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## July 1 Cattle Inventory Up 1 Percent

**All cattle and calves** in the United States on July 1, 2018 totaled 103 million head, 1 percent above the 102 million head on July 1, 2017.

**All cows and heifers that have calved**, at 41.9 million head, were 1 percent above the 41.6 million head on July 1, 2017. Beef cows, at 32.5 million head, were up 1 percent from a year ago. Milk cows, at 9.40 million head, were unchanged from previous year.

**All heifers 500 pounds and over** on July 1, 2018 totaled 16.3 million head, 1 percent above the 16.2 million head on July 1, 2017. Beef replacement heifers, at 4.60 million head, were down 2 percent from a year ago. Milk replacement heifers, at 4.20 million head, were unchanged from previous year. Other heifers, at 7.50 million head, were 3 percent above a year earlier.

**Steers 500 pounds and over** on July 1, 2018 totaled 14.5 million head, unchanged from July 1, 2017.

**Bulls 500 pounds and over** on July 1, 2018 totaled 2.10 million head, up 5 percent from July 1, 2017.

**Calves under 500 pounds** on July 1, 2018 totaled 28.4 million head, up 2 percent from July 1, 2017.

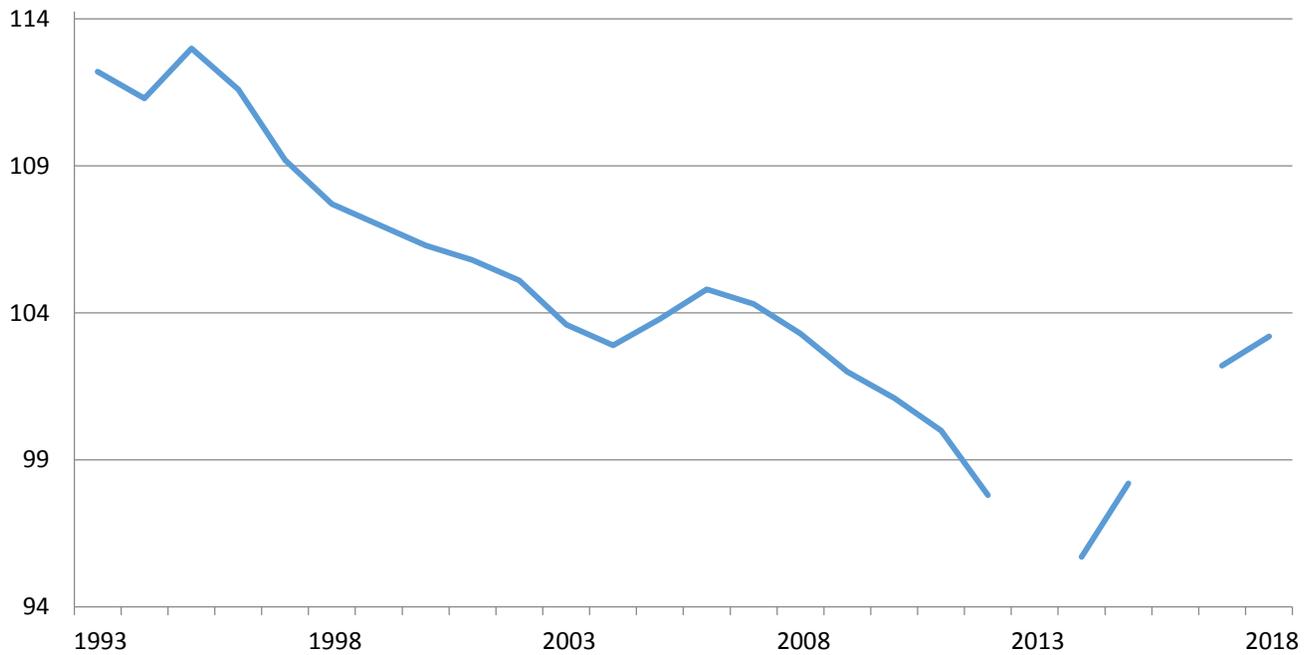
**Cattle and calves on feed** for the slaughter market in the United States for all feedlots totaled 13.3 million head on July 1, 2018. The inventory is up 4 percent from the July 1, 2017 total of 12.8 million head. Cattle on feed in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head accounted for 84.8 percent of the total cattle on feed on July 1, 2018, up slightly from previous year. The combined total of calves under 500 pounds and other heifers and steers over 500 pounds (outside of feedlots) is 37.1 million head. This is 1 percent above the 36.9 million head on July 1, 2017.

## Calf Crop Up 2 Percent

**The 2018 calf crop** in the United States is expected to be 36.5 million head, up 2 percent from last year's calf crop. Calves born during the first half of 2018 are estimated at 26.6 million head, up 2 percent from the first half of 2017. An additional 9.90 million calves are expected to be born during the second half of 2018.

# Cattle Inventory – United States: July 1

Million head



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This report was approved on July 20, 2018.

