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LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

April Red Meat Production

WEST VIRGINIA – Commercial red meat production during April 2005 totaled 400,000 pounds. This was down 2 percent from April 2004 and down 14 percent from March 2005 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 539,000 pounds live weight, up 7 percent from April 2004. Cattle slaughter totaled 600 head, up 100 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 980 pounds, was up 49 pounds from a year ago.

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

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 110,000 pounds live weight, down 8 percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 500 head, unchanged from the previous year. The average live weight, at 233 pounds, was down 10 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 3.62 billion pounds in April, down 2 percent from the 3.71 billion pounds produced in April 2004.

Beef production, at 1.89 billion pounds, was 3 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.56 million head, down 5 percent from April 2004. The average live weight was up 20 pounds from the previous year, at 1,220 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.0 million pounds, 7 percent below April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 61,600 head, down 13 percent from April 2004. The average live weight was 23 pounds above last year, at 353 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.70 billion pounds, down 1 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 8.44 million head, 2 percent below April 2004. The average live weight was 3 pounds above the previous year, at 271 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.5 million pounds, was down 11 percent from April 2004. Sheep slaughter totaled 220,800 head, 14 percent below last year. The average live weight was 141 pounds, up 5 pounds from April a year ago.

January to April 2005 commercial red meat production was 14.6 billion pounds, down 1 percent from 2004. Accumulated beef production was down 2 percent from last year, veal was down 12 percent, pork was down slightly from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 8 percent.

April 2004 contained 22 weekdays (including no holidays) and 4 Saturdays. April 2005 contained 21 weekdays (including no holidays) and 5 Saturdays.

CHICKENS & EGGS

April Egg Production Up Slightly

U.S. egg production totaled 7.39 billion during April 2005, up slightly from last year. Production included 6.29 billion table eggs, and 1.10 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.04 billion were broiler-type and 63 million were egg-type.

The total number of layers during April 2005 averaged 344 million, up slightly from a year earlier. April egg production per 100 layers was 2,148 eggs, unchanged from April 2004.

All layers in the U.S. on May 1, 2005, totaled 343 million, up slightly from a year ago. The 343 million layers consisted of 283 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 57.4 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.68 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on May 1, 2005, averaged 71.4 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from a year ago.

Egg-Type Chicks Hatched Up 2 Percent

Egg-type chicks hatched during April 2005 totaled 38.3 million, up 2 percent from April 2004. Eggs in incubators totaled 35.9 million on May 1, 2005, up 8 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 308,000 during April 2005, down 10 percent from April 2004.

Broiler Hatch Up 2 Percent

Broiler-type chicks hatched during April 2005 totaled 790 million, up 2 percent from April 2004. Eggs in incubators totaled 663 million on May 1, 2005, up slightly from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 6.80 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during April 2005, up 6 percent from April 2004.

EGG PRODUCTS

Shell Eggs Broken Up 5 Percent

UNITED STATES -- Shell eggs broken totaled 167 million dozen during April 2005, up 5 percent from April a year ago.

April 2005 contained 21 weekdays and five Saturdays. April 2004 contained 22 weekdays and four Saturdays.

During calendar year 2005 through April, shell eggs broken totaled 662 million dozen, up 9 percent from the 608 million dozen broken in the comparable period in 2004. Total edible liquid from eggs broken in 2005 was 864 million pounds, up 11 percent from 2004.

Data presented in this report were compiled from inspection reports of the Food Safety and Inspection Service. The best available data at time of publication were used.

POULTRY SLAUGHTER

Ready-to-Cook Weight Up 1 Percent

UNITED STATES -- Poultry certified wholesome during April 2005 (ready-to-cook weight) totaled 3.35 billion pounds, up 1 percent from the amount certified in April 2004. Updated totals for March 2005 show that 3.55 billion pounds were certified.

The preliminary total live weight of poultry inspected during April 2005 was 4.48 billion pounds, up 1 percent from 4.46 billion pounds a year ago. Young chickens inspected totaled 3.83 billion pounds, up 1 percent from April 2004, and mature chickens at 71.5 million pounds, were up 5 percent from the previous year. Turkey inspections totaled 560 million pounds, down 1 percent, and ducks totaled 14.7 million pounds, up 2 percent from last year.

Young chickens slaughtered during April 2005 averaged 5.37 pounds per bird, up 3 percent from April 2004. The average live weight of mature chickens was 5.49 pounds per bird, down 3 percent from a year ago. Turkeys slaughtered during April 2005 averaged 28.9 pounds per bird, up 5 percent from April 2004.

Ante-mortem condemnations during April 2005 totaled 14.2 million pounds. Condemnations were 0.32 percent of the live weight inspected, compared to 0.44 percent a year earlier. Post-mortem condemnations, at 46.6 million pounds (N.Y. dressed weight), were 1.16 percent of quantities inspected, compared with 1.27 percent a year earlier.

JUNE CROP PRODUCTION

Winter Wheat Production Down 3 Percent from May

UNITED STATES -- Winter wheat production is forecast at 1.55 billion bushels, down 3 percent from the May 1 forecast but 3 percent above 2004. Based on June 1 conditions, the U.S. yield is forecast at 44.1 bushels per acre, down 1.3 bushels from the previous forecast. Grain area totals 35.1 million acres, unchanged from May 1.

Hard Red production is down 5 percent from a month ago to 960 million bushels. Soft Red is down less than 1 percent from last month and now totals 301 million bushels. White production totals 285 million bushels, up 1 percent from last month. Of the White production total, 28.6 million bushels are Hard White and 256 million bushels are Soft White. This is the first year that production levels for Hard White and Soft White are available.

