



Cattle on Feed

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United States Cattle on Feed Up 2 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.5 million head on April 1, 2012. The inventory was 2 percent above April 1, 2011. The inventory included 7.17 million steers and steer calves, up 1 percent from the previous year. This group accounted for 62 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 4.25 million head, up 4 percent from 2011.

Placements in feedlots during March totaled 1.79 million, 6 percent below 2011. Net placements were 1.72 million head. During March, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 390,000, 600-699 pounds were 300,000, 700-799 pounds were 500,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 602,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during March totaled 1.92 million, 4 percent below 2011.

Other disappearance totaled 69,000 during March, 30 percent above 2011.

Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: April 1, 2011 and 2012

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed March 1	11,386	11,677	103
Placed on feed during March	1,914	1,792	94
Fed cattle marketed during March	1,990	1,918	96
Other disappearance during March	53	69	130
On feed April 1	11,257	11,482	102

Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: March 1, 2011 and 2012

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed February 1	11,571	11,811	102
Placed on feed during February	1,667	1,714	103
Fed cattle marketed during February	1,791	1,755	98
Other disappearance during February	61	93	152
On feed March 1	11,386	11,677	103

Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: April 1, 2011 and 2012

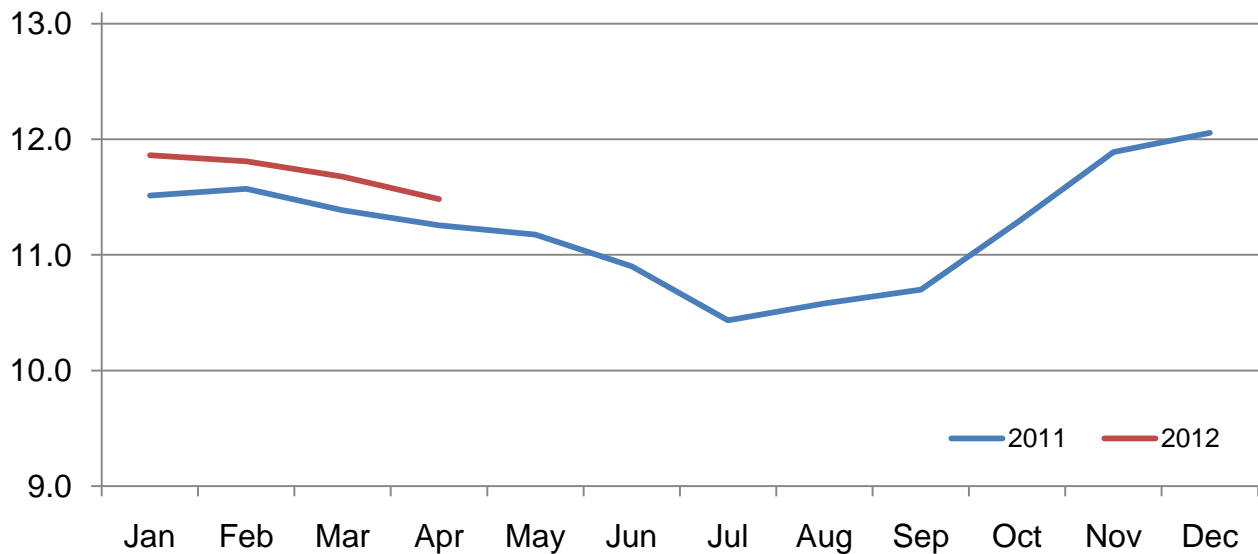
Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2011	2012	
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(percent)
Class on Feed April 1			
Steers and Steer Calves	7,119	7,174	101
Heifers and Heifer Calves	4,090	4,254	104
Cows and Bulls	48	54	113

Number of Cattle on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	April 1, 2011	March 1, 2012	April 1, 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	276	279	278	101	100
California	450	500	490	109	98
Colorado	1,090	1,090	1,070	98	98
Idaho	220	230	225	102	98
Iowa	650	670	670	103	100
Kansas	2,190	2,200	2,170	99	99
Nebraska	2,380	2,570	2,530	106	98
Oklahoma	355	340	320	90	94
South Dakota	265	260	255	96	98
Texas	2,770	2,840	2,780	100	98
Washington	207	233	233	113	100
Other States	404	465	461	114	99
United States	11,257	11,677	11,482	102	98

