

ROD-37-4-117



JANUARY 24 • 25 • 26

PORTLAND, OR

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Farmers adjust to downturn

By DAVID PITT
Associated Press

MAXWELL, Iowa (AP) — Pale green and 8 feet tall, tightly packed corn stalks reach to the horizon throughout the Midwest in what is likely to be the biggest harvest the U.S. has ever seen.

Aside from a sense of pride in breaking the previous record by nearly a billion bushels, farmers won't benefit. They'll lose money on virtually every cob.

It'll be the third consecutive year in which most corn farmers will spend more than they'll earn. The growing has been too good and the resulting glut of corn depressed prices

to a decade-low. It's a similar story for soybeans, the second most common Midwest crop.

As a result, farmers are cutting costs, dipping into savings or going farther into debt. Federal crop insurance and payments that help protect farmers when prices fall too low offer some protection, yet many farmers and their spouses supplement income with off-the-farm jobs. The drop in farm profits raises questions about agriculture's boom-and-bust cycles and why people adhere to what at times is seemingly not a sustainable business model.

"I am 67 years old and when we examined my Social Security records recently, I had

a 12-year stretch when I didn't pay myself one single dime," said Wayne Humphreys, who grows corn and soybeans and raises hogs in southwest Iowa. "We lived on my wife's salary. Everything else went to the farm."

Corn and soybean prices reached their height in 2012 but have since plunged, resulting in a 42 percent drop in farm income. For the nation's roughly 2 million family farms, the average household income will be \$118,890, but only about a fifth will come from the farm, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said recently.

"Typically, this time of year the dealership would be

talking to me about getting a new planter, and they have talked to us and we told them we're going to pass," said Joe Steinkamp who farms corn, soybeans and occasionally wheat near Evansville, Indiana. "Obviously we're concerned and we're watching our pennies as we go."

To get by, nearly a third of U.S. farms have to borrow money, and borrowing has increased because farmers need to finance operating costs and near-historic low interest rates make borrowing inexpensive. But banks are reporting an increase of past-due loans, an indication that borrowers are struggling to repay in a time of tight profit margins.

Potato Market Reports

Compiled by North American Potato Market News and USDA

Prices are weekly averages of daily prices. All prices are in dollars per hundredweight (cwt.). FWA is a weighted average of shipping point prices or common packs in each area. Weights differ by area. GRI is the Grower Returns Index for each individual area.							
FRESH RUSSET POTATO MARKET REPORT (North American Potato Market News) (USDA Market News) Sept. 10							
Market commentary: Harvest pressure continues to mount, pushing prices for Russet table potatoes down.							
SHIPPING AREA							
FWA	Chg	GRI	Chg	70 ct	Chg	10 lb. Film	Chg
IDAHO NORKOTAHs							
\$11.35	-\$0.52	\$4.58	-\$0.39	\$14	-\$1.50	\$9	\$0
COLUMBIA BASIN							
\$12.64	-\$0.17	\$5.36	-\$0.11	\$17.25	-\$0.75	\$9	\$0

Sheep/Wool Market Reports

Compiled by USDA Market News Service • Greeley, Colo.-San Angelo, Texas

Wool prices in cents per pound and foreign currency per kilogram, sheep prices in dollars per hundredweight (cwt.) except some replacement animals on per head basis as indicated.		NATIONAL WOOL REVIEW (USDA Market News) Greeley, Colo. Sept. 9		NATIONAL SHEEP SUMMARY (USDA Market News) San Angelo, Texas Sept. 9	
Domestic wool trading on a clean basis has been at a standstill this week. No confirmed trades were reported. Domestic wool trading on a greasy basis was at a standstill this week. There were no confirmed trades reported.		Domestic wool tags No. 1 \$60-70 No. 2 \$50-60 No. 3 \$40-50		Compared to last week: Slaughter lambs were steady to \$10 higher, instances \$20 higher. Slaughter ewes were steady to \$5 higher. Feeder lambs were firm to \$5 higher.	
At San Angelo, Texas, 4,840 head sold. Equity Electronic Auction sold 615 slaughter lambs in North Dakota and Nebraska. In direct trading slaughter ewes were not tested and feeder lambs were steady. 3,300 head of negotiated sales of slaughter lambs were steady to \$4 lower. 5,000 head of formula sales had no trend due to confidentiality. 3,582 lamb carcasses sold with 45 lbs. and down \$9.13 higher, 45-75 lbs. no trend due to confidentiality; 75-85 lbs. \$.36 lower and 85 lbs. and up \$.345 lower.		Orchard Grass Sudan Rice Straw Good 125 \$75		Slaughter LAMBS Choice and Prime 2-3: San Angelo: shorn and woolled 100-150 lbs.	
REGION 2: SACRAMENTO VALLEY Includes the counties of Tehama, Glenn, Butte, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba, Sierra, Nevada, Placer, Yolo, E Dorado, Solano, Sacramento.		Fair 250 \$110 Premium 500 \$95 Premium 275 \$220 Premium 300 \$170 150 \$150 Good 200 \$75 200 \$100		REGION 3: NORTHERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Includes the counties of San Joaquin, Calaveras, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mono, Merced and Mariposa.	
Alfalfa Fair 250 \$110 Premium 500 \$95 Premium 275 \$220 Premium 300 \$170 150 \$150 Good 200 \$75 200 \$100		Alfalfa Fair 250 \$110 Premium 500 \$95 Premium 275 \$220 Premium 300 \$170 150 \$150 Good 200 \$75 200 \$100		REGION 4: CENTRAL SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY Includes the counties of Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Inyo.	
Corn Good 0 \$40		Alfalfa Supreme 250 \$190 1100 \$235 Prem./Sup. 250 \$205 Premium 100 \$215 1500 \$216 Good/Prem. 75 \$200 Fair 475 \$105 25 \$140 80 \$135		REGION 5: SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Includes the counties of Kern, Northeast Los Angeles, and Western San Bernardino.	
Forage Mix-Three Way Good 50 \$190		Alfalfa Premium 250 \$220 225 \$180 50 \$160 50 \$190		Forage Mix-Four Way Good 200 \$140	

