

# Cattle



USDA  
Washington, D.C.

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## July 1 Cattle Inventory Down 2 Percent

**All cattle and calves** in the United States as of July 1, 1997, totaled 108.8 million head, 2 percent below the 111.5 million on July 1, 1996 and 4 percent below the 113.0 million two years ago.

**All cows and heifers** that have calved, at 44.0 million, were 2 percent below the 45.0 million on July 1, 1996 and 4 percent below the 45.6 million two years ago.

- **Beef cows**, at 34.7 million, were down 3 percent from July 1, 1996 and 4 percent below two years ago.
- **Milk cows**, at 9.30 million, were down 1 percent from July 1, 1996 and 2 percent below two years ago.

Other class estimates on July 1, 1997, and the changes from July 1 last year and two years ago, respectively, are as follows:

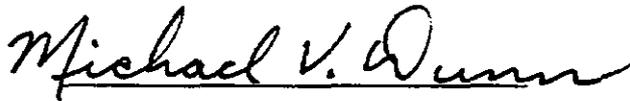
- **All heifers 500 pounds and over**, 17.1 million, down 1 percent and down 3 percent.
- **Beef replacement heifers**, 5.3 million, down 4 percent and down 7 percent.
- **Milk replacement heifers**, 3.6 million, down 3 percent and down 8 percent.
- **Other heifers**, 8.2 million, up 1 percent and up 3 percent.
- **Steers weighing 500 pounds and over**, 14.6 million, down 3 percent and down 5 percent.
- **Bulls weighing 500 pounds and over**, 2.3 million, down 4 percent from both years.
- **Calves under 500 pounds**, 30.8 million, down 3 percent and down 4 percent.
- **All cattle and calves on feed for slaughter**, 10.9 million, up 11 percent but down 3 percent.

## Calf Crop Down 2 Percent

The 1997 calf crop is expected to be 38.8 million, down 2 percent from 1996 and down 4 percent from 1995. Calves born during the first half of the year are estimated at 28.5 million, down 2 percent from 1996 and down 3 percent from 1995.

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This report was approved on July 18, 1997.



Acting Secretary of  
Agriculture  
Michael V. Dunn



Agricultural Statistics Board  
Chairperson  
Rich Allen

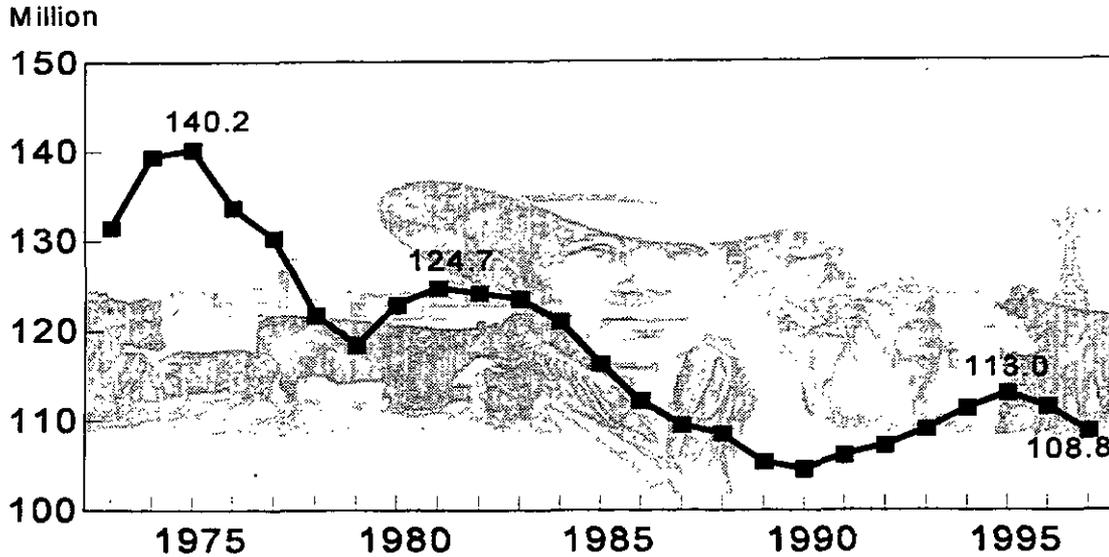
**Cattle and Calves: Number by Class and Calf Crop,  
United States, July 1, 1995-97**

Class	1995	1996	1997	1997 as % of 1996
	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cattle and Calves	113,000	111,500	108,800	98
Cows and Heifers That Have Calved	45,600	45,000	44,000	98
Beef Cows	36,100	35,600	34,700	97
Milk Cows	9,500	9,400	9,300	99
Heifers 500 Pounds and Over	17,600	17,300	17,100	99
For Beef Cow Replacement	5,700	5,500	5,300	96
For Milk Cow Replacement	3,900	3,700	3,600	97
Other Heifers	8,000	8,100	8,200	101
Steers 500 Pounds and Over	15,400	15,100	14,600	97
Bulls 500 Pounds and Over	2,400	2,400	2,300	96
Calves Under 500 Pounds	32,000	31,700	30,800	97
Calf Crop	40,211	39,586	38,800	98
Cattle on Feed	11,200	9,800	10,900	111

