

# Mountain State Reporter

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## JULY RED MEAT PRODUCTION

**West Virginia - Commercial red meat production** during July 2007 totaled 500,000 pounds. This was up 50 percent from July 2006 and up 53 percent from June 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 585,000 pounds live weight, up 50 percent from July 2006. Cattle slaughter totaled 500 head, up 200 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 1,188 pounds, was down 19 pounds from a year ago.

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

**Commercial hog slaughter totaled** 208,000 pounds live weight, up 79 percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 800 head, up 300 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 254 pounds, was up 39 pounds from the previous year.

**Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter totaled** 8,000 pounds live weight, slaughter totaled 100 head, and the average live weight was 143 pounds. Comparison data from the previous year were not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

**United States - Commercial red meat production** for the United States totaled 3.94 billion pounds in July, up 4 percent from the 3.79 billion pounds produced in July 2006.

**Beef production**, at 2.26 billion pounds, was 2 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.90 million head, up 2 percent from July 2006. The average live weight was down 4 pounds from the previous year, at 1,269 pounds.

**Veal production** totaled 10.7 million pounds, 5 percent below July a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 62,600 head, up 8 percent from July 2006. The average live weight was down 36 pounds from last year, at 289 pounds.

**Pork production** totaled 1.66 billion pounds, up 7 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.40 million head, up 7 percent from July 2006. The average live weight was up 1 pound from the previous year, at 264 pounds.

**Lamb and mutton production**, at 13.5 million pounds, was up 2 percent from July 2006. Sheep slaughter totaled 204,700 head, 1 percent above last year. The average live weight was 131 pounds, up 1 pound from July a year ago.

**January to July 2007 commercial red meat production** was 27.5 billion pounds, up 2 percent from 2006. Accumulated beef production was up 1 percent from last year, veal was up 4 percent, pork was up 2 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 3 percent.

July 2006 contained 21 weekdays (including one holiday) and 5 Saturdays. July 2007 contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays.

## TURKEYS RAISED

**United States** - The preliminary estimate of turkeys raised in the United States during 2007 is 272 million, up 4 percent from the number raised during 2006.

The following six States are expected to account for about two-thirds of the turkeys produced in the United States during 2007: **Minnesota**, at 46.0 million turkeys, is up 2 percent from last year; **North Carolina**, at 39.0 million turkeys, is up 4 percent from last year; **Arkansas**, at 31.0 million turkeys, is up 3 percent from a year ago; **Virginia**, at 21.5 million turkeys, is unchanged

from 2006; **Missouri**, at 21.0 million turkeys, is up 5 percent from last year; and **California**, at 16.8 million turkeys, is up 6 percent from last year.

## CROP PRODUCTION

**United States – Corn production** is forecast at 13.3 billion bushels, up 2 percent from last month and 26 percent above 2006. Based on conditions as of September 1, yields are expected to average 155.8 bushels per acre, up 3.0 bushels from August and 6.7 bushels above last year. If realized, this would be the second highest yield on record, behind the 160.4 bushel yield in 2004. Production would be the largest on record as growers expect to harvest the most corn acres for grain since 1933. Expected yields are higher than last month across the northern and central Great Plains and Corn Belt where heavy rainfall during the month provided much-needed moisture for the crop. Yield forecasts in the southern Great Plains and Delta are also higher than last month as early harvest results are better than anticipated. Yields are unchanged or lower than August across much of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States.

**Corn for Grain** acreage harvested and to be harvested for grain is forecast at 85.4 million acres, unchanged from August but up 21 percent from 2006. If realized, this would be the most corn acres harvested for grain since 1933.

The September 1 **corn objective yield data** indicate the highest plant population on record for the combined 10 objective yield States (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin). The September objective yield forecasted ears per acre were also a record high, surpassing the previous record set in 2004. Record high stalk and ear counts were recorded in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. Minnesota had a record high number of plants per acre while the indicated ears per acre were the highest since 2004.

As of September 2, fifty-nine percent of the **corn crop** was rated in good to excellent condition, up 1 percentage point from last month but unchanged from last year. Regionally, crop conditions improved from last month across the northern Corn Belt and adjacent areas of the Great Plains where heavy rainfall during the month provided much-needed moisture for the crop. However, the abundant showers caused some lowland flooding, particularly across the upper Midwest. Crop conditions declined from last month across the southern tier of the Corn Belt and into the Tennessee Valley and Mid-Atlantic States where extremely hot, dry weather stressed the crop. Condition ratings also declined slightly in the southern Great Plains as rainfall from the remnants of Tropical Storm Erin and other thunderstorms added to already abundant soil moisture. Under warmer than normal conditions, fields progressed

rapidly through the dough stage and into the dent and mature stages during the month. On September 2, ninety-six percent of the crop had reached the dough stage or beyond, 4 points ahead of normal, while 79 percent of the crop was dented and beyond, 12 points ahead of normal. Twenty-five percent of the acreage had reached maturity, 8 points ahead of the average pace with all States at or ahead of normal, except Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, and South Dakota.

