

Mountain State Reporter

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APRIL RED MEAT PRODUCTION

West Virginia - Commercial red meat production during April 2007 totaled 400,000 pounds. This was up 7 percent from April 2006 but down 18 percent from March 2007 production. Commercial red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter including beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. Individual commodity production is total live weight of commercial slaughter.

Commercial cattle slaughter totaled 527,000 pounds live weight, down 3 percent from April 2006. Cattle slaughter totaled 500 head, unchanged from the previous year. The average live weight, at 1,074 pounds, was down 13 pounds from a year ago.

Commercial calf slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 135,000 pounds live weight, up 35 percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 500 head, up 100 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 266 pounds, was up 29 pounds from the previous year.

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

United States - Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.75 billion pounds in April, up 4 percent from the 3.61 billion pounds produced in April 2006.

Beef production, at 2.02 billion pounds, was 2 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.70 million head, up 4 percent from April 2006. The average live weight was down 5 pounds from the previous year, at 1,235 pounds.

Veal production totaled 11.8 million pounds, 14 percent above April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 56,900 head, up 19 percent from April 2006. The average live weight was down 14 pounds from last year, at 347 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.71 billion pounds, up 6 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.47 million head, up 6 percent from April 2006. The average live weight was down 2 pounds from the previous year, at 270 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.1 million pounds, was down 11 percent from April 2006. Sheep slaughter totaled 216,900 head, 12 percent below last year. The average live weight was 139 pounds, up 3 pounds from April a year ago.

January to April 2007 commercial red meat production was 15.5 billion pounds, up 2 percent from 2006. Accumulated beef production was up 2 percent from last year, veal was up 12 percent, pork was up 2 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 3 percent.

April 2006 contained 20 weekdays (including no holidays) and 5 Saturdays. April 2007 contained 21 weekdays (including no holidays) and 4 Saturdays.

CHICKEN AND EGGS

United States egg production totaled 7.43 billion during April 2007, down 1 percent from last year. Production included 6.34 billion table eggs, and 1.09 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.03 billion were broiler-type and 66 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during April 2007 averaged 344 million, down 1 percent from last year. **April egg production** per 100 layers was 2,162 eggs, down slightly from April 2006.

All layers in the U.S. on May 1, 2007 totaled 342 million, down 1 percent from last year. The 342 million layers

consisted of 283 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 56.5 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.87 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on May 1, 2007, averaged 71.1 eggs per 100 layers, down slightly from May 1, 2006.

Egg-type chicks hatched during April 2007 totaled 39.7 million, up 12 percent from April 2006. Eggs in incubators totaled 36.8 million on May 1, 2007, down 2 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of **egg-type pullet chicks** for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 274,000 during April 2007, up 8 percent from April 2006.

Broiler-type chicks hatched during April 2007 totaled 801 million, up 2 percent from April 2006. Eggs in incubators totaled 680 million on May 1, 2007, up 3 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 6.69 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during April 2007, up 2 percent from April 2006.

POULTRY SLAUGHTER

United States - Poultry certified wholesome during April 2007 (ready-to-cook weight) totaled 3.38 billion pounds, up 2 percent from the amount certified in April 2006. The March 2007 revised certified total at 3.44 billion pounds, was down 7 percent from March 2006. The March revision represented an increase of 10 thousand pounds from last month's preliminary pounds certified.

The preliminary total live weight of poultry inspected during April 2007 was 4.59 billion pounds, up 4 percent from 4.42 billion pounds a year ago. Young chickens inspected totaled 3.93 billion pounds, up 4 percent from April 2006. Mature chickens, at 61.7 million pounds, were down 4 percent from the previous year. Turkey inspections totaled 584 million pounds, up 7 percent from a year ago. Ducks totaled 15.4 million pounds, down 4 percent from last year.

Young chickens slaughtered during April 2007 averaged 5.50 pounds per bird, up 1 percent from April 2006. The average live weight of mature chickens was 5.86 pounds per bird, down 3 percent from a year ago. Turkeys slaughtered during April 2007 averaged 28.6 pounds per bird, up 1 percent from April 2006.

