



**United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Louisiana Farm Reporter
Volume 08 Number 11
June 5, 2008**



Cooperating with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture
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HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS REPORT
Livestock Slaughter
Average Prices Received by Farmers
U.S. Farm Labor & Wage Rates

Louisiana Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production in Louisiana during April totaled 600,000 pounds, 14 percent below the previous month and April 2007.

There were 600 head of **cattle** slaughtered during April, the same as the previous month but down 100 head from April 2007. Average live weight was 815 pounds, up 13 pounds from the previous month but 45 pounds below April 2007. Total live weight, at 517,000 pounds, was 6 percent above the previous month but 16 percent below the previous year.

Calves slaughtered during April totaled 300 head, unchanged from March and the same as the previous year. Live weight averaged 527 pounds, up 16 pounds from March and 21 pounds above April 2007. Total live weight, at 154,000 pounds, was up 8 percent from March but 7 percent below the previous year.

The number of **hogs** slaughtered during April totaled 1,300 head, down 400 head from the previous month and 300 head below the previous year. Average live weight was 210 pounds, down 22 pounds from March but 24 pounds above the previous year. Total live weight was 264,000 pounds, 33 percent below March and 13 percent above a year ago.

The number of **sheep** slaughtered during April was 300 head, unchanged from March and the same as the previous year. Live weight averaged 68 pounds, down 19 pounds from the previous month and 18 pounds below the previous year.

United States Livestock Slaughter

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 4.3 billion pounds in April, up 14 percent from the 3.8 billion pounds produced in April 2007.

April 2008 contained 22 weekdays (including no holidays) and 4 Saturdays. **April 2007** contained 21 weekdays (including no holidays) and 4 Saturdays.

Beef production, at 2.3 billion pounds, was 12 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 3.0 million head, up 10 percent from April 2007. The average live weight was up 24 pounds from the previous year, at 1,259 pounds.

Veal production totaled 11.9 million pounds, 1 percent above April a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 73,300 head, up 29 percent from April 2007. The average live weight was down 70 pounds from last year, at 278 pounds.

Pork production totaled 2.0 billion pounds, up 18 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 10.0 million head, up 18 percent from April 2007. The average live weight was down 1 pound from the previous year, at 269 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.3 million pounds, was up 2 percent from April 2007. Sheep slaughter totaled 221,400 head, 2 percent above last year. The average live weight was 138 pounds, the same as April a year ago.

January through April 2008 commercial red meat production was 16.8 billion pounds, up 8 percent from 2007. Accumulated beef production was up 5 percent from last year, veal was down 12 percent, pork was up 13 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 5 percent.

Commercial Livestock Slaughter and Red Meat Production

Item	Louisiana					United States			
	March	April		January - April		April		January - April	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008
	-----Number, thousand head-----					-----Number, thousand head-----			
Cattle	0.6	0.7	0.6	2.9	2.3	2,701.4	2,959.6	10,855.9	11,229.2
Calves	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.3	1.2	56.9	73.3	268.7	284.8
Hogs	1.7	1.6	1.3	6.6	5.9	8,466.9	9,994.7	35,150.9	39,591.5
Sheep & Lambs	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.1	1.1	216.6	221.4	915.6	877.2
	-----Total live weight, thousand pounds-----					-----Total live weight, thousand pounds-----			
Cattle	489	619	517	2,581	1,907	3,324,065	3,714,432	13,675,792	14,299,197
Calves	143	166	154	670	580	19,691	20,128	86,483	76,765
Hogs	392	305	264	1,363	1,305	2,284,838	2,690,031	9,489,007	10,717,049
Sheep & Lambs	30	23	19	108	96	29,941	30,609	127,985	122,491
	-----Average live weight, pounds-----					-----Average live weight, pounds-----			
Cattle	802	860	815	890	829	1,235	1,259	1,264	1,278
Calves	511	506	527	515	483	348	278	324	273
Hogs	232	186	210	207	221	270	269	270	271
Sheep & Lambs	87	86	68	98	87	138	138	140	140
	-----Million pounds-----					-----Million pounds-----			
Red Meat	0.7	0.7	0.6	3.1	2.5	3,753.4	4,297.0	15,475.0	16,771.1

May Farm Prices Received Index Jumped 5 Points from April

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in May, at 150 percent, based on 1990-92=100, increased 5 points from April. The Crop Index was up 4 points and the Livestock Index increased 5 points. Producers received higher prices for hogs, cattle, onions, and broilers and lower prices for eggs, lettuce, wheat and broccoli. In addition to prices, the overall index was also affected by the seasonal change, based on a 3-year average mix, of commodities producers sell. Increased monthly marketings of cantaloupes, grapes, sweet corn and wheat offset decreased marketings of cattle, milk, corn and apples.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index was up 14 points from May 2007. The Food Commodities Index, at 147, increased 5 points from last month and increased 11 points from May 2007.

