

Cattle Recovery the Theme for 2002

February 2002

Chris Hurt

Beef production in 2002 is expected to drop about one percent giving rise to moderately stronger finished cattle prices as compared to 2001. Last year, beef production reached 26 billion pounds with a surprisingly large fourth quarter surge in supplies, and finished Nebraska steer prices averaged \$72.43. In 2002, beef supplies are expected to drop to 25.9 billion pounds with finished Nebraska steers averaging near \$74.

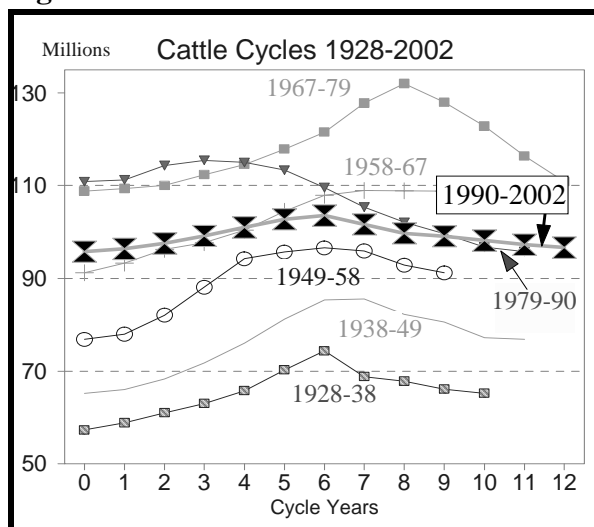
The cattle cycle has reached its 12th year which has included increasing cattle numbers from 1990 to 1996, and declining numbers from 1996 to 2002. It is likely that the number of cows and total cattle numbers will decline at least into the mid-2002 inventory report. However, cow retention could begin in late 2002 if cattle prices recover, or in 2003. This cycle will likely be 13 years, the longest since the 16 year cycle of 1912 to 1928.

Slaughter supplies are expected to be down throughout the year by about two percent. This is expected to be composed of a one percent drop in steer and heifer slaughter and a five percent decline in cow slaughter. Marketing weights are expected to rise by one percent. However, the level of weights compared to the same period in the previous year will be much greater in the first quarter of the year.

Calf and feeder cattle prices are expected to remain strong. Steer calves weighing 500 to 550 pounds are expected to average \$104 per hundredweight in 2002, and 750 to 800 pound feeder steers at Oklahoma City are expected to average \$88 per hundredweight. Both are similar to price averages from 2001.

Positives for beef producers in 2002 are expected to include; declining beef supplies as the year progresses; improved beef demand as personal incomes rise with economic recovery; improved beef demand with continued increases in travel including vacations and conventions.

Figure 1



The Numbers

Data from the USDA *Cattle* report with comparisons from past years are shown in Table 1. All cattle and calf numbers at 96.7 million head were down .6 percent. The number of beef cows was down to 33.1 million head, a decrease of .9 percent, while milk cows at 9.1 million were down .8 percent. Beef cow numbers have been decreasing since 1996, and have dropped 6.3 percent since.

This now completes the 12th year of the current

cattle cycle which started in 1990, as shown in **Figure 1**. Cattle cycles back to 1928 are illustrated there, and only one other cycle was as long as 12 years, that being the 1967-1979 cycle. Thus by historical standards, the current cycle is a long one. Since the cycle is long, this also means that herd expansion could be expected at some point in the near future, but just when remains a subject of speculation.

The Cattle report does provide some clues about potential expansion plans, and those suggest that the number of cows in the herd will not increase in the first-half of this year. The number of beef replacement heifers being retained for entry into the breeding herd remains down .5 percent, but the number of dairy replacement heifers is up .1 percent. These mean that the beef herd may drop somewhat more in the July inventory update, and that dairy numbers may remain about unchanged.

