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EGGS

Production

Table egg production in February was 623 million dozen, 3 percent above last February. Broiler-type hatching egg production in February was up 3 percent compared to 2018. There were 1.08 billion broiler-type hatching eggs produced. Egg-type hatching egg production was 80 million eggs, 8 percent higher than last year. Shell eggs broken totaled 191 million dozen during February, up 8 percent from February a year ago, and down 9 percent from the 211 million dozen broken in January.

The number of table-egg layers in the national flock on March 1 was up 2 percent compared to 2018 at 336 million birds. Hatching egg layers for the table egg flock rose 2 percent over last year to 63 million birds, and the broiler-type hatching egg flock increased 2 percent to 59 million birds. The number of pullets added during February for all types of egg production was down 10 percent year-over-year at 26 million.

Price

Egg prices lost another 5 cents to close the month at 96 cents for one dozen Large Grade A eggs in the New York wholesale market, 66 percent lower than 2018. Breaking stock prices turned upward in mid-March adding 8 cents/dozen to close at 40 cents/dozen, for a year-over-year loss of 70 percent.

International Trade

U.S. shell egg exports in February totaled 12 million dozen with a value of $33 million. This was a decline in volume of 11 percent and a fall of 12 percent in value compared with January. It is also a loss in volume of 20 percent and a loss of 13 percent in value compared with February 2018. Egg product exports in February were valued at $9 million, 12 percent below January and down 23 percent from last year. Cumulative yearly exports of shell eggs and egg products are 11 and 28 percent lower in volume, respectively, and down 2 and 29 percent, respectively, in value. Mexico, Canada, Brazil, Hong Kong and Japan were the five largest importers of U.S. eggs and egg products in February.

TURKEY

Production

The U.S. produced 458 million pounds of turkey on a ready-to-cook basis in February. Daily production was down 10 percent compared with January and down slightly compared with last February. Average dressed weights were up 1 percent for both the month and the year. Eggs in incubators on the first of March were down 2 percent from last year, and poult placements in the month of February were down 3 percent, year-over-year.

As of February 28, total turkey stocks in cold storage were 6 percent above the February 2018 level. Compared to January, total turkey stocks were 16 percent higher. Whole frozen birds were up 14 percent yearly, with hens up 25 percent and toms up 4 percent. White meat stocks were up 6 percent year-over-year, while dark meat stocks were up 12 percent.

Price

Whole frozen hens had a bumpy ride in March but ended up 1 cent to 86 cents/lb., while whole frozen toms added 4 cents, also ending at 86 cents/lb., 17 percent and 8 percent, respectively, higher than last year. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast prices lost 4 cents, falling to 204 cents/lb., 26 percent higher yearly. B/S thigh meat remained steady at 120 cents/lb., 6 percent below 2018, and tom drumsticks closed at 65 cents/lb., a loss in March of 1 cent, 6 percent lower than last year.

International Trade

In February, the United States exported 22 thousand metric tons of turkey products with a value of $42 million. This volume was 6 percent higher than January and the value was slightly higher. Compared with February 2018, exports were down 1 percent in volume and 6 percent in value. Total 2019 exports to date are lower than for the same period in 2018 by 4 percent in volume and 7 percent in value. The top five destinations for exports of turkey in February were Mexico, South Africa, Peru, Benin and Canada.

CHICKEN

Production

Chicken production totaled 3.26 billion pounds on a on a ready-to-cook basis in February. Daily production was up 10 percent from January and up 14 percent from February 2018, with dressed weights 13 percent higher than both January and last February. For the four weeks ending March 30, eggs set were up 2 percent and chicks placed were up 1 percent compared with the same period last year.

Total stocks of chicken in cold storage on February 28 were 875 million pounds, up 2 percent from the end of January but down 3 percent from February 2018. The year-over-year increase was driven largely by whole broilers, up 38 percent yearly (and up 12 percent monthly); thighs, up 35 percent year-over year (up 10 percent monthly); and drumsticks, up 33 percent yearly (but down 3 percent monthly). Breasts and wings were both down 8 percent from 2018, and down 1 and 4 percent, respectively, from the prior month. Leg quarters fell 25 percent compared to last year, but rose 7 percent compared with January.

Price

Whole broiler prices hit a low for 2019 in early March but turned around through the month, adding 7 cents/lb. to close the month at 95 cents per pound, 12 percent below the 2018 price. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast prices rose sharply in March, gaining 20 cents to close the month at 124 cents/lb., down 12 percent from last year. Leg quarter prices also saw gains through most of the month, up 8 cents to 42 cents/lb., 5 percent higher than in 2018. B/S thigh meat remained steady at 117 cents/lb. through the entire month of March, 3 percent more than 2018. Drumsticks bounced between 33 and 36 cents/lb., ending at 34 cents/lb., down 23 percent from year. Wing prices gained 24 cents to bring March to a close at 202 cents per pound, 35 percent greater than 2018.