Ante-mortem condemnations during April 2007 totaled 14.7 million pounds. Condemnations were 0.32 percent of the live weight inspected, compared with 0.32 percent a year earlier. Post-mortem condemnations, at 45.1 million pounds, were 1.32 percent of quantities inspected, compared with 1.36 percent a year earlier.

CROP ACREAGE 'JUNE SURVEY RESULTS'

West Virginia - Winter wheat planted in West Virginia for 2007 is estimated at 8,000 acres, unchanged from 2006. The projected harvest for grain is 6,000 acres, unchanged from 2006.

Corn planted is estimated at 46,000 acres, up 2 percent, or 1,000 acres from last year. Growers expect to harvest 31,000 acres for grain, up 19 percent, or 5,000 acres from last year.

Soybean planted acreage is estimated at 13,000, down 24 percent, or 4,000 acres from 2006. Harvested acreage is projected at 13,000, down 19 percent, or 3,000 acres from 2006.

All hay harvested is forecast at 600,000 acres, up 2 percent, or 10,000 acres from last year. **Alfalfa hay** harvested is expected to total 30,000 acres, down 14 percent, or 5,000 acres from last year. **Other hay** harvested is expected to be 570,000 acres, up 3 percent, or 15,000 acres from last year's harvest.

These estimates were based on results from the June 1, 2007, Agricultural Survey.

United States With 2006 Comparisons:

- Corn planted for all purposes – 92.9 million acres, up 19 percent from 2006 and up 14 percent from 2005. Biotechnology varieties as a percent of corn planted: Bt - 21% of 2007 crop, 25% of 2006 crop; Herbicide Resistant - 24% of 2007 crop, 21% of 2006 crop; Stacked Gene - 28% of 2007 crop, 15% of 2006 crop; All Biotech varieties - 73% of 2007 crop, 61% of 2006 crop.
- Corn harvested for grain – 85.4 million acres, up 21 percent.
- Winter wheat planted – 45.1 million acres, up 11 percent.
- Winter wheat harvested for grain – 37.6 million acres, up 21 percent.
- Oats planted - 3.90 million acres, down 7 percent.
- Oats harvested for grain - 1.61 million acres, up 2 percent.
- All tobacco harvested - 355,670 acres, up 5 percent.
- Burley tobacco harvested – 106,800 acres, up 3 percent.
- All hay for harvest - 61.8 million acres, up 2 percent.
- Alfalfa hay for harvest - 21.5 million acres, up slightly.
- Other hay for harvest – 40.3 million acres, up 2 percent.
- Soybeans planted – 64.1 million acres, down 15 percent. Biotechnology varieties as a percent of all soybeans planted: Herbicide Resistant only - 91% of 2007 crop, 89% of 2006 crop; All Biotech varieties - 91% of 2007 crop, 89% of 2006 crop.
- Soybeans for harvest – 63.3 million acres, down 15 percent.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICAL USAGE

Soybeans: Nineteen States were included in the 2006 survey: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin. **Nitrogen** was applied to 18 percent of the 2006 soybean planted acres in the Program States at an average rate of 16 pounds per acre per year. **Phosphate** was applied to 23 percent of the planted acres, at an average rate of 46 pounds per acre. An average of 80 pounds per acre of **Potash** was applied to 25 percent of the planted acreage. **Sulfur** was applied to 3 percent of the planted acres at an average rate of 11 pounds per acre.

Herbicides were applied to 98 percent of the soybean planted acreage in 2006 in the 19 Program States. **Glyphosate isopropylamine salt** was the most widely applied herbicide with 92 percent of planted acres treated at an average rate of 1.330 pounds per acre per crop year. The herbicide **2,4-D, 2-EHE** was a distant second, in terms of percent of acres treated, with 7 percent of the acres receiving an application with an average rate of 0.503 pounds per acre per year.

Insecticides were applied to 16 percent of the 2006 soybean planted acreage. The three most common, **Lambda-cyhalothrin**, **Chlorpyrifos**, and **Esfenvalerate**, were applied to 6, 5, and 3 percent of the planted acres, respectively.