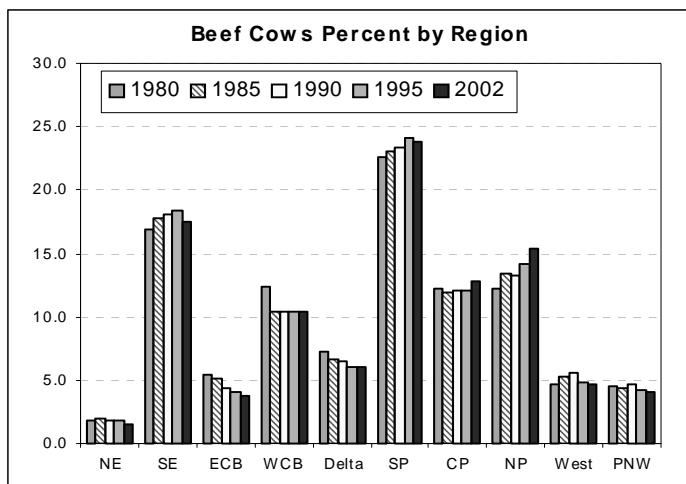
The cattle that will come to market in the first-half of the year will be drawn from the non-replacement heifers over 500 pounds and the number of steers that are over 500 pounds. The combination of these two are up one percent. These larger supplies are a result of the slowdown in cattle marketings out of feedlots after September 11th. In fact in the six weeks following the tragedy, managers dropped marketings about four percent as they were hopeful that cattle prices would recover. The industry is still working through this period of delayed marketings and must face heavier weights, at least through the first quarter of this year.

Once the current large supply of feed lot cattle are marketed, slaughter numbers will begin to back off. As a result, the number of calves under 500 pounds on January 1 were down 2.7 percent and will provide the pool for beef supplies in the last-half of the year.

The calf crop was down .9 percent in 2001, and I am estimating that the calf crop will be lower by about .7 percent in 2002. This means that calves will continue to be in shorter supply for the entire year, especially this fall. Smaller supplies will of course be supportive to calf prices.

Where Are the Cattle?

Figure 2

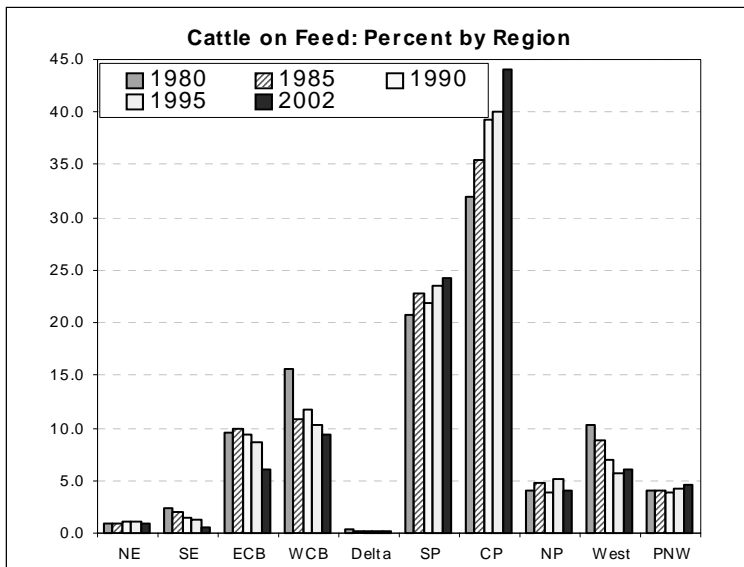


Beef cows are located all over the country since they remain best adapted as forage grazers, but the trend is for the Plains states to become relatively more important in terms of the portion of the cows in those regions. The percent of beef cows in each region of the country are shown in **Figure 2**. The country is divided into ten regions including the Northeast (NE); Southeast (SE); Eastern Corn Belt (ECB); the Western Corn Belt (WCB); the Delta; Southern Plains (SP); Central Plains (CP); Northern Plains (NP); West and Pacific

Northwest (PNW). Each of the bars represent the percentage of beef cows in that region for a designated year (from left to right: 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, and 2002). This provides a perspective on the changing importance of each region over the 1980 to 2002 period.