FARM LABOR

Hired Workers Down 10 Percent, Wage Rates Up 1 Percent From a Year Ago

UNITED STATES -- There were 978,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 10-16, 2005, down 10 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 746,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 232,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.34 per hour during the April 2005 reference week, up 11 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.55 per hour, up 8 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.23 per hour compared with \$8.95 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.73 per hour, was up 14 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 39.8 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down 2 percent from a year ago.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California, Florida, and in the Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), and Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) regions. In California, a weak El Niño weather pattern brought unseasonably cool temperatures and record rainfall to the southern half of the State from January through March, affecting quality and interrupting planting, harvesting, and crop development. The wet weather had the largest impact on vegetable crops and nursery and floriculture production, which kept the demand for hired workers well behind the previous year. Field work in Florida was hampered by wet soils in northern areas, and estimated citrus production was down considerably from 2004. These factors combined to reduce the need for hired workers. In the Mountain II region, heavy snowfall and rains in Colorado slowed field activities, so fewer workers were required. The cool, wet spring and below normal soil temperatures in the Northeast II region delayed planting of field and vegetable crops and slowed the development of hay and pastures. Thus, the demand for hired workers was lower. In the Northern Plains region, wet conditions limited field activities and lessened the need for hired workers.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico), and

Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions. Ideal weather conditions in the Southern Plains region allowed land preparation and planting to progress rapidly, increasing the need for field workers. In the Delta region, Louisiana's warm, dry weather more than offset the wet conditions experienced in Arkansas and Mississippi, which led to greater demand for hired workers. In the Mountain III region, continued expansion in the dairy, vegetable, nursery, and greenhouse industries necessitated more hired workers. Strong demand from vegetable, tobacco, and Christmas tree operations in the Appalachian I region kept worker numbers above last year.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Southern Plains, Mountain III, Northern Plains, and Florida regions. The higher wages in the Southern Plains were due to a larger concentration of full time workers. In the Mountain III and Florida regions, wages were up due to a higher percentage of skilled vegetable, nursery, and greenhouse workers. Wages in the Northern Plains region were higher because of more salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed their hourly wage higher.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICAL USAGE— SOYBEANS AND WINTER WHEAT

UNITED STATES -- The agricultural chemical use estimates in this report refer to on-farm use of commercial fertilizers and pesticides on targeted crops for the 2004 crop year. Targeted crops included durum wheat, peanuts, soybeans, other spring wheat, and winter wheat. Farm and ranch operators were enumerated late in the growing season after the farm operator had indicated that planned applications were completed.

The data were compiled from two surveys, the Agricultural Resources Management Survey (ARMS) and Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). Data collection occurred primarily during the months of September to December of 2004.

Soybeans: Eleven states were included in the 2004 survey: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, and South Dakota. Phosphate was the most commonly used fertilizer on soybeans; it was applied to 26 percent of acreage in the Program States. A total of 1,095.9 million pounds of phosphate were applied to the Program State acreage. North Dakota had the highest phosphate coverage of any other state, applying phosphate to 63 percent of their planted soybean acreage. South Dakota had the second highest coverage, applying phosphate to 45 percent of their fields. All other states applied phosphate to less than 40 percent of their planted acreage. Iowa only applied it to 11 percent of their

planted acreage. Potash was the next most frequently applied fertilizer, with 23 percent of acres planted being treated; a total of 1,733.9 million pounds were applied. Again great variability existed, Ohio applied potash to 43 percent of its planted acreage, while Kansas only treated 5 percent. Nitrogen had the smallest acreage coverage at only 21 percent of Program State acres, with 358.1 million pounds distributed.

Herbicides were applied to 97 percent of the Program State acreage though one active ingredient clearly dominated. Glyphosate was used on 87 percent of all the acres treated, 0.73 pounds of glyphosate were applied per acre per application, and 57.7 million total pounds of glyphosate were applied. The next four most widely used active ingredients were also herbicides, but their percent of acres treated were much smaller. Chlorim-ethyl, sulfentrazone, trifluralin, and pendimethalin rounded out the top five active ingredients at 7, 6, 5, and 4 percent of acres treated, respectively.

Insecticides were used on 4 percent of the Program State acres, but individual active ingredients only covered a maximum of 1 percent of soybean Program State acreage. Fungicides were applied to only 1 percent of the Program State acres; only the active ingredient azoxystrobin was reported.

Winter Wheat: Producers in the Program States (Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, and Washington) applied nitrogen fertilizer to 84 percent of the winter wheat planted acreage.

The average number of nitrogen applications per acre was 2.0 with an average application rate of 44 pounds per acre; 2,733 million total pounds were applied.

Phosphate was applied on 55 percent of the winter wheat planted acreage in the Program States; 934 million total pounds were applied. Potash was applied to 16 percent of the planted winter wheat acreage in the Program States. Producers in Ohio applied potash to 90 percent of their winter wheat planted acreage; Washington and Nebraska producers applied potash to only 3 percent of the planted acreage.

In the Program States, 45 percent of the winter wheat planted acreage was treated with herbicides. The most widely used herbicides were metsulfuron-methyl, applied to 15 percent of the winter wheat acreage, followed by glyphosate and 2,4-D, both applied to 13 percent of the planted acreage in the States surveyed.

Insecticide applications were made to 7 percent of the winter wheat planted acres in 2004. Chlorpyrifos, the most widely used insecticide, was only applied to 3 percent of Program State acres planted.

**Livestock Slaughter
Farm Production Expenditures
2005 June Acreage Report
Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts--Annual
July Crop Production
Milk Production
Chickens & Eggs
Mink**

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