**Soybean production** is forecast at 2.62 billion bushels, down slightly from the August forecast and down 18 percent from last year's record high. Based on September 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 41.4 bushels per acre, down 0.1 bushel from last month and down 1.3 bushels from last year. Compared with last month, yields are forecast lower across the central Corn Belt, the Tennessee Valley, and the Southeast. Hot, dry conditions contributed to most of the decline, especially in Kentucky and Tennessee, down 8 bushels and 9 bushels from last month, respectively. However, yields increased from the August 1 forecast in the northern Great Plains and northwestern Corn Belt, as beneficial rains fell during the month of August.

**Area for harvest** is forecast at 63.3 million acres, a decrease of 20,000 acres from August and down 15 percent from last year's record high. The September objective yield pod counts are down slightly from the final 2006 survey results, despite pod counts being higher or unchanged in 5 of the 7 major soybean producing States. Hot, dry weather across southern Illinois and Missouri hindered pod setting and development in those two States. By the end of August, 96 percent of the U.S. crop was at or beyond the pod setting stage, equal to last year but 2 percentage points ahead of the 5-year average. As of September 2, fourteen percent of the acreage was dropping leaves or beyond, 2 points ahead of 2006 and 3 points ahead of normal.

As of September 2, fifty-six percent of the U.S. **soybean crop** was rated good to excellent, 2 percentage points below the rating at the end of July and 3 points below the same week in 2006. Crop conditions declined during August across most of Southeast, southern Corn Belt, Delta, and Tennessee Valley as hot temperatures for much of the month stressed the soybean crop. The largest decline in condition from last month was seen in Kentucky, where only 16 percent of the crop was rated as good to excellent, a decline of 53 points from the end of July. In contrast, crop conditions did improve slightly during August across the northern Great Plains, the northern Corn Belt, and Ohio as needed rain fell in those areas. However, these areas also experienced some flooding from heavy rain at times. Despite the slight improvement, conditions in Ohio and the Great Lakes States were still worse than 2006, with the crop condition rating in Michigan down 34 points from 2006. Record high yields are forecast in Louisiana, Nebraska, and South Dakota, along with a record tying yield in Mississippi.

## MUSHROOMS

**United States** - Sales of the 2006-07 U.S. mushroom crop are 827 million pounds, down 2 percent from the 2005-06 season and 3 percent below two years ago. Value of sales for the 2006-07 U.S. mushroom crop is \$956 million, up 7 percent from the previous season and 5 percent above the 2004-05 season. The number of growers, at 279, is down 27 from last season. The average price is \$1.16 per pound, up 11 cents from 2005-06.

Sales reported by growers of **Agaricus mushrooms** for fresh market are 697 million pounds, down 1 percent from last season. Sales of Agaricus mushrooms for processing are 117 million pounds, 9 percent below last season. Value of sales for all Agaricus mushrooms totaled 915 million dollars, up 8 percent from the previous season and 6 percent above 2004-05.

Value of sales for commercially grown **specialty mushrooms** in 2006-07 is \$40.4 million, virtually unchanged from the 2005-06 season. A specialty grower is defined as having at least 200 natural wood logs in production or some commercial indoor growing area, and 200 dollars in sales. The average price per pound received by growers, at \$3.16, is up 14 cents from the previous season.

Sales of **Shiitake mushrooms** totaled 6.70 million pounds for the 2006-07 season, down 13 percent from the previous season. Price per pound received by growers, at \$3.36, is up 11 cents from 2005-06. Sales volume of Oyster mushrooms, at 4.75 million pounds, is up 4 percent from the previous season. Price per pound received by growers, at \$2.41, is up 26 cents from the previous season. Sales of exotic mushrooms, other than Shiitake or Oyster, are 1.37 million pounds, up 15 percent from last season. Price per pound received by growers, at \$4.75, is down 10 cents from 2005-06.

## FARM LABOR

**United States** - There were 1,205,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 8-14, 2007, up 1 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 847,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 358,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.04 per hour during the July 2007 reference week, up 32 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.31 per hour, up 38 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$9.80 per hour compared with \$9.49 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.44 per hour, was up 37 cents from last year.