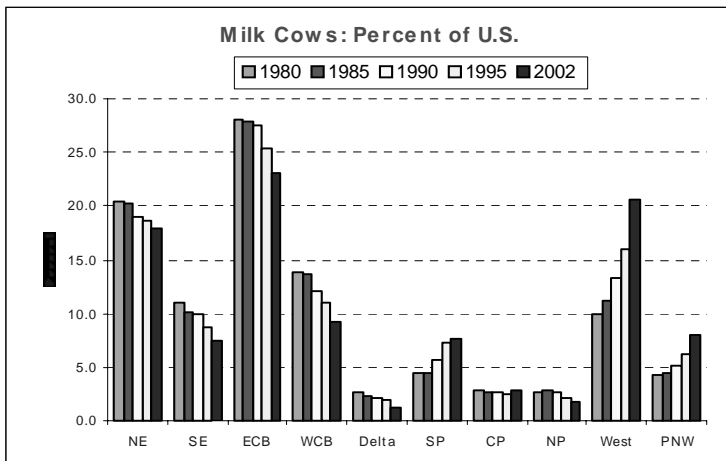
The beef cow industry is concentrating somewhat more heavily in the center of the country in the three regions described as the “Plains.” In 1980 as an example the three Plains regions contained 47.2 percent of the nation’s beef cows, and that number today is 51.9 percent. The primary losses since 1980 have been in the Western Corn Belt, Eastern Corn Belt, and the Delta (a total of 4.7 national percentage points). (However, the Western Corn Belt stabilized after 1985). The trend toward a greater portion of the beef cows in the center of the country is expected to continue as human population compete with cows for grazing lands in the far West, the Northeast, the Southeast, and the Eastern Corn Belt.

Figure 3



A similar illustration for cattle on-feed is provided in **Figure 3**. Of course cattle feeding has become more highly concentrated in terms of the number and size of farms, as well as geographically concentrated. You will see the growing dominance of the Central and Southern Plains in terms of the portion of cattle on-feed. In 1980, there was already 52.8 percent of the cattle on-feed in these two regions. Today it measures 68.4 percent. The primary losses have been in the smaller “farmer feedlots” (less than 1,000 head of capacity) in the Western and Eastern Corn Belt, as well as in the West. There is little reason to believe that this trend will reverse.

Figure 4



Finally, the trends for regional importance in milk cow numbers is shown in **Figure 4**. The growth, as measured by the portion of milk cows in each region, is dominated by the West, Pacific Northwest, and the Southern Plains. The losses are in the Eastern Corn Belt, the Western Corn Belt, Southeast, and Northeast. Will these trends continue? Population growth favors a continuation of these trends. One

study, as an example, estimates that human population growth from 2000 to 2020 will be the greatest in the West (+36.4%); the Southern Plains (+26.7%); and the Pacific Northwest (+25.3%). In contrast, the Northeast, as well as the Eastern and Western Corn Belt regions are expected to experience population growth of less than ten percent by 2020. A second major factor will be where large scale industrialized dairy operations are able to locate. New large scale dairies of 1,000 cows or larger have been finding sites in some Midwestern states. Indiana, as an example has seen a number of these new operations in the past two years, with several more planned. One question will be whether local communities are willing to accept this larger scale model and whether local environmental restrictions may constrain their siting in some locations.

Beef Supplies to Drop By Spring

Slaughter supplies in the first quarter are expected to be somewhat smaller than those of same quarter in the previous year. However, weights will be the main problem. I am estimating that weights will be two percent higher and result in first quarter supplies being up 1.3 percent. As of this writing in the third week of February, weights have averaged over four percent greater, but it is hoped that the weight problem created from slow marketings should begin to let-up as the quarter progresses.

