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# Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

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**Montana Agricultural Statistics Service**

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## HIGHLIGHTS:

Cattle & Calves Inventory  
Sheep & Lambs Inventory  
Wool & Mohair Production  
Chicken Inventory & Annual Egg  
Production  
December Egg Production

## January 1, 2004 Cattle Inventory

Montana's January 1, 2004 inventory of cattle and calves was 2.40 million head, down 2% from the revised 2003 inventory of 2.45 million head. Prolonged drought conditions coupled with record high cattle prices during the last half of the year resulted in significant reductions in the number of steers, other heifers, and calves in the inventory. The cattle and calf inventory is the lowest since 1991 when it was 2.35 million head.

The inventory of beef cows that had calved on January 1, 2004 was up 3% from a year ago to 1.472 million head. The number of milk cows in the state was unchanged from year ago to 18,000 head. There were 1.54 million calves born during 2003, up 1% from the previous year.

Beef heifer replacements, weighing 500 pounds or more, were up 8% from the previous year to 420,000 head. Milk heifer replacements decreased 3,000 head from last year to 8,000 head. The number of other heifers weighing 500 lbs or more, decreased 25% from last year to 142,000 head. This is the lowest number of other heifers in the inventory since 1982 when 107,000 head were on hand.

The inventory of steers weighing 500 lbs or more, dropped 17% from last year to 200,000 head and is the lowest inventory since 1991. The inventory of calves weighing less than 500 lbs, at 50,000 head, was down 29% from last year. This is the lowest inventory of calves weighing less than 500 lbs on record for January 1. Inventory of bulls, weighing 500 pounds or more, decreased 10,000 head from last year to 90,000 head. The number of cattle and calves on full feed that will be sent directly

to slaughter was unchanged from a year ago at 70,000 head.

All cattle and calves in the United States as of January 1, 2004, totaled 94.9 million head, 1% below the 96.1 million on January 1, 2003. All cows and heifers that have calved, at 41.9 million, were down 1% from the 42.1 million on January 1, 2003. Beef cows, at 32.86 million, were down slightly from January 1, 2003. Milk cows, at 8.99 million, were down 2% from January 1, 2003.

Other class estimates on January 1, 2004 and the change from January 1, 2003, are as follows:

- All heifers 500 pounds and over, 19.3 million, down 1%.
- Beef replacement heifers, 5.52 million, down 2%.
- Milk replacement heifers, 4.02 million, down 2%.
- Other heifers, 9.80 million, down 1%.
- Steers weighing 500 pounds and over, 16.3 million, down 2%.
- Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over, 2.21 million, down 2%.
- Calves under 500 pounds, 15.2 million, down 2%.
- Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter in all feedlots, 13.8 million, up 4%.
- The combined total of calves under 500 pounds, and other heifers and steers over 500 pounds outside of feedlots, 27.5 million, down 4%.

The 2003 calf crop was estimated at 37.9 million head, down 1% from 2002. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 27.7 million, down 1% from 2002.

Special Note: Preliminary 2002 Census data were used in the review process for the 2004 and revised 2003 estimates. States requiring 5-year historical revisions may carry a disjointed data series from their current historical data series. Any revisions for estimates from January 1, 2003 and prior years will be published in the Cattle, Final Estimates 1999-2003 publications which is scheduled for release on April 30, 2004.

## January 1, 2004 Sheep Inventory and 2003 Wool Production

Montana's sheep and lamb inventory was a record low 300,000 head on January 1, 2004, down 3% from last year.

Breeding sheep and lamb numbers remain unchanged at 280,000 head. Ewes one year and older were unchanged at 220,000 head. Rams one year and older, at 7,000 head, were down 1,000 head from the previous year. Replacement lambs, at 53,000 head, were up 1,000 head from a year ago. The 2003 lamb crop was 280,000 head, a decrease of 5% from the 2002 lamb crop.

Market sheep and lambs on hand January 1, 2004 totaled 20,000 head down 10,000 head from 2003. Of that total 2,000 head were market sheep. Of the 18,000 head of market lambs, only 6% weighed less than 65 pounds, 22% weighed 65-84 pounds, 44% were in the 85-105 pound category, and 28% were over 105 pounds.