Cattle on Feed Inventory on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

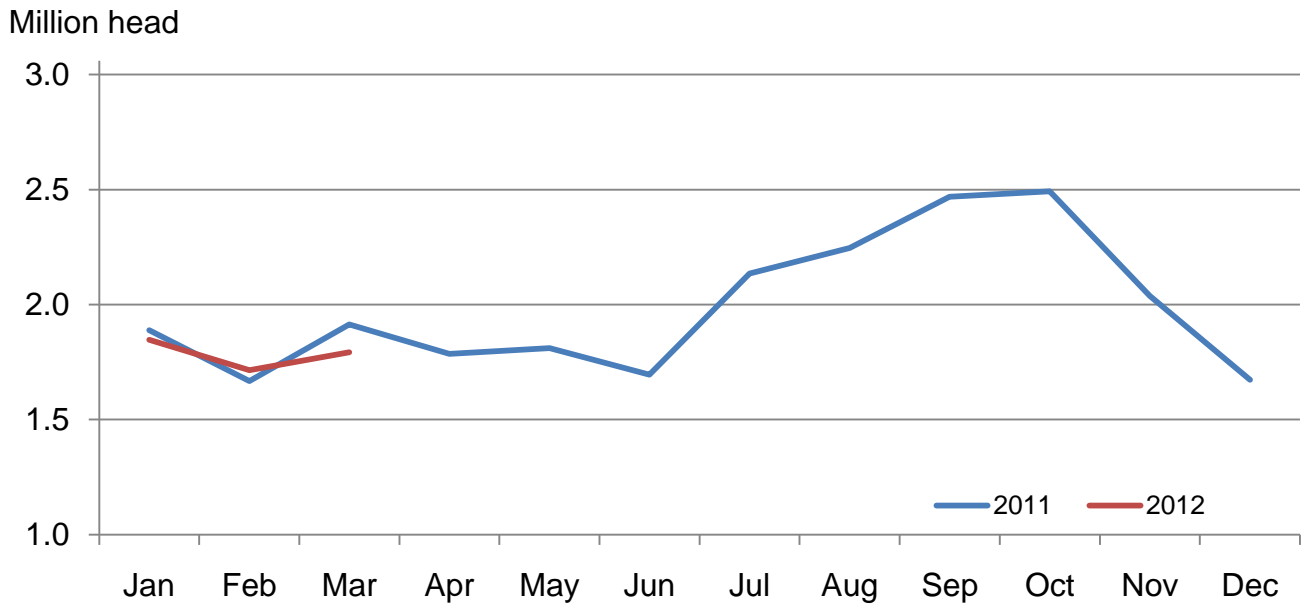
Million head



Number of Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During March 2011 (1,000 head)	During February 2012 (1,000 head)	During March 2012		
			Number (1,000 head)	Percent of previous year (percent)	Percent of previous month (percent)
Arizona	33	25	27	82	108
California	48	50	53	110	106
Colorado	215	165	160	74	97
Idaho	35	37	34	97	92
Iowa	81	85	73	90	86
Kansas	415	370	375	90	101
Nebraska	390	410	440	113	107
Oklahoma	75	48	56	75	117
South Dakota	46	47	45	98	96
Texas	490	380	430	88	113
Washington	33	41	37	112	90
Other States	53	56	62	117	111
United States	1,914	1,714	1,792	94	105

Number of Cattle Placed on 1000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States



Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During March									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	40	30	35	25	70	45	70	60	215	160
Kansas	55	60	70	65	145	125	145	125	415	375
Nebraska	60	50	70	70	120	120	140	200	390	440
Texas	135	155	110	90	150	115	95	70	490	430
Other States	90	95	75	50	104	95	135	147	404	387
United States	380	390	360	300	589	500	585	602	1,914	1,792