Table 1: Production and Prices

Year	Qtr.	Beef Production		Prices		
		Beef Prod. Mill. #'s	% Change Year-Ago	Nebraska Fin.Steers	OklaCity 5-550Steers	OklaCity 750-800Steers
1999	I	6,397	2.9%	\$62.43	\$87.35	\$71.93
	II	6,627	2.6%	\$65.04	\$89.12	\$72.17
	III	6,838	3.0%	\$65.12	\$87.12	\$77.57
	IV	6,522	2.9%	\$69.65	\$93.20	\$83.87
	Year	26,384	2.8%	\$65.56	\$89.20	\$76.39
2000	I	6,653	4.0%	\$69.32	\$106.13	\$84.91
	II	6,699	1.1%	\$71.59	\$101.64	\$84.76
	III	6,914	1.1%	\$65.43	\$101.80	\$86.25
	IV	6,511	-0.2%	\$72.26	\$97.97	\$88.76
	Year	26,777	1.5%	\$69.65	\$101.89	\$86.17
2001	I	6,182	-7.1%	\$79.11	\$107.78	\$86.82
	II	6,501	-3.0%	\$75.13	\$107.22	\$89.47
	III	6,790	-1.8%	\$70.33	\$103.00	\$91.13
	IV	6,680	2.6%	\$65.13	\$98.21	\$85.37
	Year	26,153	-2.3%	\$72.43	\$104.05	\$88.20
2002	I	6,263	1.3%	\$70.38	\$101.96	\$83.23
	II	6,451	-0.8%	\$75.92	\$107.35	\$88.31
	III	6,709	-1.2%	\$73.18	\$106.67	\$92.40
	IV	6,433	-3.7%	\$76.16	\$101.87	\$89.30
	Year	25,856	-1.1%	\$73.91	\$104.46	\$88.31

By the second quarter, supplies are expected to begin dropping with a declining head count and lighter weights. The greatest percentage drop in supplies is expected late in the year. For the year of 2002, beef supplies are expected to be down about one percent.

Finished cattle prices have been depressed by cattle held-back in feedlots and especially by heavy weights. Nebraska finished steers are expected to average near \$70 in the first quarter, but prices are expected to move into the mid-\$70s in late March and April. The normal seasonal

price decline from mid-April through the end of the summer is thought to be more moderate than normal this summer due to declining supplies with smaller slaughter supplies, and easing weight problems. In addition, beef demand is anticipated to improve also with a recovering economy and

with additional time separation from September 11th. Finished Nebraska steers are expected to demonstrate the strongest prices of the year in the final quarter when daily highs could push back toward the higher \$70s near the end of the year. For the entire year, finished steers are expected to average near \$74 about \$1.50 above last year.

Steer calf prices at Oklahoma City averaged \$104 per hundredweight in 2001 and are expected to match that same level in 2002. Calf prices will be supported by a modestly smaller calf crop in 2002, and by some recovery in finished cattle prices in the last-half of the year. Higher interest rates and somewhat higher feed prices will partially offset these bullish price factors. Feeder steers at Oklahoma City are also expected to average near last year's level of \$88 per hundredweight. Calf and feeder cattle prices in southern Illinois and southern Indiana tend to average about \$3 to \$5 under those of Oklahoma City. (Also see Table 5 for a longer price series).

Recovering Beef Demand for 2002?

The beef industry experienced more than their share of the impacts of the events of September 11th and it's aftermath. Weakened demand has been related to declining domestic demand as a result of weakened personal income expectations, reduction of demand for high-value beef cuts as a result of reductions of travel for business, vacations, and conventions; as well as by the reduction in exports to Asia as a result of the discovery of mad cow disease there.

Packer and retail margins also expanded after 9-11. Preliminary data for the last quarter of the year show that the marketing margin from farm to retail mushroomed to \$2.00 per pound, an increase of \$.42 cents greater than the same quarter in 2000. Retail prices were slow to drop after 9-11 as live prices (farm level) were dropping sharply. In fact on a monthly measure, retail prices did not drop until December.

At least on this initial glance, it appears that packers and retailers were the biggest beneficiaries of the plummet in live cattle prices in the final quarter of 2001. In the fourth quarter of 2001, choice retail beef prices averaged \$3.35 per pound, eight percent above the final quarter of 2000, and finished 2001 with record high annual retail prices of \$3.38. Viewed as a willingness to pay high prices for beef in 2001, beef demand does not look weak at all, but rather the cheap live cattle prices in the last quarter appear to be the result of wide marketing margins. One needs to be cautious with the data at this point, as the accuracy of retail price data is questionable.