Prices Paid Index up 3 Points

The May Index of Prices Paid for Commodities and Services, Interest, Taxes and Farm Wage Rates (PPITW) was 184 percent of the 1990-92 average. The index was up 3 points from April and 23 points above May 2007. Higher prices in May for diesel fuel, mixed fertilizers, feeder cattle, potash and phosphate more than offset lower prices for feed concentrates, feed supplements, tractors and feed grains.

Average Prices Received by Farmers: Louisiana and United States

Item	Louisiana			United States		
	Entire Month		Preliminary	Entire Month		Preliminary
	May 2007	April 2008	May 2008 ¹	May 2007	April 2008	May 2008 ¹
	-----Dollars-----			-----Dollars-----		
Soybeans, per bushel	6.82	11.70	12.30	7.12	12.00	12.30
Rice, per cwt	9.84	15.30	15.90	10.00	14.60	15.00
Upland cotton, per pound	.438	2/	.560 ³	.440	.621	.607 ³
Hay, all, baled, per ton	n/a	n/a	n/a	138.00	152.00	166.00
Beef Cattle, per cwt ⁴	65.50	63.20	66.10	92.80	86.60	90.50
Steers & Heifers, per cwt	100.00	89.70	93.00	98.10	91.60	95.40
Cows, per cwt ⁵	50.00	52.40	54.00	51.70	50.50	53.10
Calves, per cwt	117.00	100.00	102.00	124.00	116.00	116.00
Broilers, live, per pound	n/a	n/a	n/a	.470	.460	.480
Eggs, all, per dozen	n/a	n/a	n/a	.780	1.030	.794
Milk, all, per cwt ⁶	n/a	n/a	n/a	18.00	18.00	18.20

¹ Mid-month.

² Price not published to avoid disclosure of individual firms.

³ Preliminary prices are based on sales during the first half of the month.

⁴ "Cows" and "steers and heifers" combined.

⁵ Beef cows and cull dairy cows sold for slaughter.

⁶ Before deductions for hauling and government withholdings. Includes bulk tank, quantity, and other premiums. Excludes hauling subsidies.

n/a = not available

United States Farm Labor

There were 919,000 hired workers on the nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 6-12, 2008, down 7 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 700,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 219,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.60 per hour during the April 2008 reference week, up 40 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.65 per hour, up 30 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$10.32 per hour compared with \$9.59 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.87 per hour, was up 45 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 41.0 for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

Farm Labor & Wage Rates: Delta and United States

Item	Delta ¹			United States		
	April 8-14 2007	January 6-12 2008	April 6-12 2008	April 8-14 2007	January 6-12 2008 ²	April 6-12 2008
	-----Thousand Workers-----			-----Thousand Workers-----		
Hired Workers (All)	31	19	21	736	594	700
Ag Service Workers	---	---	---	253	179	219
Hired Farm Workers	31	19	21	989	773	919
150 Days or More	24	14	18	593	506	563
149 Days or Less	7	5	3	143	88	137
	-----Per Week-----			-----Per Week-----		
Average Hours Worked (Hired Farm Workers)	38.0	38.0	36.9	40.7	38.4	41.0
	-----Per Hour-----			-----Per Hour-----		
Average Wage Rate (Hired Farm Workers)	\$8.80	\$9.27	\$9.45	\$10.20	\$10.81	\$10.60
By Type of Worker						
Field	\$8.54	\$8.70	\$8.77	\$9.35	\$9.67	\$9.65
Livestock	\$8.00	\$8.85	\$8.84	\$9.59	\$10.18	\$10.32

¹ Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

² Revised

---Data not published.

The Louisiana Farm Reporter is published semi-monthly (twice a month) by the USDA-NASS Louisiana Field Office, 5825 Florida Blvd., Baton Rouge, La 70806. Subscription is free to respondents and cooperators, \$10.00 annually to all others, and is available from the above address. Postmaster: send changes of address to Louisiana Farm Reporter, P. O. Box 65038, Baton Rouge, LA 70896-5038

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