Montana wool growers produced 2.6 million pounds of wool during 2003, down 7% from 2002. The 2003 average price per pound of wool increased 27 cents to \$1.03 per pound, which increased the value of all wool produced by 26% for a total value of \$2.674 million dollars. The total head shorn decreased 6% from 2002 to 272,000 head. The average fleece weight decreased from 9.6 pounds in 2002 to 9.5 pounds in 2003.

All sheep and lamb inventory in the United States on January 1, 2004, totaled 6.09 million head, down 3% from 2003 and 9% below two years ago. The inventory has trended downward since peaking at 56.2 million head in 1942. Breeding sheep inventory declined to 4.48 million head on January 1, 2004, down 4% from 4.66 million head on January 1, 2003. Ewes one year old and older, at 3.60 million head, were 4% below last year. Continued on back page.

SPECIAL THANKS to all livestock producers responding to our January cattle and sheep inventory surveys.

### Cattle and Calves Inventory January 1, 2002-2004

Class of Livestock	Montana				United States			
	2002	2003	2004	'04/'03	2002	2003	2004	'04/'03
	1,000 head				1,000 head			
All Cattle and Calves	2,450	2,450	2,400	98%	96,704	96,100	94,882	99%
Cows & Heifers that have calved	1,470	1,450	1,490	103%	42,229	42,125	41,851	99%
Beef Cows	1,451	1,432	1,472	103%	33,118	32,983	32,860	100%
Milk Cows	19	18	18	100%	9,112	9,142	8,991	98%
Heifers 500 pounds and over	560	590	570	97%	19,778	19,628	19,341	99%
For beef cow replacement	370	390	420	108%	5,561	5,624	5,517	98%
For milk cow replacement	13	11	8	73%	4,060	4,114	4,020	98%
Other heifers	177	189	142	75%	10,057	9,891	9,804	99%
Steers 500 pounds and over	245	240	200	84%	16,799	16,554	16,280	98%
Bulls 500 pounds and over	100	100	90	90%	2,244	2,248	2,206	98%
Calves less than 500 pounds	75	70	50	71%	15,763	15,545	15,204	98%
Cattle on Feed	70	70	70	100%	13,860	13,220	13,811	104%

### Calf Crop, 2001-2003

	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02
Calves born during year (1,000 hd.)	1,550	1,520	1,540	101%	38,280	38,224	37,903	99%

### Sheep and Lambs Inventory January 1, 2002-2004

Class of Livestock	Montana				United States			
	2002	2003	2004	'04/'03	2002	2003	2004	'04/'03
	1,000 head				1,000 head			
All Sheep and Lambs	335	310	300	97%	6,685	6,300	6,090	97%
Breeding sheep	300	280	280	100%	4,913	4,658	4,480	96%
One year old & older								
Ewes	232	220	220	100%	3,980	3,770	3,601	96%
Rams	8	8	7	88%	200	193	189	98%
Replacement Lambs	60	52	53	102%	734	695	691	99%
Market Sheep & Lambs	35	30	20	67%	1,772	1,642	1,610	98%
Sheep	1	1	2	200%	72	67	67	100%
Lambs	34	29	18	62%	1,700	1,575	1,543	98%

### Lamb Crop, 2001-2003

Item	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02
Lamb crop (1,000 head)	340	295	280	95%	4,495	4,357	4,120	95%

### Sheep and Lambs Shorn and Wool Production

Item	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02	2001	2002	2003	'03/'02
Sheep Shorn (000) Hd.								
All Sheep and Lambs	318	289	272	95%	5,689	5,476	5,057	92%
All Wool Shorn (000 Lbs.)	2,978	2,788	2,597	94%	43,016	41,322	38,114	92%
Wool: Price & Value								
Dollars Per Pound	0.45	0.76	1.03	136%	0.36	0.53	0.72	136%
Value (000 Dollars)	1,340.0	2,119.0	2,675.0	126%	15,311	21,876	27,408	125%

## Agricultural Prices Received for December 2003

December full month crop prices were mostly lower compared with November 2003. Montana's winter wheat average price was \$3.62 per bushel, down \$0.03 from the previous month; spring wheat dropped \$0.03 to \$3.80 per bushel; and durum wheat prices decreased \$0.04 to \$3.90 per bushel. Feed barley prices were unchanged from the previous month at \$2.16, and malt barley prices jumped \$0.54 to \$3.51 per bushel. Oat prices for December 2003 were \$1.58 per bushel.