Demand prospects for 2002 are hopeful. Personal incomes are expected to improve, especially in the last-half of the year. Travel activity will increase, as there is more distance from 9-11, and if further terrorist activities related to travel do not occur. Also the issue of mad cow disease in Japan will be less of an issue as time passes. In addition, smaller beef supplies particularly in the last-half of the year should narrow marketing margins and provide greater upside price potential for live cattle prices.

What to Do?

The cattle industry has been through a rugged period of depressed prices, compared to expectations prior to 9-11. Most of the events that have caused the depression are expected to be reduced in coming months. The excess supply created from slower marketings after 9-11 should be relieved by the first quarter of 2002, weights should also moderate. Improvements in personal incomes and a return to more normal travel activity will also be encouraging to demand, and supplies will drop throughout the year.

Prices of finished cattle are expected to move back toward the mid-\$70 in the early spring with only modest seasonal decline in the late spring and summer. Most of the positive factors for higher cattle prices are expected to be in place during the last-half of the year, and especially the last quarter of the year. This means that prices could surge even more than has been outlined in this report.

Given the expected pattern of prices this year, it appears there are two time periods to consider pricing. One of those is expected to be in the late-March or early-April time frame, and the second is in the last-quarter of the year. If several of the favorable price factors fall into place, finished cattle prices could exceed \$80 by the end of the year, with similar strength in calf and feeder cattle prices. This means that either pricing in the early spring, or retaining ownership until late in the year appear to be reasonable strategies at this time.

Overall, it should be a year of recovery for the beef industry. Confidence has been sufficiently shaken to keep heifer retention at bay for a while longer. It will take a recovery of fed cattle prices back into the higher \$70 to low \$80s to restore confidence among producer that would be sufficient to begin expansion. Regardless, expansion is not likely to show up in numbers until 2003. The period of heifer retention to expand the herd generally provides the highest prices on the cycle. So, several years of favorable calf prices can be expected for cow-calf operators.

Table 1. Cattle Number, 1991 - 2002

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	% Change vs. 2001
All cattle and calves													
January 1	98,896	99,559	99,176	100,988	102,755	103,487	101,656	99,744	99,115	98,198	97,277	96,704	-0.6
July 1	109,000	109,200	109,000	111,300	113,000	111,500	109,200	107,700	107,000	106,300	105,800		
Beef cows													
January 1	33,271	33,775	33,365	34,650	35,156	35,228	34,458	33,885	33,745	33,569	33,397	33,100	-0.9
July 1	34,400	34,550	34,900	35,600	36,100	35,600	34,800	34,400	34,150	33,950	33,850		
Milk cows													
January 1	10,156	9,913	9,658	9,528	9,487	9,416	9,318	9,199	9,133	9,190	9,183	9,110	-0.8
July 1	10,000	9,850	9,700	9,500	9,500	9,400	9,300	9,200	9,150	9,250	9,150		
Heifers 500 lbs. +													
Beef replacement													
January 1	5,605	5,761	6,092	6,365	6,475	6,179	6,042	5,764	5,535	5,503	5,588	5,561	-0.5
July 1	5,300	5,700	5,700	5,900	5,700	5,500	5,300	5,000	4,800	4,700	4,600		
Milk replacement													
January 1	4,220	4,202	4,176	4,144	4,141	4,104	4,058	3,986	4,069	4,000	4,057	4,060	0.1
July 1	4,200	4,200	4,000	4,000	3,900	3,700	3,600	3,600	3,700	3,700	3,600		
Other heifers 500 lbs. +													
January 1	8,357	8,142	8,550	9,068	9,275	9,949	10,212	10,051	10,170	10,147	10,131	10,057	-0.7
July 1	7,400	7,100	7,300	7,500	8,000	8,100	8,200	8,100	8,100	8,100	8,200		
Steers 500 lbs. +													
January 1	16,369	16,755	16,940	17,042	17,463	17,732	17,392	17,189	16,891	16,682	16,441	16,800	2.2
July 1	15,100	15,100	14,900	15,200	15,400	15,100	14,800	14,600	14,400	14,300	14,600		
Bulls 500 lbs. +													
January 1	2,228	2,279	2,278	2,307	2,390	2,392	2,350	2,270	2,281	2,293	2,274	2,244	-1.3
July 1	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,300	2,400	2,400	2,300	2,200	2,200	2,100	2,100		
All Calves < 500 lbs.													
January 1	18,691	18,733	18,117	17,884	18,369	18,488	17,826	17,401	17,290	16,815	16,206	15,773	-2.7
July 1	30,400	30,500	30,300	31,300	32,000	31,700	30,900	30,600	30,500	30,200	29,700		
Calf Crop	39,026	39,290	39,448	40,059	40,211	39,776	38,961	38,812	38,796	38,631	38,280	38,000	-0.7