**Calf Crop: Number and Percent of Total by Six-Month Period,  
United States, 1995-96 and Preliminary Calf Crop, 1997**

Period	1995		1996		1997	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Hd</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Jan 1 - Jun 30	29,500	73.4	29,200	73.8	28,500	73.5
Jul 1 - Dec 31	10,711	26.6	10,386	26.2	10,300	26.5
Total	40,211	100.0	39,586	100.0	38,800	100.0

# U.S. Cattle Inventory July 1, 1973-97



**1997 Inventory 108,800,000 Head**

**Cattle and Calves: Balance Sheet, United States,  
January 1 - June 30, 1995-97 <sup>1</sup>**

Item	1995 <i>Million Head</i>	1996 <i>Million Head</i>	1997 <i>Million Head</i>
January 1 Inventory	102.8	103.5	101.2
Calf Crop and Imports	31.2	30.3	29.6
<b>Total Supply <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>133.9</b>	<b>133.8</b>	<b>130.8</b>
Slaughter	18.3	19.5	19.1
Deaths and Exports	2.5	2.7	2.9
<b>Total Disappearance <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>21.9</b>
Residual <sup>2</sup>	-.1	-.1	.0
<b>July 1 Inventory</b>	<b>113.0</b>	<b>111.5</b>	<b>108.8</b>

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary.

<sup>2</sup> Totals may not add due to rounding.

## Reliability of July 1 Cattle and Calves Estimates

**Survey Procedures:** A random sample of U.S. producers was surveyed to provide data for these estimates. Survey procedures ensured that all cattle producers, regardless of size, had a chance to be included in the survey. Data were collected during the first half of June from over 40,000 small and medium sized operations. These operators were contacted by face-to-face personal interviews. About 9,500 large producers and feedlots were contacted during the first half of July by mail, telephone, and face-to-face personal interviews. Operators were asked to report inventories as of the first of the month and calf crop for the entire year of 1997.

**Estimating Procedures:** These cattle estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing National and State indications and analysis. National and State survey data were reviewed for reasonableness with each other and with estimates from the previous year using a balance sheet. The balance sheet begins with the previous inventory estimate, adds to it estimates of births and imports for the first six months, and subtracts estimates of slaughter, exports, and deaths for the first six months of the current year. This indicated ending inventory level is compared to the Agricultural Statistics Board estimate for reasonableness.

**Revision Policy:** Revisions to previous estimates are made to improve year to year and item to item relationships. Estimates for the previous year are subject to revision when current estimates are made and when the January 1 cattle inventory estimates are made. The reviews are primarily based on livestock slaughter and additional foreign trade and survey data. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the Department of Agriculture five-year Census of Agriculture are available. No revisions will be made after that date.

**Reliability:** Since all cattle operators are not included in the sample, survey estimates are subject to sampling variability. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplications, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. The effects of these errors cannot be measured directly. They are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and through a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

To assist users in evaluating the reliability of estimates in this report, the "**Root Mean Square Error**" is shown for selected items in the table below. The "Root Mean Square Error" is a statistical measure based on past performance and is computed using the differences between first and latest estimates. The "Root Mean Square Error" for cattle inventory estimates over the past 20 years is 0.6 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 108.8 million head by more than 0.6 percent, or about 653,000 head. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 1.0 percent, or about 1,088,000 head (the 90 percent confidence level).

The table below also shows a 20 year record of the range of differences between first and latest estimates for selected items. Using estimates of all cattle and calves as an example, changes between the first inventory estimate and the latest estimate during the past 20 years have averaged 356,000 head, ranging from 0 to 1,500,000 head. During this period the initial inventory estimate has been below the latest estimate 3 times, above the latest estimate 11 times, and unchanged 6 times. This does not imply that the July 1 estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

**Reliability of July 1 Cattle Estimates <sup>1 2</sup>**

Item	Root Mean Square Error	90 Percent Confidence Level		Difference Between First and Latest Estimates			Number of Years	
		Percent	Head	Average	Smallest	Largest	First Above Latest	First Below Latest
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>1,000 Head</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>
All Cattle	.6	1.0	1,088	356	0	1,500	11	3
All Cows	.8	1.4	616	153	0	1,100	11	3
Calf Crop	1.7	2.9	1,125	386	50	1,289	17	3

<sup>1</sup> Based on data from July 1977 through July 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Data in the above table do not reflect the 1-3 percent changes made during the 1989-93 historic revision period. The root mean square error's would be about 1 percent higher if these were included.

The next "Cattle " report will be released at 3 p.m. ET on January 30, 1998.

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