Fungicide were applied to 4 percent of the soybean planted acreage in the Program States. **Pyraclostrobin** and **Azoxystrobin** were the only two fungicides reported on more than one half of one percent of the planted acres. **Pyraclostrobin** was applied to 2 percent of the planted acres at an average rate of 0.112 pounds per acre per year. **Azoxystrobin** was applied to 1 percent of planted acres at an average rate of 0.106 pounds per acre per year.

Winter Wheat: Fourteen winter wheat producing States were included in the 2006 survey: Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, and Washington. **Nitrogen** applications averaged 64 pounds per acre per crop year and were applied to 80 percent of the Program States' planted acres. An average of 34 pounds of **phosphate** per acre per year was applied to 57 percent of the winter wheat planted acres in the Program States. **Potash** was applied to 17 percent of the planted acreage at an average rate of 49 pounds per acre per year in the States surveyed. **Sulfur** was applied on 14 percent of the acres planted at an average of 14 pounds per acre per year.

Herbicides were applied to 49 percent of the winter wheat planted acreage in 2006 in the 14 Program States. **Glyphosate isopropylamine salt** was the most

widely used herbicide, applied to 15 percent of the planted acreage at a rate of 0.963 pounds per acre per crop year. The two next most commonly applied herbicides, on a per acre basis were **2,4-D, 2-EHE** and **Metsulfuron-methyl**, at 14 percent with average application rates of 0.440 and 0.002 pounds per acre per year, respectively.

Insecticides were applied to 3 percent of the 2006 winter wheat planted acreage. **Chlorpyrifos**, at 2 percent, was the only insecticide applied to more than one half of one percent of the planted acres. It was applied at an average rate of 0.378 pounds per acre per year.

Fungicide treatments were applied to 2 percent of the winter wheat acreage in the Program States. **Azoxystrobin**, **Propiconazole**, and **Pyraclostrobin** were each applied to 1 percent of the winter wheat planted acres. They were applied at 0.055, 0.082, and 0.078 pounds per acre per year respectively.

FARM LABOR

United States - There were 961,000 **hired workers** on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 8-14, 2007, unchanged from a year ago. A large increase in California was enough to offset the large declines in hired workers in most other regions, resulting in a net change of zero from last April. Of these hired workers, 720,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 241,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an **average wage** of \$10.17 per hour during the April 2007 reference week, up 39 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.35 per hour, up 40 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.55 per hour compared with \$9.31 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.41 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year.

The **number of hours worked** averaged 40.6 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down fractionally from a year ago.

The **largest increases in the number of hired farm workers** from last year occurred in California, Florida, and in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) and Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming) regions. In California, last year's reference week was plagued by rainfall and unseasonably cool temperatures, which delayed most fieldwork. This year, a return to more normal weather patterns allowed cotton and rice planting to progress well ahead of average, increasing the demand for field workers. Cold, wet conditions in the Northeast II region slowed most outdoor field activities. However, continued

strong demand from nurseries, greenhouses, and dairies was more than enough to offset the reduced need for workers in most other agricultural sectors. In the Mountain I region, dry, seasonable weather in Idaho offset below normal temperatures and damp conditions in the rest of the region, resulting in a collectively higher demand for hired workers. Florida experienced abnormally dry conditions last April. This year, soil moisture levels have increased, allowing more fieldwork to be accomplished and causing more hired workers to be needed.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. In the Appalachian I and II regions, hard freezes early in the reference week, along with heavy rains later in the week, severely curtailed most field activities. Therefore, the demand for hired workers in both regions was considerably lower. Frigid temperatures, torrential rains, and snow from two strong winter storms caused major fieldwork delays in the Corn Belt II, Southern Plains, and Northeast I regions. Field worker demand was down in all three regions due to these undesirable conditions.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Appalachian II, Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) regions, and Florida. In the Appalachian II and Mountain II regions, the higher wages were due to a larger proportion of salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed the average hourly wage higher. The higher wages in the Delta region were due to a greater percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force. In the Northern Plains region, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. The higher wages in Florida were due to a larger percentage of fresh market vegetable pickers in the work force. Tomatoes and other fresh market vegetables require extra care and skill during harvest to minimize crop damage. Therefore, these workers receive higher wages.

NEXT ISSUE:

May Red Meat Production
Chicken and Eggs
Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts
Milk Production

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