



Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

survey results summary issued twice monthly by the
Montana Agricultural Statistics Service

USDA-NASS

Issue: 04-05 (0279-0394) Released: March 9, 2004

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Wheat & Barley Movement
- Farms & Land in Farms
- All Wheat County Estimates
- Agricultural Prices
- Honey Production

Farm Numbers & Land in Farms

The **number of farms** and ranches in Montana increased to 28,000 during 2003, 100 more than the revised number of farms last year. Revisions were made for years 1998 through 2002 to reflect the results of the 2002 Census of Agriculture data. Farms and ranches are sub-grouped by economic classes to give a clearer picture of where the changes occurred. The smallest economic sales category, the \$1,000 to \$9,999 sales group, contains the largest number of farms at 11,900, up 100 farms from 2002. The next economic sales category, \$10,000 to \$99,999, shows 10,600 farms in 2003 compared with 10,500 in 2002; and the economic sales class of \$100,000 or more is 5,500, down from 5,600 in 2002.

The **land in farms and ranches** is estimated at 60.1 million acres, up 300,000 acres from 2002. Montana's average farm size is 2,146 acres. The economic sales breakdown of land in

farm and ranches follows: \$1,000 to \$9,999 - 4.3 million acres the same as 2002; \$10,000 to \$99,999 - 17.8 million acres, up from 17.7 million last year; \$100,000 or more of sales - 38.0 million acres, up from the 37.8 million acres in 2002. These numbers show that producers are shifting between sales categories with many moving into lower value of sales and others increasing their size of farms and value of sales. The acreage increase in the largest economic sales category reflects the consolidation of operations necessary to compete in today's tough agricultural environment.

The \$100,000 to \$249,999 sales category has 3,700 farms and ranches, down from 3,800 in 2002 comprising 18.8 million acres of land, up from 18.6 million acres last year. The \$250,000 to \$499,999 sales category has 1,200 farms and ranches comprising of 10.4 million acres of land compared with 1,200 farms and ranches and 10.5 million acres a year earlier. The \$500,000 plus sales category includes 600 farms and ranches comprising of 8.8 million acres of land, equaling the number of farms in 2002, but with an increase of 100,000 acres. (Continued on back page)

Wheat and Barley Movement

Montana wheat shipped to out-of-state destinations during the June 2003 - November 2003 period, at 51.0 million bushels, was 15%

below the same period last year. Over 80% of wheat shipped during this period headed west, totaling 40.9 million bushels, down 22% from a year earlier. Movements to eastern destinations during this period, totaled 4.4 million bushels, up 19% from a year ago. Other and unknown destinations totaled 5.8 million bushels, up from 3.9 million bushels a year ago. Wheat shipped by rail, amounted to 42.3 million bushels, 83% of total shipments. Wheat trucked during this period was 8.7 million bushels compared with 3.2 million bushels last year. The percentage of wheat shipped by truck was 17% of the total, compared with 5% last year.

Montana barley shipped to out-of-state destinations during the June 2003 - November 2003 period was 6.3 million bushels, down 12% from the same period last year. Shipments of barley out of Montana headed for eastern destinations fell from 3.6 million bushels last year to 3.3 million bushels this year. Shipments to western destinations were up 145% from the same period last year, at 2.7 million bushels. Shipments to other destinations dropped from 1.7 million bushels last year to 0.3 million bushels this year. Barley shipped by rail amounted to 5.8 million bushels, up 0.9 million bushels from last year. Barley hauled by rail was 91% of total movement, up from 68% for the same period last year.

