

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS  
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CATTLE ON FEED, JANUARY 1, 1950

The number of cattle on feed for market in the United States on January 1, 1950 was slightly larger than a year ago and the largest on record, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported today. The estimated number on January 1 this year was 4,552,000 head, 22,000 more than the 4,530,000 head on January 1, 1949. All of the increase in numbers on feed occurred in the Corn Belt States and Texas, since the number in the Western States was 16 percent below a year ago.

The number on feed in the North Central States, which include the Corn Belt was 5 percent larger than a year ago. The total on January 1, 1950 was estimated at 3,588,000 head, compared with 3,405,000 head last year. The 1950 inventory is a record high for the North Central States, exceeding slightly the previous high of 3,569,000 head in 1945. All of the east North Central States showed increases, while in the west North Central States, Minnesota, Nebraska and Kansas had reductions of 2 percent, 7 percent and 15 percent, respectively. Iowa, the leading feeding State, showed a 13 percent increase, resulting in the second highest number on record.

Shipments of stocker and feeder cattle during December into the 8 Corn Belt States for which records are available, both from public markets and direct, were only slightly higher than last year. However, for the period July-December in shipments reached 2,635,000 head, 31 percent larger than last year and the highest on record. Including shipments from markets for the other three States, total in shipments for July-December for the 11 Corn Belt States were 3,050,000 head, 25 percent larger than last year.

Outside the North Central States the number of cattle on feed was smaller than last year. Pennsylvania has the same number as last year. Texas shows an increase, but the number on feed in every Western State is down from last year. Colorado and California, the most important feeding States in the West, show decreases of 6 percent and 24 percent, respectively. Elsewhere in the West fewer cattle are on feed, and in nearly all cases the reductions are substantial.

Reports from cattle feeders in the Corn Belt on the weight of cattle on feed on January 1 this year show a larger proportion of lightweight cattle on feed than last year. Cattle weighing 600 pounds or less accounted for 31 percent this year, compared with 23 percent last year. The number of cattle on feed weighing over 900 pounds comprised 27 percent of the total this year, compared with 34 percent last year.

Corn Belt cattle feeders report a substantial increase in the proportion of cattle that have been on feed less than three months. The number on feed less than three months amounted to 79 percent of the total on January 1, compared with 74 percent last year. Corn Belt feeders intend to market 33 percent of the January 1 number before April 1. This is considerably less than reported last year when feeders intended to market 42 percent. However, actual marketings of fed cattle in the first three months of 1949 were more rapid than reported intentions. This year, based on the data now available, the number of fed cattle received at Corn Belt markets during the next three months is expected to be smaller than last year. The number that are better grade slaughter cattle is also expected to be smaller. The increase in marketings of fed cattle from the Corn Belt, as a result of the larger number on feed there, is expected to show up in late spring and summer, according to cattle feeders' plans on January 1.

The accompanying table shows the estimated number of cattle on feed by States on January 1 for the years 1943 to 1950.

CATTLE AND CALVES ON FEED <sup>1/</sup>  
BY STATES AS OF JANUARY 1, 1943-50

State	5-year Average (1944-48)	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950: % <sup>3/</sup>
Thousand head									
Pa.	80	80	75	70	82	90	85	88	88
Ohio	112	135	119	102	107	120	110	120	130
Ind.	166	184	171	156	165	183	155	181	195
Ill.	462	505	455	478	454	500	425	475	532
Mich.	85	95	90	94	85	81	77	83	95
Wis.	77	74	70	77	77	77	83	80	93
E.N.C.	902	993	905	907	888	961	850	939	1,045
Minn.	259	295	251	261	261	282	240	300	294
Iowa	946	1,007	987	1,056	950	970	770	901	1,020
Mo.	287	310	279	325	289	300	240	300	315
N.Dak.	65	50	62	76	64	64	58	58	61
S.Dak.	161	160	120	200	178	170	136	177	195
Nebr.	392	400	340	422	435	413	350	450	420
Kans.	266	318	280	322	271	257	200	280	238
W.N.C.	2,376	2,540	2,319	2,662	2,448	2,456	1,994	2,466	2,543
N.Cent.	3,278	3,533	3,224	3,569	3,336	3,417	2,844	3,405	3,588
Okla.	51	70	42	60	51	50	50	70	55
Texas	126	194	130	150	115	121	115	144	161
Mont.	42	27	35	44	50	48	35	38	20
Idaho	61	37	45	55	55	70	80	95	78
Wyo.	18	16	14	16	21	20	20	18	15
Colo.	164	160	158	160	176	146	180	192	180
N.Mex.	12	17	12	9	6	11	22	33	17
Ariz.	49	60	38	42	50	50	65	62	59
Utah	37	30	35	33	38	37	44	45	34
Nev.	23	22	17	22	28	22	24	26	18
Wash.	27	21	28	28	25	27	24	24	16
Oreg.	28	24	28	28	29	32	24	32	27
Calif.	157	154	134	125	149	166	209	258	196
Western	795	832	716	772	793	800	892	1,037	876
Total									
U. S.	4,153	4,445	4,015	4,411	4,211	4,307	3,821	4,530	4,552

<sup>1/</sup> Estimates include only cattle being fattened for market as a more or less distinct agricultural enterprise, and excludes small operations incidental to dairy and general farming. Cattle thus fed are presumed to produce carcasses that will grade commercial or better.

In addition there have been a number of cattle finished on distillery slop, mostly in Kentucky, and on by-product feeds in other States not shown as well as large numbers being winter fed in W. Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and some other States to be marketed as grass fat in late summer.

<sup>2/</sup> Revised estimates.

<sup>3/</sup> 1950 as a percent of 1949.