The mid-January price for alfalfa hay was down \$3.00 to \$74.00 per ton and all other hay dropped \$1.00 to \$67.00 per ton. The mid-January grain prices were mixed from the previous month with winter wheat price averaging \$3.67 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.86 per bushel, durum wheat was \$3.97 per bushel, and feed barley was \$2.05 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of December were mostly higher than the previous month. Steer and heifer prices

increased \$0.40 to \$98.90 per cwt. and cows rose \$1.70 to \$51.50. The average price for calves jumped \$4.00 to \$114.00 per cwt. Sheep prices were up \$0.30 to \$43.00 per cwt, but lamb prices dropped \$8.00 to \$108.00 per cwt. Milk prices increased \$0.30 per cwt from last month to \$15.00 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-January averaged \$95.40 per cwt.; cows averaged \$45.40 per cwt.; calves averaged \$114.00 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged \$15.10 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for December and changes from November were as follows: winter wheat was \$3.63, up \$0.08, spring wheat was \$3.75, up \$0.08; durum wheat was \$3.96, up \$0.05; the all barley price was \$2.94, up \$0.08, and steer and heifer prices were \$95.70, down \$4.30 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-January winter wheat price was \$3.70 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.73 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.03 per bushel, all wheat was \$3.73 per bushel, malt barley was \$3.00 per bushel, feed barley was \$2.20 per bushel, and all barley was \$2.70. Steer and heifer prices were \$81.20 per cwt, cow prices were

\$45.80, calves were \$105.00 per cwt., all hog prices were \$35.70 per cwt, and all egg prices were \$0.806 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in January, at 111, based on 1990-92=100, is 2 points (1.8 percent) below the December Index. The Livestock Products Index is down 5 points (4.5 percent) from December while the All Crops Index is unchanged. Lower prices received for cattle, lettuce, milk, and tomatoes more than offset higher commodity prices for broilers, soybeans, corn, and eggs. The seasonal change in the mix of commodities farmers sell, based on the past 3-year average, also affects the overall index. Increased average marketings of cattle, soybeans, corn, and strawberries offset decreased marketings of cotton, grapes, tobacco, and cottonseed.

This preliminary All Farm Products Index is up 11 points (11 percent) from January 2003. The Food Commodities Index, at 112, is 3 points (2.6 percent) below last month but 14 points (14 percent) above January 2003.

## United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	December 2002	January 2003	December 2003	January 2004
Prices Received	100	100	113	111
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	125	126	130	130
Ratio 2/	80	79	87	85

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

## Montana Average Farm Prices Received

Commodity	UNIT	Monthly Average				Change From Previous		Mid-Month Average	
		Montana		U.S.		Month	Year	Montana	U.S.
		Dec. 2002	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec 2002	Jan. 15, 2004	Jan. 15, 2004
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu.	4.24	3.65	3.62	3.63	-0.03	-0.62	3.67	3.70
Durum Wheat	Bu.	4.67	3.94	3.90	3.96	-0.04	-0.77	3.97	4.03
Spring Wheat	Bu.	4.48	3.83	3.80	3.75	-0.03	-0.68	3.86	3.73
All Wheat	Bu.	4.45	3.77	3.75	3.69	-0.02	-0.70	3.81	3.73
Barley, All	Bu.	3.00	2.57	3.08	2.94	+0.51	+0.08	3.05	2.70
Feed Barley	Bu.	2.24	2.16	2.16	2.30	0	-0.08	2.05	2.20
Malt Barley	Bu.	3.23	2.97	3.51	3.22	-0.54	+0.28	n/a	3.00
Oats	Bu.	n/a	n/a	1.58	1.58	0	0	n/a	1.50
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	86.00	76.00	77.00	87.90	+1.00	-9.00	74.00	83.60
All Other Hay	Ton	75.00	69.00	68.00	66.90	-1.00	-7.00	67.00	71.40
All Hay Baled	Ton	85.00	74.00	76.00	81.30	+2.00	-9.00	72.00	79.30
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	83.50	98.50	98.90	95.70	+0.40	+15.40	95.40	81.20
Cows	Cwt	36.00	49.80	51.50	49.40	+1.70	+15.50	45.40	45.80
Beef Cattle 1/	Cwt	72.60	88.80	90.40	90.50	+1.60	+17.80	85.90	77.40
Calves	Cwt	94.60	110.00	114.00	112.00	+4.00	+19.40	114.00	105.00
Sheep 2/	Cwt	40.60	42.70	43.00	44.40	+0.30	+2.40	n/a	n/a
Lambs 2/	Cwt	94.00	116.00	108.00	98.40	+8.00	+14.00	n/a	n/a
All Milk	Cwt	12.10	14.70	15.00	13.70	+0.30	+2.90	15.10	13.10

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. 2/ Mid-month prices for sheep and lambs discontinued January 1996.

## January 1, 2004 Sheep Inventory

(continued from front page)

Market sheep and lambs on January 1, 2004, totaled 1.61 million head, down 2% from January 1, 2003. Market lambs comprised 96% of the total. Market lambs by weight were 27% under 65 pounds, 16% were between 65 - 84 pounds, 23% were between 85 - 105 pounds, and 30% were over 105 pounds.

The 2003 lamb crop of 4.12 million head was down 5% from 2002 and established a new record low. The 2003 lambing rate was 109 lambs per 100 ewes one year old and older on January 1, 2003, unchanged from 2002.

Shorn wool production in the United States during 2003 was 38.1 million pounds, down 8% from 2002. Sheep and lambs shorn totaled 5.06 million head, down 8% from 2002. The average price paid for wool sold in 2003 was \$0.72 per pound for a total value of \$27.4 million dollars, up 25% from \$21.9 million dollars in 2002.

## December Egg Production

U.S. egg production totaled 7.53 billion during December 2003, up 1 percent from last year. Production included 6.48 billion table eggs, and 1.06 billion hatching eggs, of which 995 million were broiler-type and 61.0 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during December 2003 averaged 339 million, down 1 percent from a year earlier. December egg production per 100 layers was 2,225 eggs, up 2 percent from December 2002.

## 2003 Chicken Inventory and Egg Production

There were 485,000 total chickens on Montana farms and ranches on December 1, 2003, up 1 percent from a year ago. The December 1, 2003 inventory included 355,000 layers 20 weeks old and older, 40,000 pullets between 13 and 20 weeks old, and 89,000 pullets 13 weeks and under. The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2002 was \$1.5 million, up 1 percent from last year. The average value per bird, at \$3.10, was unchanged from the 2002.

Montana chickens produced 107 million eggs during the year ending November 30,

2003, up 3 percent from last year. The state had an average of 355,000 layers in 2003, up 4 percent from a year ago. The average production per layer on hand was 301 eggs, down 1 percent from 2002.

The U.S. inventory of chickens on hand on December 1, 2003 (excluding commercial broilers) was 449 million birds, up 1 percent from last year. Egg production during the year ending November 30, 2003 totaled a record high 87.2 billion eggs, up slightly from 2002. Table egg production, at 74.4 billion eggs, was up slightly from the previous year. Hatching egg production, at 12.8 billion eggs, decreased 1 percent from 2002.

U.S. layer numbers during 2003 averaged 335 million, down 1 percent from the year earlier. The annual average production per layer on hand in 2003 was 259 eggs, up one percent from the 2002 average of 257.

The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2003 was \$1.11 billion, up 5 percent from December 1, 2002. The average value increased from \$2.37 per bird on December 1, 2002, to \$2.47 per bird on December 1, 2003.

### COMING IN NEXT REPORTER

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Estimates	Farm Labor
Red Meat Production	Egg Production

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