Shipments Out-of-State	June 2002 - November 2002 1/				June 2003 - November 2003 1/			
	Winter Wheat	Spring Wheat 2/	All Wheat	Barley	Winter Wheat	Spring Wheat 2/	All Wheat	Barley
<i>District of Origin</i>	<i>(000) Bushels</i>							
West 3/	900	2,147	3,047	808	650	2,218	2,868	455
North Central	4,452	20,797	25,249	5,986	10,607	11,619	22,226	5,593
Northeast	1,632	24,835	26,467	85	89	19,487	19,576	143
Central	889	1,150	2,039	291	1,795	901	2,696	115
South Central	1,990	587	2,577	13	2,187	649	2,836	0
Southeast	82	664	746	0	525	300	825	0
TOTAL SHIPPED	9,945	50,180	60,125	7,183	15,853	35,174	51,027	6,306
<i>Mode & Destination</i>	<i>(000) Bushels</i>							
Trucked East	74	220	294	352	38	206	244	60
Trucked West	1,159	1,296	2,455	487	5,565	2,362	7,927	211
Trucked Other 4/	119	380	499	1,440	292	272	564	272
Total By Truck	1,352	1,896	3,248	2,279	5,895	2,840	8,735	543
Rail East	0	3,437	3,437	3,232	20	4,106	4,126	3,203
Rail West	8,392	41,680	50,072	1,384	8,846	24,101	32,947	2,501
Rail Other 4/	201	3,167	3,368	288	1,093	4,126	5,219	59
Total by Rail	8,593	48,284	56,877	4,904	9,959	32,333	42,292	5,763
TOTAL SHIPPED	9,945	50,180	60,125	7,183	15,854	35,173	51,027	6,306

1/ This report is based on data reported by commercial elevators and licensed truckers. The reported data were expanded to represent 100% coverage of elevator capacity. 2/ Includes durum. 3/ Northwest and Southwest were combined to avoid disclosing individual operations. 4/ Other and unknown destinations.

This report is made possible through funds provided by the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee.