Hay Market Reports

Compiled by USDA Market News Service • St. Joseph, Mo.-Portland

Hay prices are dollars per ton or dollars per bale when sold to retail outlets. Basis is current delivery FOB barn or stack, or delivered customer as indicated.				
Grade guidelines used in this report have the following relationship to Relative Feed Value (RFV), Acid Detergent Fiber (ADF), TDN (Total Digestible Nutrients), or Crude Protein (CP) test numbers:				
Grade	RFV	ADF	TDN	CP
Supreme	185+	<27	55.9+	22+
Premium	170-185	27-29	54.5-55.9	20-22
Good	150-170	29-32	52.5-54.5	18-20
Fair	130-150	32-35	50.5-52.5	16-18
Utility	<130	36+	<50.5	<16

WASHINGTON-OREGON HAY
(Columbia Basin)
(USDA Market News)
Moses Lake, Wash.
Sept. 9

<i>This week FOB</i>	<i>Last week</i>	<i>Last year</i>	
5,450	30,305	8,310	

Compared to Sept. 2: All grades of export Alfalfa steady in a light test. Domestic Alfalfa not tested this week as most interests are busy with silage harvest. Trade slow with light demand as exporters await the news of the ocean shippers. The Annual National Hay Association convention will be held next week, Sept. 14-17 in Pasco, Wash. Retail/Feedstore steady in a light test. Demand remains good.

		<i>Tons</i>	<i>Price</i>
Alfalfa Mid Square	Premium	2000	\$140
	Good/Prem.	2000	\$135
Export			
Alfalfa Small Square	Premium	50	\$230
Timothy Grass Mid Square	Premium	700	\$180-210
	Good/Prem.	200	\$170
Wheat Straw Mid Square	Good	500	\$35

OREGON AREA HAY (USDA Market News) Portland, Ore. Sept. 9			
<i>This week FOB</i>	<i>Last week</i>	<i>Last year</i>	
9,968	2,407	2,471	
Compared to Sept. 2: Prices trended generally steady compared to week ago prices. Most demand lays with the retail/stable hay. According to some producers, horse owners are starting to prefer lower sugar, higher protein hay. Many hay producers are selling or have already sold most of their first and second cutting hay, and are working on later cutting(s) resulting in higher volumes of hay moving.			
		Tons	Price
CROOK, DESCHUTES, JEFFERSON, WASCO COUNTIES			
Alfalfa Small Square	Premium	25	\$200
Orchard Grass Mid Square	Premium	53	\$225-235
Small Square	Premium	72	\$230-250
Orchard/Bluegrass			
Small Square	Premium	50	\$230
Barley Large Square	Good	60	\$130
Grass Mix Five-Way Large Square	Fair/Good	20	\$180
Small Square	Premium	20	\$260

EASTERN OREGON Alfalfa Large Square HARNEY COUNTY Alfalfa Large Square			
Export			
KLAMATH BASIN Alfalfa Mid Square Small Square LAKE COUNTY Alfalfa Large Square			
Good 7	\$230		
Supreme 300	\$140		
Premium 123	\$160-180		
500	\$165		
Export			
KLAMATH BASIN Alfalfa Mid Square Small Square LAKE COUNTY Alfalfa Large Square			
Fair 200	\$105		
Premium 250	\$170		
Supreme 170	\$180		
Premium 140	\$175		
4500	\$170		
Good/Prem. 2000	\$165		
Good 1000	\$150		
Supreme 10	\$240		
Premium 30	\$185		
Good 60	\$120		
Good 20	\$125		
Good 350	\$75		
Good 8	\$150		