Table 2a. Ratios of Commercial Slaughter Steers and Heifers to Beginning Cattle Inventories, 1985 to 2002

	January 1 ^a	Total Commerical	Ratio of Slaughter to
	Slaughter Supply	Steer and Heifer Slaughter	Supply
	-----Thousand Head -----		-----Percent-----
1985	50,885	28,139	55.3
1986	48,488	28,613	59.0
1987	45,881	28,350	61.8
1988	44,299	28,087	63.4
1989	43,673	26,970	61.8
1990	42,970	26,664	62.1
1991	43,417	26,445	60.9
1992	43,630	26,368	60.4
1993	43,607	26,573	60.9
1994	43,994	27,614	62.8
1995	45,107	28,667	63.6
1996	46,169	28,573	61.9
1997	45,430	29,541	65.0
1998	44,641	28,893	64.7
1999	44,351	29,795	67.2
2000	43,644	30,101	69.0
2001	42,778	28,958	67.7
2002 ^b	42,630	28,622	67.1

^a Steers 500 pounds and over, other heifers, and all under 500 pounds

^b Projected

^c Average of 3 previous years

Table 2b. Ratios of Commercial Slaughter Steers and Heifers to Beginning Cattle Inventories, 1985 to 2002

	January 1 Inventory	First Half	Ratio	Calves <	Second Half	Ratio
	Steers and Heifers	Steer and Heifer		500 Pounds	Steer and Heifer	
	500+ ^b	Slaughter		January 1	Slaughter	
	thousand head			thousand head		
1985	24,435	14,083	57.6	26,450	14,056	53.1
1986	24,057	14,219	59.1	24,431	14,394	58.9
1987	22,797	14,046	61.6	23,084	14,304	62.0
1988	23,404	13,986	59.8	20,895	14,101	67.5
1989	23,100	13,477	58.3	19,899	13,493	67.8
1990	23,939	13,425	56.1	19,031	13,239	69.6
1991	24,726	13,048	52.8	18,691	13,397	71.7
1992	24,897	13,137	52.8	18,733	13,231	70.6
1993	25,490	13,101	51.4	18,117	13,472	74.4
1994	26,110	13,576	52.0	17,884	14,038	78.5
1995	26,738	14,119	52.8	18,369	14,533	79.1
1996	27,681	14,742	53.3	18,488	13,831	74.8
1997	27,604	14,680	53.2	17,826	14,861	83.4
1998	27,240	14,460	53.1	17,401	14,447	83.0
1999	27,061	14,794	54.7	17,290	15,001	86.8
2000	26,829	15,159	56.5	16,815	14,942	88.9
2001	26,572	14,351	54.0	16,206	14,607	90.1
2002 ^a	26,957	14,769	54.8	15,773	13,853	87.8

^a Projected

^b Excluding replacement heifers

Table 3. Cow Inventory, January 1 and Cow and Bull Slaughter for the Following Year