ALL WHEAT: Acreage, Yield, and Production, by Counties and Districts, 2003

COUNTY & DISTRICT	ALL						IRRIGATED			
	Planted Acres 1/	Net Planted Acres 2/	Harvested Acres	Yield Per Acre Bu.	Production		Planted Acres 1/	Harvested Acres	Yield Per Acre Bu.	Pro- duction Bu.
					Bushels	Rank				
Deer Lodge	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Flathead	22,000	22,000	21,300	42.5	906,000	28	9,900	9,300	53.0	493,000
Granite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lake	11,800	11,800	10,900	50.6	552,000	34	6,600	6,400	67.5	432,000
Lincoln	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mineral	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Missoula	1,700	1,700	1,400	33.6	47,000	47	--	--	--	--
Powell	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ravalli	1,000	1,000	900	46.7	42,000	48	500	500	70.0	35,000
Sanders	900	900	800	23.8	19,000	51	--	--	--	--
Other	1,200	1,200	1,200	51.7	62,000	--	1,300	1,200	60.0	72,000
NORTHWEST	38,600	38,600	36,500	44.6	1,628,000	--	18,300	17,400	59.3	1,032,000
Blaine	183,100	183,100	174,500	20.0	3,484,000	17	5,300	5,300	39.6	210,000
Chouteau	531,900	521,800	503,800	33.9	17,082,000	1	--	--	--	--
Glacier	123,300	123,300	121,700	23.2	2,818,000	18	1,200	1,200	46.7	56,000
Hill	441,300	441,300	436,200	29.5	12,884,000	2	--	--	--	--
Liberty	248,500	247,500	232,400	25.5	5,937,000	6	1,800	1,800	57.2	103,000
Phillips	124,500	124,500	116,700	21.5	2,510,000	19	2,700	2,300	36.5	84,000
Pondera	157,000	155,600	148,800	35.3	5,251,000	9	8,900	8,800	64.0	563,000
Teton	122,600	122,500	116,300	35.1	4,082,000	14	5,500	5,400	57.4	310,000
Toole	231,800	231,800	222,300	22.6	5,017,000	11	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	4,200	4,200	56.0	235,000
NORTH CENTRAL	2,164,000	2,151,400	2,072,700	28.5	59,065,000	--	29,600	29,000	53.8	1,561,000
Daniels	297,000	297,000	294,000	18.8	5,536,000	8	--	--	--	--
Dawson	166,300	166,300	161,300	25.2	4,069,000	15	2,400	2,300	65.7	151,000
Garfield	88,000	87,400	83,000	23.4	1,946,000	22	--	--	--	--
McCone	231,100	231,000	225,700	24.9	5,610,000	7	2,800	2,800	55.0	154,000
Richland	156,000	156,000	153,100	27.6	4,219,000	12	12,500	12,400	70.3	872,000
Roosevelt	345,400	345,300	339,300	26.9	9,143,000	3	6,000	5,900	64.4	380,000
Sheridan	359,000	359,000	354,500	23.8	8,453,000	4	1,400	1,400	55.0	77,000
Valley	301,200	300,800	296,600	23.4	6,953,000	5	5,400	5,300	46.0	244,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
NORTHEAST	1,944,000	1,942,800	1,907,500	24.1	45,929,000	--	30,500	30,100	62.4	1,878,000
Broadwater	36,600	36,600	35,700	33.1	1,182,000	25	9,800	9,700	68.8	667,000
Cascade	136,100	134,900	121,300	34.1	4,137,000	13	--	--	--	--
Fergus	172,100	172,100	166,500	30.7	5,119,000	10	700	600	41.7	25,000
Golden Valley	23,100	23,100	19,400	22.9	445,000	38	--	--	--	--
Judith Basin	82,800	82,800	79,700	25.0	1,995,000	21	--	--	--	--
Lewis & Clark	12,200	12,200	11,900	26.9	320,000	41	--	--	--	--
Meagher	9,700	9,400	8,400	26.5	223,000	44	--	--	--	--
Musselshell	35,600	35,600	27,500	26.0	715,000	30	--	--	--	--
Petroleum	26,200	26,200	23,800	25.0	594,000	32	--	--	--	--
Wheatland	44,200	44,200	39,400	14.6	577,000	33	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	7,200	6,600	55.6	367,000
CENTRAL	578,600	577,100	533,600	28.7	15,307,000	--	17,700	16,900	62.7	1,059,000
Beaverhead	7,400	7,400	7,400	47.7	353,000	40	3,400	3,400	90.0	306,000
Gallatin	49,700	49,700	49,400	47.0	2,322,000	20	16,700	16,700	73.3	1,224,000
Jefferson	2,800	2,800	2,800	28.2	79,000	46	--	--	--	--
Madison	8,700	8,700	8,500	42.7	363,000	39	4,200	4,000	55.5	222,000
Silver Bow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	100	100	50.0	5,000
SOUTHWEST	68,600	68,600	68,100	45.8	3,117,000	--	24,400	24,200	72.6	1,757,000
Big Horn	91,200	91,000	90,100	40.6	3,662,000	16	10,100	9,900	71.7	710,000
Carbon	5,700	5,700	5,200	25.6	133,000	45	--	--	--	--
Park	10,500	10,500	10,300	29.9	308,000	42	1,700	1,700	52.9	90,000
Stillwater	32,900	31,800	24,600	19.7	485,000	36	--	--	--	--
Sweetgrass	900	900	800	18.8	15,000	53	--	--	--	--
Treasure	4,500	4,500	4,500	60.0	270,000	43	2,300	2,300	90.0	207,000
Yellowstone	87,500	85,200	76,200	24.8	1,893,000	23	1,200	1,200	86.7	104,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	300	300	53.3	16,000
SOUTH CENTRAL	233,200	229,600	211,700	32.0	6,766,000	--	15,600	15,400	73.2	1,127,000
Carter	52,200	46,200	31,600	19.2	608,000	31	--	--	--	--
Custer	28,700	28,700	22,100	22.9	506,000	35	--	--	--	--
Fallon	40,100	39,700	34,500	29.0	1,002,000	26	--	--	--	--
Powder River	22,900	22,300	18,700	25.3	474,000	37	--	--	--	--
Prairie	32,700	32,700	30,500	27.7	845,000	29	2,700	2,700	71.9	194,000
Rosebud	46,200	46,200	45,500	29.6	1,345,000	24	900	900	81.1	73,000
Wibaux	40,200	40,100	37,000	25.4	938,000	27	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	300	300	83.3	25,000
SOUTHEAST	263,000	255,900	219,900	26.0	5,718,000	--	3,900	3,900	74.9	292,000
MONTANA	5,290,000	5,264,000	5,050,000	27.2	137,530,000	--	140,000	136,900	63.6	8,706,000

1/ Counties with less than 500 acres planted of one class of wheat are combined into "other" counties to avoid disclosure of individual information.

