

BLUESTEM (FLINT HILLS) AND OSAGE PASTURE REPORT - JUNE 1, 1964  
KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA

June 12, 1964

The condition of grazing feed June 1 on the Bluestem pastures of Kansas was below a year earlier but higher on the Osage pastures of Oklahoma according to the Crop Reporting Board. However, conditions are expected to improve from late May rains received in both areas.

Early spring growth was hindered throughout the Bluestem and Osage pasture area by inadequate moisture supplies. Hot temperatures and high winds sapped soil moisture and the situation was becoming critical in some sections until the last week in May. Rainfall throughout the entire area during late May relieved the dry conditions and hastened development of new grass forage supplies. The situation on June 1 was much improved over what it had been prior to the rains, and adequate summer grazing anticipated if normal moisture is received during the season. The quality of feed is reported to be very good and cattle and calves are expected to make good gains.

Inshipments of cattle and calves into the Bluestem-Osage area during the January-May period this year are estimated at 190,000 head. This is 36 percent below the 296,000 head shipped into this area during the same period in 1963 and 26 percent below the 5-year average inshipments for January-May. The January 1, 1964 inventory of cattle and calves in the Bluestem-Osage pasture area totaled 1,096,000 head, up 5 percent from a year earlier and the highest of record dating to 1937.

Most cattle and calves went on pastures in good flesh due to adequate feed supplies during the mild and open winter. Early spring grazing was limited because of the short moisture supply and the condition of cattle on June 1 was below a year earlier in the Bluestem area, but above a year earlier in the Osage area.

The peak of cattle marketings from the Bluestem-Osage areas is expected in late August and early September. This is comparable with the peak in other recent years.

KANSAS BLUESTEM (FLINT HILLS) PASTURES. Bluestem pastures started slowly this spring and development of grass was limited by the short soil moisture supply throughout the Flint Hills. Light April rains sustained grass forage but hot temperatures and high winds the first three weeks of May reduced soil moisture to a critically low level. However, during the last week of the month a slow, steady rain was received throughout the Bluestem area measuring a minimum of 2 inches in all counties. Some areas received even more moisture--from 5 to 7 inches--and by June 1 conditions were greatly improved. Prospects for an adequate supply of summer forage this season are good assuming that normal summer precipitation is received. There was some runoff in many Bluestem area localities and the level of water in ponds was improved. Bluestem pasture feed condition on June 1 was 79, down 3 points from a year earlier and 8 points below the 1958-62 average. The lower condition this season is a reflection of the short moisture supplies prior to the late May rainfall.

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The 14 county Bluestem pasture area of Kansas received 147,000 head of cattle and calves during the first 5 months of 1964. This is 40 percent below the 247,000 head shipped into this area during the January-May period in 1963 and 33 percent below average. On January 1, 1964, there were 950,000 head of cattle and calves on hand in this area, up 3 percent from the inventory on hand a year earlier. The 1964 inventory was the highest of record, dating back to 1937.

Most cattle went on Bluestem pastures in good flesh due to the adequate grazing conditions during the mild, open winter. There were some inshipments of thin cattle from the Southern States. Good gains are anticipated from the strong feed available. The June 1 condition of cattle was 84, a decrease of 3 points from both the previous year and average. The average shipping date is expected to be during the first week in September, about the same as for most recent year.

OKLAHOMA OSAGE PASTURES. Development of Osage pasture grazing feed was benefited by late May rainfall. Grass in northern and eastern areas was being utilized extensively on June 1. In southern sections of the county, some pastures showed evidence of overgrazing and growth was slightly below normal until moisture received over the Memorial Day weekend hastened development. Prospects for summer grazing are good, although additional rain will be needed throughout the summer because sub-soil moisture has not been fully replenished this season. The condition of pasture feed on June 1 was 84, up 5 points from a year earlier, 10 points above 2 years earlier but 3 points below the 1958-62 average.

Cattle shipments during January-May into the Osage pasture area are estimated at 43,000 head, a 12 percent decline from the same period a year earlier. The January 1, 1964, inventory for this area was 146,000 head, compared with 128,000 head the previous year.

Cattle are in good condition, largely because of a mild, open winter. Spring weather has been favorable for cattle, although too cool for optimum development of grass. Favorable gains are anticipated in view of the advancement of Osage pastures because of the current favorable moisture supply. Cattle condition on June 1 was 86, up 2 points from a year earlier but 1 point below the 5-year average. Peak marketings from this area are expected to be in late August, similar to the movement of recent years.

Pastures in the Osage area were 94 percent filled on June 1 this year. Last year Osage pastures were 96 percent filled and the average for June 1 is 90 percent filled.

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			Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
	1958-62 av.	1963	1964	1958-62 av.	1963	1964			
Kansas, Bluestem	87	82	79	87	87	84	92	98	97
Oklahoma, Osage	87	79	84	87	84	86	90	96	94

CATTLE AND CALVES: JANUARY 1 INVENTORY AND INSHIPMENTS

Area	January 1 inventory			Inshipments January-May		
	1958-62 av.	1963	1964	1958-62 av.	1963	1964
	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head	1,000 head
Kansas, Bluestem	838	920	950	220	247	147
Oklahoma, Osage	125	128	146	37	49	43
Total both areas	963	1,048	1,096	257	296	190

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