IDAHO HAY (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash. Sept. 9			
<i>This week FOB</i>	<i>Last week</i>	<i>Last year</i>	
1,300	800	14,630	
Compared to Sept. 2: All grades of Alfalfa weak in a light test. Trade very slow with light demand as large supplies remain a hindrance to the market. Dairies are busy with silage harvest. Retail/feed store/horse not tested this week.			
Alfalfa Mid Square	Supreme	<i>Tons</i> 500	<i>Price</i> \$120
	Fair/Good	800	\$80
CALIFORNIA HAY (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash. Sept. 9			
<i>This week FOB</i>	<i>Last week</i>	<i>Last year</i>	
16,030	7,680	10,471	
Compared to last week: All classes traded steady. Demand moderate. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, during the past week, average temperatures were below normal across California, most of the Great Basin, Northern Rockies, and western portions of the Southwest while areas east of the Continental Divide were slightly above normal.			

PACIFIC NORTHWEST MARKET SUMMARY Cash wheat bids for September delivery ended the reporting week on Thursday Sept. 8, were mixed compared to last week's noon bids for September delivery.			
December wheat futures ended the reporting week on Thursday, Sept. 8, higher as follows compared to Sept. 1 closes: Chicago wheat futures were 11.25 cents higher at \$4.06, Kansas City wheat futures were 11.50 cents higher at \$4.18 and Minneapolis wheat futures trended six cents higher at \$4.92. Chicago December corn futures trended 14.75 cents higher at \$3.3850 and November soybean futures closed 33 cents higher at \$9.7675.			
Bids for U.S. 1 Soft White Wheat delivered to Portland in unit trains or barges during September for ordinary protein trended 2.0 to 11.25 cents per bushel higher compared to Sept. 1 prices for the same delivery period at \$4.65-4.86.			
Some exporters were not issuing bids for nearby delivery. White club wheat premiums were zero cents per bushel over soft white wheat bids this week were zero to 10 cents per bushel over soft white wheat bids compared to zero to seven cents the previous week.			
One year ago bids for U.S. 1 Soft White Wheat any protein for September delivery by unit trains and barges to Portland were \$5.30-5.35 and bids for White Club Wheat were also \$5.30-5.35. Forward month bids for soft white wheat ordinary protein were as follows: October \$4.76-4.81, November \$4.65-4.86 and December \$4.65-4.91. One year ago, forward month bids for soft white wheat for any protein were as follows: October, November and December \$5.30-5.35.			
Bids for U.S. 1 Soft White Wheat guaranteed maximum 10.5 percent protein during September trended 0.25 to 11.25 cents per bushel higher than week ago prices for the same delivery period at \$4.65-4.91. Some exporters were not issuing bids for nearby delivery. White club wheat premiums for guaranteed maximum 10.5 percent protein soft white wheat this week were zero to 5 cents per bushel over soft white wheat bids this week compared to zero cents last week.			
One year ago bids for U.S. 1 Soft White Wheat guaranteed maximum 10.5 percent protein for September delivery by unit trains and barges to Portland were \$6.30-6.52 and bids for White Club Wheat			

PORTLAND GRAIN (USDA Market News) Portland Sept. 8			
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Grain Market Reports

Compiled by USDA Market News Service • Portland

Grains are stated in dollars per bushel or hundredweight (cwt.) except feed grains traded in dollars per ton. National grain report bids are for rail delivery unless truck indicated.		
CALIFORNIA GRAINS (USDA Market News) Portland Sept. 9		
Prices in dollars per cwt., bulk Inc.= including; Nom.= nominal; Ltd.= limited; Ind.= indicated; NYE=Not fully estimated.		
GRAIN DELIVERED		
Mode	Destination	Price per cwt.
BARLEY—U.S. No. 2 (46-lbs. per bushel)		
FOB	Kern County	NA
Rail	Los Angeles	NA
Truck	Petaluma-Santa Rosa	\$9.75
	Stockton-Modesto-Oakdale-Turlock	\$9.75
CORN-U.S. No. 2 Yellow		
FOB	Turlock-Tulare	\$7.76
	Kings-Tulare-Fresno	\$7-7.20
Rail	Single Car Units via BNSF	
	Chino Valley-Los Angeles	\$8.31-8.33
Truck	Petaluma-Santa Rosa	NA
	Stockton-Modesto-Oakdale-Turlock	\$8.06
	Kings-Tulare-Fresno Counties	\$8.06
SORGHUM-U.S. No. 2 Yellow		
Rail	Los Angeles-Chino Valley via BNSF Single	\$8.08-8.10
Truck	Modesto-Oakdale-Turlock	NA
OATS-U.S. No. 1 White		
Truck	Petaluma	\$11.25
	Stockton-Modesto-Oakdale-Turlock	\$11.25
Rail	Petaluma	NA
WHEAT-U.S. No. 2 or better-Hard Red Winter (Domestic Values for Flour Milling)		
	Los Angeles 12 percent Protein	NA
Truck/Rail	Los Angeles 11-12 percent Protein	NA
FOB	Tulare-Kern-Merced	NA
WHEAT-U.S. Durum Wheat		
Truck	Imperial County	NA
WHEAT-Any Class for Feed		
FOB	Tulare	NA
Truck/Rail	Los Angeles-Chino Valley	NA
Truck	Petaluma-Santa Rosa	NA
Prices paid to California farmers, seven-day reporting period end-		