2/ Planted acres less winter wheat replanted to spring wheat.

January Ag Prices Received

January 2004 full-month crop prices were lower compared with December 2003. Montana's winter wheat average price was \$3.54 per bushel, down \$0.08 from the previous month; spring wheat remained steady at \$3.80 per bushel; and durum wheat prices rose \$0.08 to \$3.98 per bushel. Feed barley prices dropped \$0.13 from the previous month to \$2.03, and malt barley prices decreased \$0.11 to \$3.40 per bushel.

The mid-February price for alfalfa hay was up \$1.00 to \$75.00 per ton from January, but all other hay decreased \$1.00 to \$66.00 per ton. Mid-February grain prices were mostly higher than the previous month with winter wheat price averaging \$3.60 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.96 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.00 per bushel, and feed barley was \$2.07 per bushel.

Livestock prices for the full month of January were mostly lower than the previous month, except for calves and sheep. Steer and heifer prices decreased \$4.70 to \$94.20 per cwt, while cows

dropped \$6.20 to \$45.30. The average price for calves increased \$3.00 to a record high \$117 per cwt. Sheep prices rose \$0.90 to \$43.90 per cwt and lamb prices moved up \$6.00 to \$114 per cwt. Milk prices decreased \$0.70 per cwt from last month to \$14.30 per cwt. Steer and heifer prices for mid-February averaged \$93.50 per cwt.; cows averaged \$46.80 per cwt.; calves averaged \$111 per cwt.; and milk prices averaged \$13.20 per cwt.

Nationally, prices for January and changes from December were as follows: winter wheat was \$3.66, up \$0.03; spring wheat was \$3.66, down \$0.09; durum wheat was \$3.97, up \$0.01; the all barley price was \$2.71, down \$0.14, and steer and heifer prices were down \$85.40, down \$10.30 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-February winter wheat price was \$3.60 per bushel, spring wheat was \$3.75 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.03 per bushel, all wheat was \$3.68 per bushel, malt barley was \$2.88 per bushel, feed barley was \$2.13 per bushel, and all barley was \$2.62. Steer and heifer prices were \$81.60 per cwt, cow prices were

\$46.20, calves were \$110 per cwt., all hog prices were \$43.20 per cwt., and market egg prices were \$0.75 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in February at 113, based on 1990-92=100, is 2 points (1.8 percent) above the January Index. The Livestock Products Index increased 1 point (0.9 percent) from January while the All Crops Index increased 2 points (1.8 percent). Producers received higher commodity prices for soybeans, broilers, corn, and hogs. Lower prices were received for cattle, lettuce, eggs, and broccoli. 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 milk, cattle, broilers, and eggs offset decreased marketings of soybeans, corn, tobacco, and wheat. This preliminary All Farm Products Index is up 14 points (14 percent) from February 2003. The Food Commodities Index increased 2 points (1.8 percent) from last month to 114, and is 18 points (19 percent) above February 2003.

United States Index Summary

INDEX (1990-92=100)	January 2003	February 2003	January 2004	February 2004
Prices Received	100	99	111	113
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/ Ratio 2/	126	128	130	130
	79	77	85	87

