

WESTERN

RANGE AND LIVESTOCK



March 1, 1971

17 Western States

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Range feed condition on March 1 in the 17 Western States was lower than a year earlier and also below the 10-year average, according to the Crop Reporting Board. Record low temperatures were reported in several States during February.

Reported condition of cattle and calves was 79 percent on March 1, 1 point below average. Sheep and lamb condition, at 80 percent, was also 1 point below average.

RANGE FEED CONDITION: Range feed condition at 71 percent was 5 points below March 1, 1970 and 3 points below average, but was the same as last month. Ranges were covered with snow in the northern tier of States but were generally accessible in other areas. However, supplemental feeding continued in most areas.

Prospects for spring grass are favorable at this time in most areas. Moisture shortages continue in the Southwest and Southern Great Plains.

CATTLE CONDITION: Condition of cattle was 79 percent, down 3 points from March 1, 1970 and 1 point below average. March 1 cattle condition was below a year earlier in all States except Colorado, where it was unchanged. Calving has begun in most States with light losses reported, except in areas that had heavy snows.

SHEEP AND LAMB CONDITION: Reported condition of sheep and lambs declined one point during the month and averaged 80 percent on March 1. This is 1 point below average and 4 points below March 1, 1970. Lambing continues in most areas with light losses.

TEXAS GOAT CONDITION: Goat condition declined 2 points to 72 percent on March 1. This is 8 points below a year earlier and 5 points below average.

CONDITIONS, MARCH 1, 1971, WITH COMPARISONS
EQUIVALENTS OF REPORTED CONDITIONS: Below 60, bad; 60-69, poor; 70-79, fair; 80-89, good; 90-99, very good; and 100 and over is excellent

State	RANGE FEED				CATTLE				SHEEP			
	:10 yr.:		:		:10 yr.:		:		:10 yr.:		:	
	: av. :	: Mar.:	: Feb.:	: Mar.:	: av. :	: Mar.:	: Feb.:	: Mar.:	: av. :	: Mar.:	: Feb.:	: Mar.:
	:1960-	:1970:	:1971:	:1971:	:1960-	:1970:	:1971:	:1971:	:1960-	:1970:	:1971:	:1971:
	:1969 :	:	:	:	:1969 :	:	:	:	:1969 :	:	:	:
N. D.	: 66	69	62	68	: 82	84	82	83	: 83	83	82	83
S. D. (West.)	: 73	73	67	69	: 82	84	81	81	: 83	85	81	82
Nebr. (West.)	: 77	80	77	74	: 84	86	84	83	:			
Kans. (West.)	: 72	73	66	67	: 80	82	79	77	: 81	83	81	77
Okla.	: 73	72	67	68	: 78	80	77	77	:			
Texas	: 72	76	65	64	: 77	78	76	75	: 78	82	75	72
Mont.	: 70	75	72	72	: 83	86	84	85	: 83	85	84	85
Idaho	: 80	79	78	80	: 85	86	85	85	: 86	85	84	85
Wyo.	: 74	75	78	76	: 84	84	84	83	: 84	86	85	85
Colo.	: 75	79	77	77	: 82	84	84	84	: 84	85	86	85
New Mex.	: 76	77	73	73	: 80	80	80	79	: 80	81	81	80
Ariz.	: 76	71	73	71	: 78	77	77	75	: 79	78	77	76
Utah	: 74	78	77	76	: 81	85	83	83	: 82	85	82	83
Nev.	: 74	79	76	76	: 81	85	81	82	: 82	81	83	80
Wash.	: 75	77	71	71	: 84	84	84	83	: 85	85	87	86
Oreg.	: 79	83	76	76	: 84	85	83	82	: 83	86	81	83
Calif.	: 79	81	78	77	: 81	83	80	81	: 83	87	81	85
Western	:				:				:			
Range States:	: 74	76	71	71	: 80	82	80	79	: 81	84	81	80

DETAILS BY STATES

NORTH DAKOTA: Limited snowfall and above normal temperatures during most of February aided in maintaining livestock in good condition. Local shortages of hay may occur from the long feeding season, but feed grain supplies are expected to be ample. Shrinkage has been no more than usual. Dams and dugouts are filling as the snow melts and stock water supplies are generally good. Prospects for spring grazing are becoming more favorable but spring rains will be especially needed in the southeast and south central areas of the State.

SOUTH DAKOTA (WESTERN): Range feed condition in western South Dakota improved 2 percentage points during February, due primarily to warmer temperatures that melted much of the snow cover. Grazing remains limited as grass is generally quite short and some ranges are covered with snow. Stock water supplies are greatly improved as stock dams that had been low since last fall were filled by runoff from the melting snow. Livestock remain in good condition. Calving was just getting started in late February and lambing was well underway. No unusual death losses were reported.

NEBRASKA (WESTERN): Weather was highly variable in Nebraska's range country during February. Cold temperatures prevailed during the first week while the rest of the month averaged warmer than usual. Most of the Sandhills and southwest received generous precipitation in the form of rain and snow on February 18 and 19. A storm on February 22 brought some snow to all range areas, with blizzard conditions in small areas of the Sandhills and southwest. March 1 range feed condition at 74 percent was well below a year ago and normal. Cattle condition at 83 percent was below a year earlier but near normal. Calving has started on many ranches and is in full swing on a few.