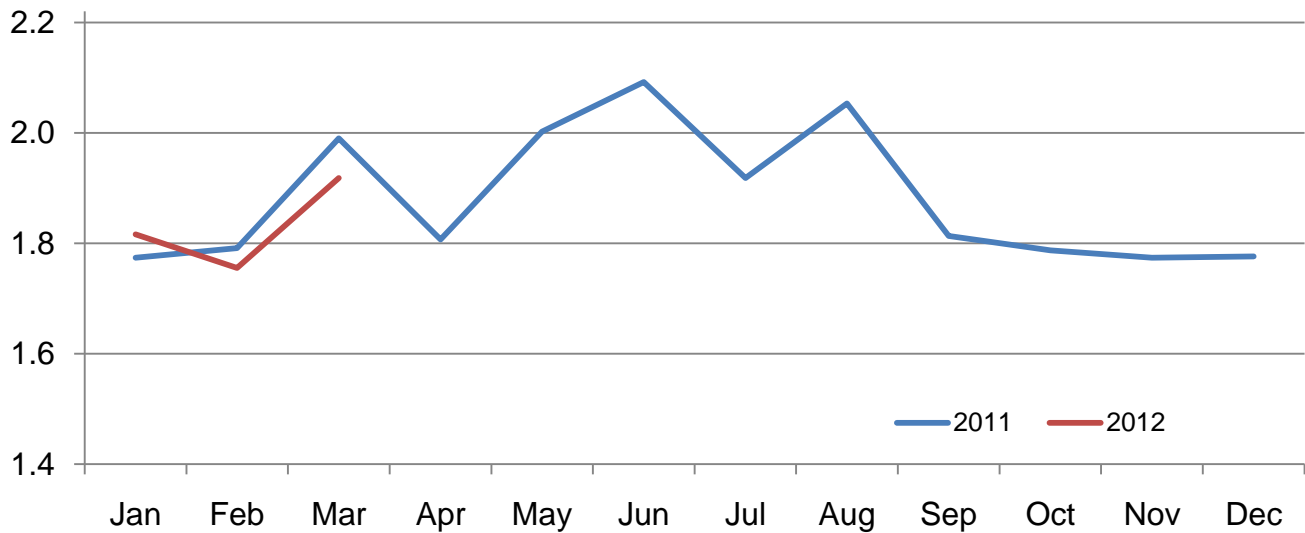
State	During February									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado	30	30	45	30	65	40	75	65	215	165
Kansas	55	70	80	75	150	130	80	95	365	370
Nebraska	60	60	85	70	100	110	105	170	350	410
Texas	160	145	85	85	85	95	50	55	380	380
Other States	95	95	70	75	92	94	100	125	357	389
United States	400	400	365	335	492	469	410	510	1,667	1,714

Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During March 2011	During February 2012	During March 2012		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
			(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona	25	21	27	108	129
California	55	53	61	111	115
Colorado	190	200	175	92	88
Idaho	34	41	38	112	93
Iowa	78	62	71	91	115
Kansas	435	385	395	91	103
Nebraska	430	390	460	107	118
Oklahoma	78	61	74	95	121
South Dakota	44	45	48	109	107
Texas	540	415	470	87	113
Washington	28	32	36	129	113
Other States	53	50	63	119	126
United States	1,990	1,755	1,918	96	109

Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States

Million head



Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	During March 2011 (1,000 head)	During February 2012 (1,000 head)	During March 2012		
			Number (1,000 head)	Percent of previous year (percent)	Percent of previous month (percent)
Arizona	1	1	1	100	100
California	3	2	2	67	100
Colorado	5	15	5	100	33
Idaho	1	1	1	100	100
Iowa	3	3	2	67	67
Kansas	10	15	10	100	67
Nebraska	10	20	20	200	100
Oklahoma	2	2	2	100	100
South Dakota	2	2	2	100	100
Texas	10	25	20	200	80
Washington	3	3	1	33	33
Other States	3	4	3	100	75
United States	53	93	69	130	74

Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Quarter – States and United States: 2011 and 2012