Livestock Auctions

Cattle prices in dollars per hundredweight (cwt.) except some replacement animals per pair or head as indicated.	
Idaho	
Caldwell (Treasure Valley Livestock) Sept. 9	
Steers (wt.): 300-400 lbs. \$82.50; 400-500 lbs. \$95; 500-600 lbs. \$92; 600-700 lbs. \$93.50; 700-800 lbs. \$113; 800 lbs. and up \$93.50.	
Heifers (hd.): 200-300 lbs. \$145; 300-400 lbs. \$295; 400-500 lbs. \$300; 500-600 lbs. \$525.	
Heifers (wt.): 300-400 lbs. \$113; 400-500 lbs. \$80; 500-600 lbs. \$88.50; 600-700 lbs. \$80; 700-800 lbs. \$70; 800-1000 lbs. \$75.50; 1000-1100 lbs. \$85; 1100-1200 lbs. \$79.50; 1200 lbs. and up \$72.	
Heifers (hd.): 100-200 lbs. \$150; 300-400 lbs. \$400.	
Bull Calf (wt.): 300-400 lbs. \$400-500 lbs. \$73.	
Bull Calf (hd.): 200-300 lbs. \$140.	

Oregon

VALE (Producers Livestock Market) Sept. 7	
Total receipts: 379 head.	
Comments: Smaller sale due to Harney County fair. Expecting a "true test" on the calf market next week, with several good quality strings consigned.	
Steer calves: 300-400 lbs. \$141-159; 400-500 lbs. \$139-156; 500-600 lbs. \$127-140.	
Heifer calves: 400-500 lbs. \$122-146; 500-600 lbs. \$114-120.	
Yearling steers: 600-700 lbs. \$119-127.	
Yearling heifers: 600-700 lbs. \$109-121.	
Light Holstein steers, 600 lbs. and under: NA.	

Light Holstein steers, 700 lbs. and over: NA.
Stock cows (young): \$950-1260. Stock cows (B.M.): NA.
Butcher cows: \$62-68.
Thin shelly cows: \$49-59.
Butcher bulls: \$64-79.

California

SHASTA (Shasta Livestock Auction) Cottonwood, Calif. Sept. 9	
Current week	Last week
4,914	No sale
Compared to Last Sale: Slaughter cows steady \$2 lower, lowering futures market and lower demand has pressured the market.	
Slaughter cows: High yielding \$70-73; \$74-80 high dress; Boning \$64-69; Cutters \$40-60.	
Bulls 1 and 2: \$65-90, \$91-100 high dress.	
Feeder steers: 450-500 lbs. \$120-140.50; 500-550 lbs. \$120-139; 550-600 lbs. \$120-136.50;	

600-650 lbs. \$120-135; 650-700 lbs. \$120-134; 700-750 lbs. \$120-134; 750-800 lbs. \$120-134; 800-900 lbs. \$115-131.25.
Feeder heifers: 300-400 115-130; 400-450 lbs. \$115-132; 450-500 lbs. \$115-129; 500-550 lbs. \$115-124.50; 550-600 lbs. \$115-127; 600-650 lbs. \$112-125; 650-700 lbs. \$110-122; 700-750 lbs. \$110-129; 750-800 lbs. \$110-127; 800-900 lbs. \$100-119.
Pairs: \$1000-1650.

Washington

TOPPENISH (Toppenish Livestock Auction) (USDA Market News) Moses Lake, Wash. Sept. 10		
<i>This week</i>	<i>Last week</i>	<i>Last year</i>
1,800	1,400	1,650
Compared to Sept. 3 at the same market: Stocker and feeder cattle \$4-5 lower in a light test. Trade active with good demand. Slaughter		