KANSAS (WESTERN): Condition of range feed in the western two-thirds of Kansas was 67 percent of normal, slightly above last month but moderately below a year ago. Only limited use was made of stubble fields during the month because of two severe snow storms. Supplemental feeding of hay and roughage increased during the month and an air lift of hay was implemented for stranded cattle. Feed supplies are short in some localities but appear to be adequate in most areas. Condition of cattle and sheep on March 1 was moderately below last month and last year.

OKLAHOMA: Condition of range feed in Oklahoma was poor to fair at the first of March, but moisture supplies ranged from abundant to ample to get grass started. The outlook for early spring grazing is good. A blizzard on February 21 in northwest Oklahoma stranded cattle from feed supplies and caused considerable loss, particularly of newborn calves. A great number of strayed cattle traveled with the storm. Northwestern cattle lost condition which will take time to replace. Feed supplies continue low and replenishment is expensive. Marketings have been moderate and demand and prices have held up well. Death loss in the State has been light except in the blizzard area.

TEXAS: Range and livestock conditions continued to decline during February. Blizzard conditions stretched across much of the Plains, greatly increasing the need for supplemental feeding during the last part of February. Moisture from the heavy snow was not as good as had been hoped as strong winds caused drifts along fence lines and ditches leaving only light coverings on open fields. The drifts along the fence lines enabled cattle to cross fences and scatter over wide areas. Rains covered much of the remainder of the State offering partial relief to dry winter ranges and small grain pastures. Supplemental feeding again helped to limit the drop in livestock condition but severe weather conditions are beginning to affect livestock. However, prices at auctions remain very strong as demand for feeders puts pressure on market prices.

MONTANA: Winter ranges and pastures were covered with ice and hard crusted snow during most of February, which made grazing difficult. Warm winds thawed some of the snow and ice and enabled range livestock to do a little grazing. Feed supplies appear adequate. Melting snow replenished stock water supplies in dams and reservoirs. Cattle are in above-average condition. Weather has been favorable for calving and lambing which are well underway. Good calf and lamb crops are expected. Sheep are wintering well. Shearing of sheep is underway in places.

IDAHO: Range feed condition was about average throughout the State on the first of March. Annual grasses at lower elevations were providing some early grazing. Above normal precipitation continued to boost soil moisture supplies. Cattle were in good condition on March 1, average for this time of the year. Supplemental feeding of hay and protein is prevalent in all areas. Generally, hay supplies are ample; however, some ranchers were reporting local shortages. Calving increased with generally favorable weather, especially during the early part of the month. Sheep were in about average condition for March 1. Lambing was well underway, particularly in the southern part of the State.

WYOMING: Weather conditions during February were mixed but no extreme temperature or moisture conditions were recorded. Light to moderate amounts of snowfall were recorded statewide and moderate to heavy amounts fell in the mountains. Range feed condition declined 2 points during February. Livestock are still in good condition and no exceptional death losses have been reported.

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COLORADO: Colorado range feed condition was fair to good during February. Cattle and sheep condition remained good in most areas of the State. Winter range grazing was limited to open areas and supplemental feeding was required in normal to less-than-normal amounts in most areas. Calving and lambing were off to a good start. Stock water supplies remained adequate throughout the State.

NEW MEXICO: The State continues very dry in spite of snows in the north and east during February. Dry winds hastened depletion of the little moisture that was received. Winter range is about gone and cattle are coming off wheat pastures. Supplemental feeding is general. Stock water continues short. Livestock losses have been light to date. Calving is underway in all parts of the State.

ARIZONA: Condition of range feed declined 2 points during the month of February. Snow in the higher elevation ranges in northern and southeastern counties, and rains in the desert areas have improved soil moisture and will help start spring weeds and grass. Windy conditions throughout the State have reduced soil moisture. Supplemental feeding continues throughout the State. Livestock remain in fair to good condition with no unusual death losses reported. A few early lambs have been born in northern areas.

UTAH: Precipitation averaged below normal during February. Colder than normal temperatures and heavy snowstorms in parts of the State reduced the availability of range feed. Stockmen on some lower desert areas of the State were hauling water for their livestock. Cattle and sheep continue in good condition. Calving was underway by March 1.

NEVADA: Range feed condition remains fair again this month. Cooler weather has hampered grass growth. Supplemental feeding remains the major source of feed. Feed supplies and stock water are adequate. Livestock are in fair to good condition with death losses about normal. Calving and lambing are underway and will be well along by mid-March.

WASHINGTON: Good weather during most of February helped to improve both stock and grazing condition. However, cold temperatures, wind, snow and rain late in the month caused the improved condition to slip back to last month's level or below. No major loss of calves and lambs was reported. Feed supplies appear adequate.

OREGON: February weather was mostly mild the first half of the month, but turned cold with general snowfall in the second half. Several new record low temperatures for so late in the season were established during the last week of the month. Most livestock continue to receive hay. Hay supplies are becoming short in the southern Willamette Valley. Livestock are generally in good condition, but ewes are thinner than normal. Calving is well underway.

CALIFORNIA: Lack of rain and periodic cold weather and drying winds slowed grass growth during February. Supplemental feeding is declining seasonally. Calving and lambing are virtually completed in southern areas and commencing in northern and mountain regions. Some shrinkage has been reported in mountain areas. March and April growth will determine the outlook for the grass feed year.