	Ratio		Ratio Bull		
	Cow Inventory	Cow Slaughter	Slaughter /Inventory	Bull Slaughter	Slaughter to Cow
	----thousand head----		thousand head		
1980	47,865	6,334	13.2	724	11.4
1981	49,586	6,634	13.4	775	11.7
1982	50,331	7,354	14.6	818	11.1
1983	48,987	7,606	15.5	808	10.6
1984	48,603	8,617	17.7	788	9.1
1985	46,212	7,391	16.0	758	10.3
1986	44,811	7,958	17.8	715	9.0
1987	44,457	6,604	14.9	691	10.5
1988	43,494	6,331	14.6	642	10.1
1989	43,337	6,294	14.5	668	10.6
1990	43,353	5,969	13.8	658	11.0
1991	43,427	5,624	13.0	615	10.9
1992	43,688	5,839	13.4	653	11.2
1993	43,023	6,088	14.2	659	10.8
1994	44,178	5,974	13.5	643	10.8
1995	44,643	6,144	13.8	675	11.0
1996	44,644	7,172	16.1	723	10.1
1997	43,776	6,619	15.1	707	10.7
1998	43,084	5,985	13.9	606	10.1
1999	42,878	5,711	13.3	639	11.2
2000	42,759	5,522	12.9	624	11.3
2001	42,580	5,774	13.6	632	10.9
2002 ^a	42,210	5,487	13.0	609	11.1

^a Projected

Table 4. Commercial Beef Slaughter, Production, and Dressed Weights, 1983-2002

Year	Slaughter (1,000 hd)	Weight (lb)	Production (lbs)	Slaughter (1,000 hd)	Weight (lb)	Production (lbs)
	-----January-March-----			-----April-June-----		
1983	8,735	632	5,525	8,844	627	5,549
1984	9,169	623	5,708	9,341	623	5,819
1985	8,936	637	5,691	9,023	656	5,917
1986	8,884	649	5,769	9,574	652	6,247
1987	8,765	657	5,756	8,878	646	5,737
1988	8,575	664	5,696	8,759	660	5,784
1989	8,180	676	5,529	8,694	664	5,777
1990	8,117	678	5,507	8,541	671	5,733
1991	7,858	685	5,383	8,299	686	5,694
1992	8,032	697	5,597	8,255	693	5,726
1993	7,910	677	5,357	8,469	672	5,690
1994	8,162	704	5,745	8,615	702	6,042
1995	8,418	699	5,888	9,053	699	6,325
1996	8,971	703	6,303	9,589	693	6,642
1997	8,912	686	6,112	9,307	690	6,419
1998	8,681	716	6,215	8,995	718	6,461
1999	8,733	733	6,397	9,176	722	6,627
2000	9,005	739	6,653	9,195	729	6,699
2001	8,500	727	6,182	9,033	720	6,501
2002	8,452	741	6,263	8,825	731	6,451
	-----July-September-----			-----October-December-----		
1983	9,547	630	6,012	9,537	626	5,974
1984	9,559	622	5,949	9,503	624	5,933
1985	9,352	659	6,166	8,978	643	5,774
1986	9,654	650	6,275	9,180	645	5,925
1987	9,222	657	6,063	8,783	666	5,852
1988	9,199	672	6,186	8,538	674	5,575
1989	8,612	684	5,892	8,430	686	5,785
1990	8,449	689	5,814	8,112	687	5,564
1991	8,453	711	6,012	8,074	707	5,710
1992	8,451	709	5,991	8,122	696	5,654
1993	8,673	700	6,076	8,268	704	5,819
1994	8,825	723	6,377	8,629	709	6,114
1995	9,279	714	6,625	8,890	706	6,277
1996	9,123	700	6,390	8,900	684	6,084
1997	9,300	710	6,603	8,879	704	6,258
1998	9,071	732	6,638	8,737	726	6,339
1999	9,337	733	6,841	8,915	732	6,525
2000	9,256	747	6,914	8,791	741	6,511
2001	8,987	748	6,720	8,844	755	6,680
2002 ^a	8,886	755	6,709	8,555	752	6,433

^a Projected for next 12 months

Table 5. Beef, Pork, Poultry Production, Nebraska Steer Prices, and Oklahoma City Feeders by Quarter

