to supplement local shortages of range forage. Supplies of hay, grain and roughages are adequate for the winter feeding season. Livestock are in good condition. Fall marketing marketings of range cattle sold or contracted have been slow to date.

CALIFORNIA: Range feed conditions are only fair to poor, with forage supplies below normal at lower elevations. Feed supplies on high summer ranges continue adequate. Additional rain is needed at once to promote adequate fall and winter range feed. Livestock are in good condition in view of the long, dry season and short feed supply. Supplemental feeding has been necessary in many low elevation areas. Cattle are moving off high elevation summer ranges in good flesh. Lambing is underway in the San Joaquin Valley under good lambing conditions.

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