

BLUESTEM (FLINT HILLS) AND OSAGE PASTURE

KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA



JUNE 1, 1971

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June 1 condition of grazing feed on the Bluestem pastures of Kansas was slightly above last year but was down sharply for the Osage pastures of Oklahoma, according to the Crop Reporting Board. Substantial rainfall during May in most of the Kansas Bluestem pasture area improved prospects for summer grazing. In the Osage pasture area of Oklahoma, rains the last few days of May and in early June put some water in ponds and improved the outlook for summer grazing.

Movement of cattle into the Bluestem pasture area of Kansas, January, 1971 through May, 1971, was the largest since 1963. The January 1, 1971 inventory of cattle and calves in the Bluestem-Osage area was up moderately from a year earlier.

KANSAS BLUESTEM (FLINT HILLS) PASTURES: Reported condition of pasture feed in the Bluestem area of Kansas on June 1 averaged 89 percent of normal. This compares with 88 percent last year and is appreciably above the 10-year average of 83 percent. This year pasture feed developed slowly due to cold weather and lack of moisture in southern counties. However, substantial rains in May provided moisture and growth of feed was rapid as the weather warmed. Stock water supplies are generally ample with streams running and ponds well filled.

Inshipments for the first 5 months of 1971 are up considerably from last year and appear to be the largest in eight years. Total inshipments into the Bluestem area for the January-May period are estimated at 215,000 head, compared with 190,000 head a year earlier. The survey indicated 95 percent of the cattle were shipped in by truck as compared to 94 percent last year.

On June 1, the condition of cattle in the Bluestem area was 89 percent of normal compared with 88 percent last year and a 10-year average of 86 percent. As a result of the mild winter cattle held over in the area were generally in good shape on June 1. Marketings of grass fat cattle in the Bluestem area are expected to reach a peak about September 12 this year, three days earlier than a year ago but otherwise the latest in records beginning in 1950.

On June 1, stockmen in the Bluestem area report the pastures filled to 96 percent of capacity compared with 92 percent a year ago and a 10-year average of 96 percent. Cattle were slow moving into the Bluestem area in the early months due to slow feed growth and high prices of cattle. Later shipments picked up sharply when considerable numbers of cattle from the drought areas of Texas and Oklahoma were brought into the Bluestem area for grazing.

OKLAHOMA OSAGE PASTURES: On June 1, grazing conditions in the Oklahoma Osage pasture area were 78 percent of normal, the lowest since 1962 when the reported condition was 74 percent. The dry summer of 1970 left ranges in poor condition. Rains in September improved fall grazing, but growth was not sufficient to provide a good cover of cured grass for fall grazing. Cold spring weather and light rainfall during March and April caused grass to get off to a slow start. Scattered rainfall during May improved pasture conditions in some localities. Rains the last few days of May and early in June have put some water in ponds and greatly improved the outlook for summer grazing.

Cattle condition in the Osage area, at 81 percent, is the lowest reported condition since data for that series began in 1928. The condition of cattle is low because of the poor quality grazing during the winter and the slow start of grass this spring.

**CATTLE AND PASTURE FEED CONDITIONS AND PERCENT OF PASTURES FILLED**  
 (Equivalent of reported conditions: 49 or below is very bad; 50-59 bad; 60-69 poor; 70-79 fair; 80-89 good; 90-99 very good; 100 and over is excellent)

Area	Condition June 1						Percent of available pasture filled June 1		
	Pasture feed			Cattle			Percent		
	1960-69 av.	1970	1971	1960-69 av.	1970	1971	1960-69 av.	1970	1971
Kansas, Bluestem	83	88	89	85	88	89	96	92	96
Oklahoma, Osage	86	90	78	81	88	81	95	93	90

**CATTLE AND CALVES: JANUARY 1 INVENTORY AND INSHIPMENTS**

Area	January 1 Inventory			Inshipments January-May		
	1969	1970	1971	1969	1970	1971
	1,000 head					
Kansas, Bluestem	1,132	1,116	1,158	185	190	215
Oklahoma, Osage	144	154	<u>1/</u>	32	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
Total both areas	1,276	1,270	<u>1/</u>	217	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>

1/ Not available.