

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 12, 1937.

MILK PRODUCTION MAY 1, 1937.

Milk production per cow increased much more rapidly than usual during April, and will probably show a sharp increase during May as the acute feed shortage resulting from last year's drought is relieved by the opening of the pasture season in northern dairy sections, it was reported by the Crop Reporting Board of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Although pastures were late in starting this year, many farmers are turning their cows out as early as possible and pastures were furnishing most of the feed for milk cows as far north as Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri and Kansas. In the United States as a whole, milk production per cow in herds kept by crop correspondents averaged almost 1 percent higher on May 1 this year than on the same date in 1936. This slightly larger quantity of milk produced per cow was more than offset by a 2 percent smaller number of milk cows on farms and total milk production on May 1 appears to have been about 1 percent less than on the same date last year, but still about 2 percent more than the production on May 1, 1935 following the 1934 drought. Allowing for the increase in population, the amount of milk produced per capita on May 1 appears to have been 3 or 4 percent below the 10-year average for that season of the year.

As compared with the usual seasonal trend, increases in milk production per cow during April were particularly sharp this year in an area including Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas. In this area, cows that had been on short rations responded to the feed furnished by pastures even though pastures were poorer than usual. In the northern part of the Western Corn Belt, milk production per cow continued low. In the East North Central and South Atlantic States, about the usual April increase was reported, and milk production per cow remained somewhat below average on May 1. In the Western States milk production per cow rose to above the 10-year average on May 1, while in the Northeast milk production per cow continued well above both last year and the 10-year average. For the United States as a whole, the milk production per cow in herds kept by crop correspondents averaged 14.58 pounds on May 1, compared to 14.48 pounds on May 1, 1936, 13.85 pounds on May 1, 1935, and a 1925-34 average of 14.92 pounds for May 1.

DAIRY PASTURES MAY 1, 1937.

On May 1 the condition of pastures was reported below average in practically all States. As this low condition was due in part to the lateness of the spring, and as most of the important dairy States have had adequate rainfall, it is probable that some improvement in pastures has already taken place. The condition of pastures during the remainder of the season will depend primarily on weather conditions, but prospects appear rather below average due to the thinning of stands by drought, loss of some new seedings, injury from late frosts in the South, lack of adequate subsoil moisture in the western portion of the Great Plains area, and the generally early pasturing that is necessitated by the shortage of feed.

In the important dairy area extending eastward from Minnesota and Iowa and mostly north of the Ohio and Potomac Rivers, cool weather retarded growth during April and very few milk cows were on pasture on May 1, but rainfall has been ample and the reported condition should be closer to average when full pasture feed becomes available. In the range area of the Great Plains the May 1 condition of pastures was extremely low and prospects poor. West of the Rockies, pastures are late, but they are expected to show improvement. In most of the South, pastures were set back by late frosts, but they improved markedly late in April and were only moderately below average on May 1. In the country as a whole, the May 1 condition of dairy pastures was reported by crop correspondents as 71.3 percent compared with 71.2 last year, 73.5 in 1935 following the drought of 1934, and an average of 78.9 percent during the 10-year period 1923-32.

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MILK PRODUCED PER MILK COW IN HERDS KEPT BY CROP REPORTERS 1/

State	May 1 :(Avg.) 1925-34 Pounds	May 1 1935 Pounds	May 1 1936 Pounds	May 1 1937 Pounds
N. Eng.	16.53	16.22	15.95	16.31
N. Y.	18.3	19.1	18.8	19.8
N. J.	19.9	19.8	19.2	20.4
Pa.	17.7	18.1	18.1	18.1
N. Atl.	17.99	18.13	17.93	18.73
Ohio	16.6	15.8	15.7	16.6
Ind.	15.6	14.8	14.1	14.7
Ill.	15.9	14.4	15.1	15.9
Mich.	18.4	17.5	18.0	18.5
Wis.	18.6	17.3	18.4	18.5
E. N. Cent.	17.38	16.26	16.78	17.15
Minn.	17.4	15.2	18.7	16.6
Iowa	14.9	14.2	15.5	14.1
Mo.	11.1	12.2	11.2	11.2
N. Dak.	13.5	10.4	13.1	11.2
S. Dak.	13.3	9.3	13.1	10.5
Nebr.	15.9	13.5	15.1	13.0
Kans.	15.2	14.3	14.6	15.9
W. N. Cent.	14.57	13.06	14.79	13.53
Md.	15.3	13.9	14.9	14.7
Va.	11.9	10.5	10.6	11.3
W. Va.	11.9	10.0	10.1	10.6
N. C.	11.8	10.5	11.2	11.2
S. C.	10.2	9.5	8.6	10.2
S. Atl.	11.38	10.31	10.54	11.07
Ky.	12.4	10.8	10.5	11.8
Tenn.	11.2	10.9	10.2	10.2
Miss.	9.0	7.9	8.1	7.7
Ark.	10.1	9.3	9.4	9.8
Okla.	12.7	12.0	11.8	13.8
Tex.	10.4	9.4	10.6	10.9
S. Cent.	10.67	9.99	9.98	10.63
Mont.	13.7	13.3	14.4	13.8
Idaho	17.9	17.6	17.9	18.1
Wyo.	12.4	12.6	14.6	11.4
Colo.	14.9	11.2	15.8	13.6
Wash.	19.3	18.5	19.9	19.5
Oreg.	18.3	17.5	19.0	18.7
Calif.	19.9	21.6	21.3	21.2
West.	16.38	15.50	17.90	16.86
U. S.	14.92	13.85	14.48	14.58

1/ Averages obtained by dividing the reported daily milk production of herds kept by reporters by the total number of milk cows (in milk or dry) in these herds. The regional averages shown were based in part on records from less important dairy States not shown separately, as follows: South Atlantic, Delaware, Georgia, Florida; South Central, Alabama, Louisiana; Western, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada.