

Beef Report

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Beef cattle numbers in the United States reached an all time high of 97 million on January 1, 1956. During 1956 numbers dropped 2 per cent and in 1957 another 1 per cent decrease occurred. Numbers however, are still 9 per cent above the least 10 year average. In Klamath County cattle numbers also have increased through the past 10 years to record numbers. It is estimated that on January 1 of this year there were 90,000 head of cattle in the county. It is also estimated that there was a slight drop in numbers between 1956 and 1958.

It is expected that cattle numbers in the United States will continue to show a decrease through 1958 and reach a low in 1960 and start back up. If employment remains high, prices of cattle should remain above prices for the last four or five years until 1963 when numbers may again reach a point that will depress prices.

Economists believe that with population increasing at about one and one half per cent each year, cattle numbers may increase by the same amount without lowering prices. It is expected that there will be 225 million people in the United States by 1975. Prior to the war it was believed our population would stabilize at about 150 million by 1975. If we reach a population of 225 million, we will need 125 million head of cattle.

The government program is committed to a high employment with no more than four to five per cent unemployed. Beef consumption is affected by consumer income and with full employment, it is anticipated that we will eventually consume 85 pounds of beef per capita in the United States.

The government report on the number of cattle on feed as of January 1 shows a decrease of three per cent from a year ago. California shows 21 per cent fewer cattle. The corn belt states had one per cent more cattle on feed than one year ago. The 13 western cattle feeding states were down 13 per cent from January 1, 1957.

Feeder marketing intentions indicate that 41 per cent of the cattle will be marketed from January 1 to April (12 per cent less than for the period last year). They intend to market 59 per cent after that time or four per cent more than one year earlier. Heavier hog marketing will also take place from April to May. Indications are that cattle will be fed to heavier weights. Marketing specialists believe fed cattle prices should be high in June and July.

A number of changes in preparing and marketing meats will probably take place in the future. Tenderizing meat may change fattening practices. Radiation may effect storage. Radiated meats have been kept two years at room temperature.

Marketing is one of the more important problems in the production of livestock as well as other farm products. Producers should keep themselves well posted on the market prices of cattle so they at least get prevailing market values. The strong demand for feeders and stocker cattle from California feed lot operators and the nearness of the area to these feeders have attracted many buyers to the county and thus provides a satisfactory market. The auction yards in Klamath County provide a competitive market for all classes of cattle. The auction market prices are also valuable in helping a producer calculate the market value of his livestock. The market report prepared and disseminated cooperatively between the county agent's office and the two auction markets is very useful to stockmen in this area and the committee recommends it be continued.

Cow and calf herds on high priced irrigated farms have not been profitable in the past except for years of high calf prices. The

committee believes that it would not be advisable for farmers to get into the cow and calf business at this time because of the cost of breeding stock, and the likelihood that prices will drop before new producers could get into production and pay off the cost of breeding herd.

It would appear more advisable for farmers with pasture, hay or other livestock feed to purchase feeder cattle. Calves could be purchased in the fall and wintered and then placed on pasture during the summers. These calves could then be sold as grass fattened, as feeders or placed in the feed lot and finished. Another method would be to purchase yearlings in the spring

and pasture them during the summer and sell them off pasture or finish them in the feed lot.

A cow and calf operation that might be considered by small producers on high priced land would be to drop calves in November and December then carry them on pasture the next summer and place them in the feed lot in the fall so as to have finished cattle in June and July or when the cattle are 18 to 20 months of age.

Klamath County raises a large number of feeder cattle each year and the committee feels there is a place for more commercial feed lots in the county. A surplus of hay and grain is produced here and potatoes are frequently a low cost

cattle feed. Fuller use of these feeds should be made. Fattening cattle must be considered as a longtime program. Some years there is little or no profit in the business while in other years returns are good. The average return over a period of years have returned a reasonable profit.

Pelleting feeds that contain large percentages of roughage for beef cattle has given excellent results in experiments and feed lot trials. At this time the cost of pelleting has increased the cost of the feed so that the better gains from pelleting has been off-set by the higher feed cost. The greatest advantage in feeding the pellets have been with calves. Pelleting greatly

increases consumption of feed in younger animals especially. Where it is desired to fatten calves in a short period of time, pelleted feeds with large portions of alfalfa is one of the best feeds for this purpose.

More consideration should be given to spring and summer feeding operations. The relatively cool summer weather gives feeders in this area an advantage over those in hotter climates. Also prices are generally higher at this time of the year due to a limited supply of feed lot cattle.

Any feeder should arrange for all feed needed before starting cattle on feed. Generally grain and hay are lowest in price at harvest time.

Hormones and drugs used to increase gains and improve feed efficiency in fattening cattle have come into use in recent years. Cattle feeders should consider their use when they lower costs of producing gains.

A great many experiments and feed lot trials have been conducted with the hormones. Generally the results have led to the following conclusions:

1. Hormones increase the rate of gain from 20 to 30 per cent or around 25 to 40 pounds during a pasture or feed period.

2. Hormones reduce feed required for 100 pounds gain by 10 to 20 per cent.

3. Hormones increase growth but not fat disposition so cattle must be fed as long when hormones are used.

4. There is little difference in carcass grade or dressing percentage, moisture content and no flavor difference between hormone treated or untreated lots.

5. Hormones may be given in the feed so that the animal receives 10 milligrams per day or the hormone may be given by implanting the drug under the skin of the ear. About equal results have been secured from both methods. The implantation is cheaper and more convenient.

6. Trials have shown that 24 to 36 milligram per head is the most desirable rate of implanting steers. Spayed heifers should not receive over 15 milligrams and unsplayed heifers should not be given the

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(1000's) GRAIN CONSUMING ANIMALS

	1949-53	54-55	55-56	56-57	57-58
United States	165,800	162,000	166,000	163,000	163,000
California					
3 Northwest States	2,774	2,776	2,953	2,778	
Oregon	1,037	1,015	1,039	1,017	

POUNDS FEED GRAIN PRODUCED PER ANIMAL UNIT

United States	1,428	1,543	1,578	1,607	1,632
California					
3 Northwest States	826	1,558	1,370	1,531	
Oregon	820	1,389	1,245	1,510	

POUNDS, FEED SUPPLIES PER ANIMAL UNIT

United States	2,080	2,260	2,380	2,460	2,577
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POUNDS FEED GRAIN & BY-PRODUCT USED PER ANIMAL UNIT

United States	1,538	1,556	1,590	1,608	
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