

LIVESTOCK



CATTLE AND CALVES

Severe drought was the primary reason that New Mexico's inventory of all cattle and calves dropped significantly to 1,390,000 head as of January 1, 2012. Milk cow inventory increased from 322,000 to 335,000 head. Dairy producers retained 120,000 heifers for replacement. Beef cow inventory decreased 12.2 percent to 435,000 head which was the lowest recorded inventory. Ranchers held 75,000 heifers for beef cow replacement. The number of steers weighing 500 pounds or more decreased to 110,000 head. Bull inventory this year came in at 35,000 head. Calves on hand weighing less than 500 pounds, including both beef and dairy calves, totaled 190,000 head. The 2011 calf crop was estimated at 620,000 head. Gross income from cattle and calves totaled \$1,694 million in 2011, up 28 percent from the previous year.

RANGE AND PASTURE FEED 2011

The reporting of range and pasture conditions began in late-March to early-April. Conditions were reported at 24 percent very poor, 37 percent poor, 27 percent fair, and 12 percent good with conditions getting slowly worse through the month of April. Ranchers began to trim herds due to extreme drought conditions. Range and pasture conditions were mostly fair to poor. Topsoil moisture reported for mid-May was 74 percent very short, 22 percent short, and 4 percent adequate; this continued to improve through the month of May. Mild rains were seen in mid-May and early June, but moisture was still mostly very short. Moisture began to deteriorate during mid-June browning pastures. July brought some rain, increasing the moisture, but still very short. August rains were significant, but soil moisture and range conditions remained the same due to triple digit temperatures.

September temperatures were above normal with a good amount of rain. However, moisture rose again in late September to 48 percent very short, 41 percent short, and 11 percent adequate. As of early October, ranchers continued to sell off underweight calves early due to drought. Hay was becoming hard to find and purchase. Rangeland continued to remain dry. Temperatures were dropping to near freezing in many parts of the state. Late October started to see range and pasture conditions improve to 59 percent very poor, 28 percent poor, 9 percent fair, 3 percent good, and 1 percent excellent.

DAIRY

Beginning inventory of milk cows was 335,000 head on January 1, 2012, up 4 percent from a year earlier. The average number during 2011 was 329,000. Milk production was up slightly from 7.88 billion pounds in 2010 to 8.18 billion pounds in 2011. Cash receipts from marketing's increased 28 percent from the previous year. New Mexico ended the year ranked ninth in the nation in milk production

SHEEP AND LAMBS

Sheep and lamb inventory totaled 100,000 head as of January 1, 2012, 10,000 fewer head than 2011 inventory. The number of breeding sheep was 89,000 head, a decrease of 6,000 head from 2011. Market sheep and lambs decreased 4,000 head from the previous year to 11,000 head. The 2011 lamb crop decreased 6,000 head from 2010 to 50,000 lambs. In 2011 wool was sheared from 90,000 sheep and lambs, producing 700,000 pounds. The value of wool produced increased to \$1.29 million as the average price of wool increased \$0.35 per pound to \$1.85 per pound.