		Beef Production	Pork Production	Poultry Production	Nebraska Choice Steer Price	Oklahoma City 450-500 Heifers	Oklahoma City 5-550 Steers	Oklahoma City 750-800 Steers
		-----million pounds-----			-----\$/cwt-----			
1991	I	5,383	3,901	5,821	80.89		109.37	91.16
	II	5,694	3,792	6,311	79.34		112.00	93.42
	III	6,012	3,821	6,415	70.29		101.91	87.66
	IV	5,710	4,434	6,338	70.60		94.76	81.88
1992	I	5,595	4,321	6,314	75.95		95.72	79.56
	II	5,723	4,033	6,624	77.18		93.44	80.71
	III	5,990	4,264	6,816	72.84		94.16	83.50
	IV	5,660	4,567	6,644	76.49		91.17	81.72
1993	I	5,357	4,204	6,542	80.65		99.51	85.76
	II	5,690	4,151	6,987	79.78		104.17	86.80
	III	6,076	4,140	7,027	73.77		100.08	87.99
	IV	5,819	4,535	6,970	71.23		94.83	85.27
1994	I	5,745	4,182	6,765	73.10	90.66	98.96	82.14
	II	6,042	4,240	7,238	68.79	87.79	94.16	77.63
	III	6,377	4,326	7,504	66.37	79.28	86.42	76.37
	IV	6,114	4,913	7,339	67.63	77.96	84.58	74.74
1995	I	5,888	4,488	7,343	71.51	78.30	86.81	72.62
	II	6,325	4,394	7,653	64.73	71.23	78.62	65.77
	III	6,625	4,240	7,472	62.65	63.50	68.29	65.44
	IV	6,277	4,690	7,683	66.10	56.20	64.45	67.55
1996	I	6,303	4,389	7,880	63.06	53.54	62.12	58.11
	II	6,642	4,104	7,949	60.26	50.24	59.83	56.79
	III	6,390	4,143	8,043	67.35	56.18	64.90	63.29
	IV	6,084	4,449	7,930	70.39	57.55	67.49	66.15
1997	I	6,107	4,194	7,875	66.40	70.64	81.28	69.44
	II	6,416	4,091	8,341	66.63	81.28	90.28	75.88
	III	6,603	4,194	8,275	65.65	83.97	92.65	80.44
	IV	6,258	4,767	8,259	66.56	78.81	89.90	78.98
1998	I	6,215	4,687	8,135	61.73	81.43	83.44	75.49
	II	6,461	4,429	8,316	64.11	81.54	86.71	74.00
	III	6,638	4,625	8,244	58.97	69.11	74.41	67.89
	IV	6,339	5,239	8,452	61.06	72.67	79.21	69.80
1999	I	6,397	4,865	8,501	62.43	78.03	87.35	71.93
	II	6,627	4,630	8,928	65.04	80.49	89.12	72.17
	III	6,838	4,672	8,848	65.12	82.36	87.12	77.57
	IV	6,522	5,110	8,760	69.65	85.28	93.20	83.87
2000	I	6,653	4,824	8,887	69.32	96.90	106.13	84.91
	II	6,699	4,478	9,146	71.59	96.16	101.64	84.76
	III	6,914	4,606	8,934	65.43	93.46	101.80	86.25
	IV	6,511	5,010	8,929	72.26	93.57	97.97	88.76
2001	I	6,182	4,805	8,879	79.11	100.39	107.78	86.82
	II	6,501	4,544	9,204	75.13	102.17	107.22	89.47
	III	6,720	4,547	9,219	70.33	97.06	103.00	91.13
	IV ^P	6,680	5,250	9,225	65.13	90.75	98.21	85.37
2002 [*]	I	6,263	4,752	9,125	70.38		101.96	83.23
	II	6,451	4,566	9,550	75.92		107.35	88.31
	III	6,709	4,749	9,425	73.18		106.67	92.40
	IV	6,433	5,260	9,425	76.16		101.87	89.30

^P Preliminary

*Prices are point estimates, but users should look at a range of possible prices at least in a band that both adds and subtracts the following \$/cwt. These are the estimation errors:

Nebraska steers: \$2.00/cwt.; 550 to 600 # steers: \$2.50/cwt.; 750 to 800 # steers: \$3.00/cwt.

This range has included about 67% of the prices from the historical price estimates.