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.
		Jan. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Jan. 2004	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2003	Feb. 15, 2004	Feb. 15, 2004
Dollars									
Winter Wheat	Bu.	3.97	3.62	3.54	3.66	-0.08	-0.43	3.60	3.60
Durum Wheat	Bu.	4.62	3.90	3.98	3.97	+0.08	-0.64	4.00	4.03
Spring Wheat	Bu.	4.15	3.80	3.80	3.66	0.00	-0.35	3.96	3.75
All Wheat	Bu.	4.16	3.75	3.72	3.68	-0.03	-0.44	3.82	3.68
Barley, All	Bu.	2.80	3.08	2.52	2.71	-0.56	-0.28	2.55	2.62
Feed Barley	Bu.	2.21	2.16	2.03	2.15	-0.13	-0.18	2.07	2.13
Malt Barley	Bu.	3.12	3.51	3.40	2.97	-0.11	+0.28	N/A	2.88
Oats	Bu.	1.88	1.58	N/A	1.46	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.51
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	87.00	77.00	74.00	83.60	-3.00	-13.00	75.00	84.70
All Other Hay	Ton	76.00	68.00	67.00	71.40	-1.00	-9.00	66.00	69.90
All Hay Baled	Ton	85.00	76.00	72.00	79.30	-4.00	-13.00	73.00	79.90
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	82.70	98.90	94.20	85.40	-4.70	+11.50	93.50	81.60
Cows	Cwt	37.40	51.50	45.30	46.10	-6.20	+7.90	46.80	46.20
Beef Cattle 1/ Calves	Cwt	76.40	90.40	80.00	80.90	-10.40	+3.60	83.70	77.80
Sheep 2/ Lambs 2/ All Milk	Cwt	95.80	114.00	117.00	110.00	+3.00	+21.20	111.00	110.00
	Cwt	43.50	43.00	43.90	43.80	+0.90	+0.40	N/A	N/A
	Cwt	103.00	108.00	114.00	104.00	+6.00	+11.00	N/A	N/A
	Cwt	12.80	15.00	14.30	13.20	-0.70	+1.50	13.20	13.30

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

Land in Farms (continued)

The number of farms in the **United States** in 2003 is estimated at 2.13 million, 0.4 percent fewer than in 2002. The decline in farms occurred in all sales categories except the \$250,000-\$499,999 class which remained unchanged. Total land in farms, at 938.8 million acres, decreased 1,550,000 acres from 2002. The average size farm during 2003 was 441 acres, an increase of one acre from the previous year. The decline in the number of farms and land in farms continues to reflect consolidation in farming operations and competition for agricultural land for other uses.

The U.S. number of agricultural operations in the economic sales class \$1,000-\$9,999 declined 0.2 percent to 1,199,270 in 2003. Farms with sales of \$10,000-\$99,999 decreased 0.7% from 2002 to 600,530. The number of farms with \$100,000-\$249,999 in sales was 167,230, a decline of 0.9 percent. In the \$250,000-\$499,999 sales class, the number of farms was unchanged from the previous year. The number of agricultural operations with \$500,000 or more of sales declined 0.4% from 2002. Generally favorable weather, stronger commodity prices, higher value of commodities produced, farm

consolidation, and competition for other uses of farmland contributed to the shifting of farms among the sales categories.

2003 Honey Production

Montana honey producers with five or more colonies during 2003 produced 9.6 million pounds of honey, up 13 percent from 2002. The estimate of honey production includes production by colonies that were in the state for part of the year. There were 145,000 colonies producing honey in 2003, compared with 134,000 colonies in 2002. The increase in colonies and honey production is due to more beekeepers who were in the state part of the year. The honey yield per colony was 66 pounds, up 3 pounds from a year ago. Stocks on hand on December 15, 2003 was estimated at 1.9 million pounds, up from 1.1 million pounds in 2002.

Prices for Montana honey increased 10 cents per pound from last year to a record high \$1.48 per pound in 2003. The value of 2003 honey production was also a record high at \$14.2 million dollars, up 22 percent from last year.

Honey production in the United States from producers with five or more colonies

totaled 181 million pounds, up 5 percent from 2002. There were 2.59 million colonies producing honey in 2003, up 1 percent from 2002. Yield per colony averaged 69.9 pounds, up 5 percent from the 66.7 pounds in 2002. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State and yields per colony may therefore be understated. Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 40.7 million pounds on December 15, 2003, up 3 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

U.S. honey prices increased to a record high during 2003 to 140.4 cents, up 6 percent from 132.7 cents in 2002. Prices are based on retail sales by producers and sales to private processors and cooperatives. State level honey prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, co-op and private channels. U.S. honey prices for each color class are derived by weighing quantities sold for each marketing channel at the U.S. level. Honey prices for 2003 were higher than the previous year for all color classes. Some 2002 crop honey was sold at the higher prices in 2003, which caused some revisions to the 2002 crop prices.

COMING IN NEXT REPORTER

Sheep & Lamb Losses	February Red Meat Production
Annual Red Meat Production	
Potato Stocks	
Milk Production	
Cattle on Feed	
Egg Production	

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