State	Steers and steer calves			Heifers and heifer calves			Cows and bulls		
	Apr 1, 2011	Jan 1, 2012	Apr 1, 2012	Apr 1, 2011	Jan 1, 2012	Apr 1, 2012	Apr 1, 2011	Jan 1, 2012	Apr 1, 2012
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)
Arizona	268	276	274	8	3	4	0	0	0
California	390	440	425	59	69	65	1	1	0
Colorado	740	745	730	345	400	335	5	5	5
Idaho	120	123	131	94	106	92	6	1	2
Iowa	460	450	480	190	170	189	0	0	1
Kansas	1,220	1,160	1,180	965	1,085	985	5	5	5
Nebraska	1,480	1,530	1,530	890	980	980	10	40	20
Oklahoma	210	215	200	145	160	120	0	0	0
South Dakota	135	131	138	114	101	100	16	28	17
Texas	1,680	1,730	1,610	1,090	1,209	1,169	0	1	1
Washington	135	150	143	68	80	88	4	2	2
Other States	281	331	333	122	133	127	1	1	1
United States	7,119	7,281	7,174	4,090	4,496	4,254	48	84	54

Terms and Definitions of Cattle on Feed Estimates

Cattle on feed are animals being fed a ration of grain, silage, hay and/or protein supplement for slaughter market that are expected to produce a carcass that will grade select or better. It excludes cattle being "backgrounded only" for later sale as feeders or later placement in another feedlot.

Placements are cattle put into a feedlot, fed a ration which will produce a carcass that will grade select or better, and are intended for the slaughter market.

Marketings are cattle shipped out of feedlots to a slaughter market.

Other disappearance includes death loss, movement from feedlots to pasture, and shipments to other feedlots for further feeding.

Reliability of Cattle on Feed Estimates

Survey Procedures: During January and July all known feedlots in the United States with capacity of 1,000 or more head are surveyed to provide data for cattle on feed estimates. During the other months, all known feedlots from 16 States are surveyed. The 16 States account for approximately 98 percent of the cattle on feed in feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head. Individual State estimates are published monthly for 11 of the 16 States. Data collected from the remaining 5 States are used to establish the "Other States" estimates. These 5 States include Illinois, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, and Wyoming. The "Other States" category represents all cattle on feed with a capacity of 1,000 or more head for the rest of the United States.

Estimating Procedures: These cattle on feed estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Statistics Board after reviewing recommendations and analysis submitted by each State office. Regional and State survey data were reviewed for reasonableness with each other and with estimates from the previous month when establishing the current estimates.

Revision Policy: Revisions to previous estimates are made to improve month to month relationships. Estimates for the previous month are subject to revision in all States each month when current estimates are made. In February, all monthly estimates for the previous year, and the number of feedlots and annual marketings from two years ago are reviewed and subject to revisions. The reviews are primarily based on slaughter data, state check-off or brand data, and any other data that may have been received after the original estimate was made. Estimates will also be reviewed after data from the Census of Agriculture are available. No revisions will be made after that date and estimates become final.

Reliability: Since all 1,000+ capacity cattle on feed operators in every State are not included in the monthly survey, 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 table on the following page. 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 cattle on feed inventory estimates over the past 24 months is 0.2 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 11.5 million head by more than 0.1 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 0.3 percent.

The table on the following page shows a 24 month record of the range of differences between first and latest estimates for selected items. Using estimates of number on feed as an example, changes between the first estimate and the latest estimate during the past 24 months have averaged 15,000 head, ranging from 0 to 47,000 head. During this period the initial estimate has been above the latest estimate 14 times and has been below the latest estimate 7 times. This does not imply that the initial estimate is likely to understate or overstate final inventory.

Reliability of Monthly Cattle on Feed Estimates

[Based on data for the past 24 months]

Item	Root mean square error	90 percent confidence level	Difference between first and latest estimate				
			Average	Smallest	Largest	Months	
						Below latest	Above latest
	(percent)	(percent)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(number)	(number)
Number on feed	0.2	0.3	15	0	47	7	14
Placements	0.3	0.5	4	0	18	9	9
Marketings	0.3	0.5	3	0	20	8	6

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

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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.

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