Secretary of Agriculture  
Designate  
Warren P. Preston

Agricultural Statistics Board  
Chairperson  
Joseph L. Parsons

## Cattle Inventory by Class and Calf Crop – United States: July 1, 2017 and 2018

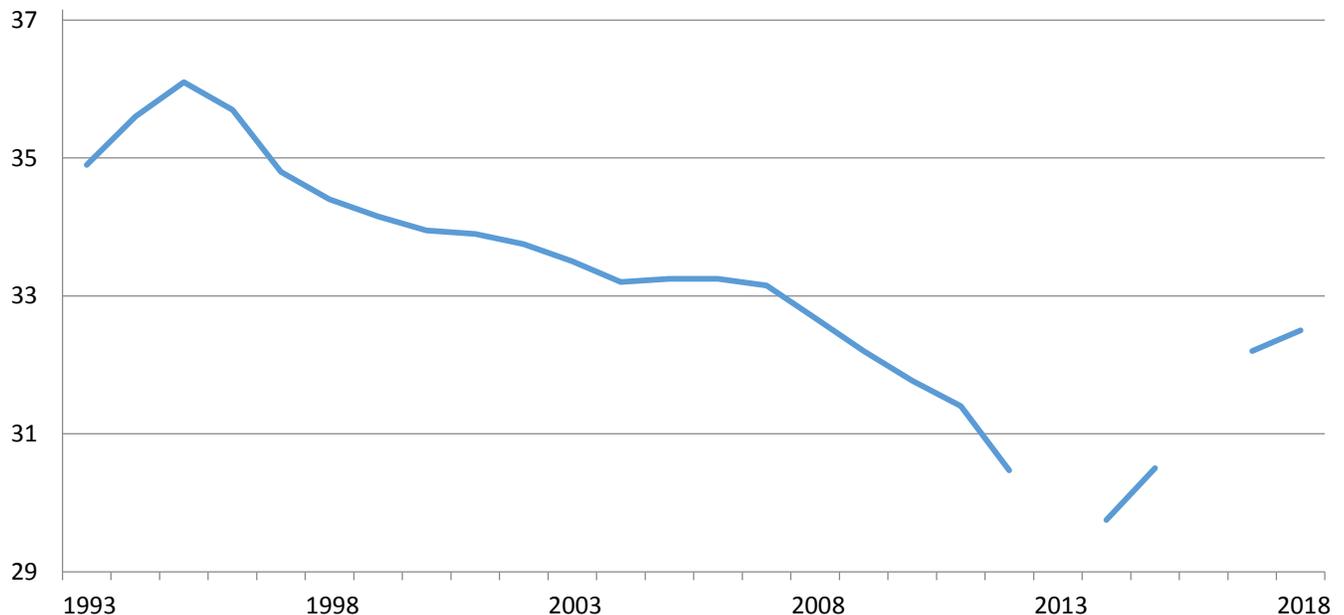
Class	2017	2018	Percent of previous year
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
Cattle and calves .....	102,200.0	103,200.0	101
Cows and heifers that have calved .....	41,600.0	41,900.0	101
Beef cows .....	32,200.0	32,500.0	101
Milk cows .....	9,400.0	9,400.0	100
Heifers 500 pounds and over .....	16,200.0	16,300.0	101
For beef cow replacement .....	4,700.0	4,600.0	98
For milk cow replacement .....	4,200.0	4,200.0	100
Other heifers .....	7,300.0	7,500.0	103
Steers 500 pounds and over .....	14,500.0	14,500.0	100
Bulls 500 pounds and over .....	2,000.0	2,100.0	105
Calves under 500 pounds .....	27,900.0	28,400.0	102
Calf crop .....	35,808.2	36,500.0	102
Cattle on feed .....	12,800.0	13,300.0	104

## Calf Crop and Percent of Total by Six-Month Period – United States: 2017 and Preliminary 2018

Period	2017		2018	
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
January 1 - June 30 .....	26,000.0	72.6	26,600.0	72.9
July 1 - December 31 .....	9,808.2	27.4	9,900.0	27.1
Total .....	35,808.2	100.0	36,500.0	100.0

## Beef Cow Inventory – United States: July 1

Million head



## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** A random sample of United States producers were 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. During the first half of June, a probability area frame survey was conducted with a sample of 8,600 segments or parcels of land from which agricultural operations were contacted by face-to-face personal interviews. Data collected during the June Area Survey were used for cattle operations not on the list frame. During July, a probability list frame survey with a sample of approximately 16,000 producers and feedlots was conducted. These operations were contacted during the first half of July by mail, telephone, and face-to-face personal interviews and 73 percent of the reports were usable. Operators were asked to report inventories as of the first of the month and calf crop for the entire year of 2018.

**Estimating Procedures:** These cattle estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing National indications and analysis. National survey data was reviewed for reasonableness 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. Class estimates are rounded to the nearest 100,000 head with the exception of beef and milk cows which are rounded to the nearest 50,000 head.

**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 revisions are primarily based on livestock slaughter and additional foreign trade and survey data. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the 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 following table. 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 July cattle inventory estimates over the past 10 years is 0.5 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 103 million head by more than 0.5 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 1.0 percent.

The table on the following page shows a 10 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 10 years have averaged 420,000 head, ranging from 0 to 1,000,000 head. During this period the initial inventory estimate has been below the latest estimate 3 times and has been above the latest estimate 5 times. This does not imply that the July 1 estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

## Reliability of July 1 Cattle Estimates

[Based on data from the past 10 years]

Item	Root mean square error	90 percent confidence level	Difference between first and latest estimate				
			Average	Smallest	Largest	Years	
						Below latest	Above latest
	(percent)	(percent)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(number)	(number)
All cattle and calves .....	0.5	1.0	420	0	1,000	3	5
All cows and heifers that have calved .....	0.6	1.1	160	0	600	1	4
Calf crop .....	1.2	2.2	294	10	1,093	3	7

## Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity specialists in the Livestock Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

Travis Averill, Chief, Livestock Branch .....	(202) 720-3570
Scott Hollis, Head, Livestock Section .....	(202) 690-2424
Sherry Bertramsen – Livestock Slaughter .....	(202) 690-8632
Holly Brenize – Sheep and Goats .....	(202) 720-0585
Donnie Fike – Dairy Products .....	(202) 690-3236
Heidi Gleich – Cattle, Cattle on Feed .....	(202) 720-3040
Mike Miller – Milk Production and Milk Cows .....	(202) 720-3278
Seth Riggins – Hogs and Pigs .....	(202) 720-3106

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For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, or e-mail: [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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