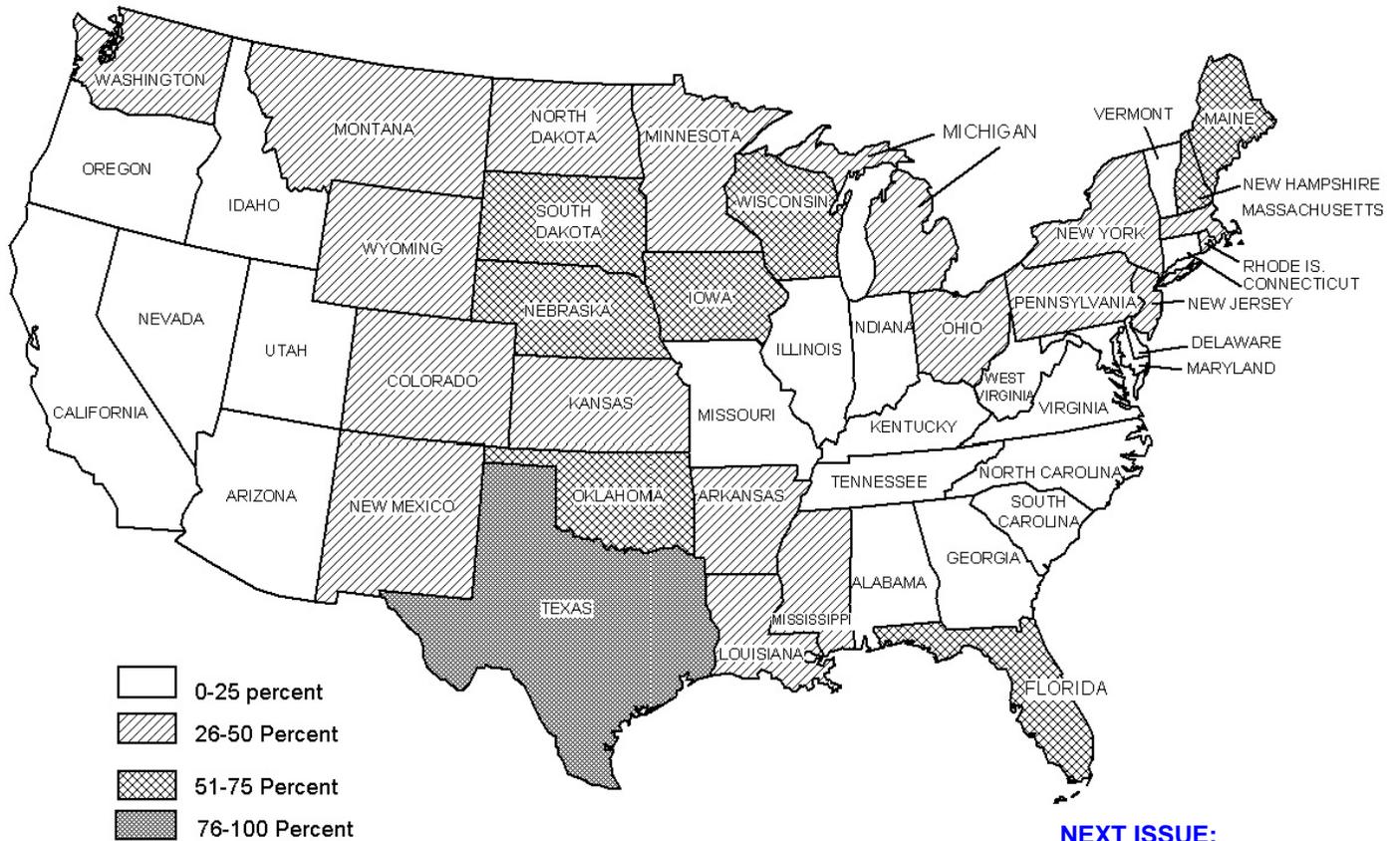
The number of hours worked averaged 41.6 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The **largest increases** in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in the Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. In the Lake region, continued strong demand from the dairy industry in Minnesota and Wisconsin and increased fruit harvest in Michigan led to a greater need for hired workers. In the Southern Plains region, wet conditions due to flooding in Oklahoma were more than offset by drier conditions over most of Texas, resulting in an overall increased demand for hired workers. Strong demand from the equine industry in Kentucky caused a greater need for livestock workers in the Appalachian II region. Also, drier conditions compared with last year's reference week in Kentucky and West Virginia led to a higher demand for field workers. In the Northeast I region, hot, dry conditions in New York offset the effects of wet weather in parts of New England, causing a slightly greater demand for hired workers. Drought conditions were slowly working their way into the region, necessitating more irrigation of fruit and vegetable crops in New York.

The **largest decreases** in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), and Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) regions. In the Northeast II and Southeast regions, extreme drought conditions severely curtailed crop growth. Therefore, the demand for hired workers was down considerably in both regions. Winter wheat harvest in the Mountain I and II regions was behind last year's pace, reducing the need for hired workers. In the Delta region, wet weather in Louisiana and Mississippi delayed field activities and led to a decreased demand for hired workers. Drier conditions in Arkansas were not enough to offset the wetness in the other two States.

**Hired farm worker wage rates** were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Northeast II, Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), California, Delta, and Mountain II regions. In the Northeast II region, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. The higher wages in the Mountain III, Delta and Mountain II regions were due to a greater percentage of salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed the average hourly wage higher. In California, there has been continued concern about potential labor shortages due to increased border security. Therefore, farm operators paid workers more in order to compete with the higher paying construction industry.

### Pasture and Range Condition, Percent Rating Good or Better Week Ending September 23, 2007



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Small Grains Summary

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