International Trade

J February exports of chicken and chicken products totaled 249 thousand metric tons valued at $225 million. This is a decrease in volume of 5 percent and a 3 percent increase in value compared with January. Year-over-year, this represents a 1 percent decrease in volume and an 11 percent decrease in value. Year-to-date exports of chicken are up 3 percent in volume but down 8 percent in value. In February, our five largest export destinations for chicken were Mexico, Canada, Taiwan, Cuba and Vietnam.

BEEF/VEAL

Production

February 2019 beef production added slightly to last year's production, for a total of 1.99 billion pounds, but fell 14 percent from the January 2019 output. Cattle slaughter numbers totaled 2.45 million head, up 3 percent on a yearly basis, but 11 percent lower monthly. The average live weight was down 13 pounds from last year, at 1,352 pounds. Veal production in February 2019 was 6.1 million pounds, up 5 percent on a yearly basis but down 8 percent monthly. Calf slaughter volume equaled 48,500 head, 18 percent more than February 2018 but 10 percent below January. The average live weight was 23 pounds lower than last year, at 219 pounds.

Total beef in cold storage was down 6 percent compared with the end of January 2018, while up 4 percent compared with last February. Stocks of boneless beef were 6 percent lower monthly but up 8 percent on the year, while beef cuts were down 13 percent month-over-month and lost 34 percent year-over-year. Veal stocks in freezers lost 6 percent on a monthly basis but down 57 percent yearly.

Price

Live cattle prices (FOB, steers and heifers) fell $1 in March, ending at $126 per cwt, 4 percent lower than the March 2018 closing price. The beef cutout value gained $8, completing the month at $228 per cwt, 3 percent above last year. The 90 percent lean boneless beef price added $6 to close at $218 per cwt, even with 2018. 50 percent lean trim prices added $11 per cwt to $82 per cwt, 1 percent below last year. Packer-owned veal carcasses held steady at $310 per cwt, up slightly from 2018, while non-packer owned veal carcasses inched up $1 to $306 per cwt, up 2 percent from 2018. The veal cutout average remained at $395 per cwt, down 6 percent from last year.

International Trade

Compared to 2018, February 2019 beef and veal exports (including variety meats) were down 6 percent to 95 thousand MT while the export value lost 3 percent to $582 million. The export volume and value were both down by 9 percent from January. Total exports for 2019 were 3 percent lower in volume, but only slightly lower in value than 2018. South Korea, Japan and Mexico were our largest export markets in February 2018. Year-over-year beef import volumes for February were down 1 percent to 77 thousand MT and were up 1 percent in value to $426 million. Compared to January, beef import volume and value were both 16 percent lower. Year-to-date beef imports are down 10 percent relative to 2018, with value 12 percent lower. Canada, Mexico and Australia were the largest importers of beef to the U.S. in the first month of 2019.

PORK

Production

Pork production for the month of February was a monthly record-breaking 2.16 billion pounds, 5 percent above 2018 but 8 percent lower than January. Hog slaughter totaled 10.1 million head, 5 percent above February 2018 and 9 percent higher monthly. The average live weight was up 1 pounds from last year, at 287 pounds.

February 2019 stocks of pork in cold storage were up 9 percent compared with January and up 1 percent compared with last February. Ham inventories were up 13 percent month-over-month and 4 percent year-over-year. Belly inventories were up slightly for the month and 10 percent for the year. Loin stocks added 11 percent compared with last month but were even with last year. Pork trimmings in freezers gained 9 percent monthly but were also steady with last year.

Price

The negotiated carcass price for barrows and gilts jumped $29 in March 2019, to end at $74 per cwt, 34 percent above 2018. The pork cutout value gained $20 through March, ending the month at $81 per cwt, up 15 percent from 2018. Trimmed, bone-in hams, 23-27 pounds prices shot up $28 in March to $74 per cwt, 42 percent above the 2018 price. Picnic meat combos, cushion out, recouped the $26 lost in February, ending back at $75 per cwt, 15 percent more than the year before. Pork trim, 72 percent lean also saw an increase of $29, ending the month at $72 per cwt, up 22 percent from 2019. Pork belly primal values had the largest gain at $46, 44 percent more than 2018, with a close at $146 per cwt.

International Trade

Pork exports (including variety meats) in February 2019 were down 10 percent from 2018 to 181 thousand MT, and the value was down 18 percent at $426 million. Pork export volume and value fell 8 percent from January. The year-to-date volume of pork exports was down 5 percent and the value down 14 percent. The largest overseas markets for U.S. pork were Japan, Mexico and Canada. Compared to last year, February pork imports were 10 percent lower in volume at 37 thousand MT, and down 16 percent in value at $121 million. Import volume and value were down from January by 3 and 6 percent, respectively. Total imports for 2019 so far were 10 percent lower in volume and 12 percent lower in value. The countries of Canada, Poland and Italy imported the largest volumes of pork to the U.S. in February 2019.

LAMB

Production

February lamb and mutton production, at 11.2 million pounds, was 5 percent below the February 2018 production and 10 percent below the January 2019 production. Sheep slaughter totaled 169,300 head, 3 percent above last year but down 9 percent monthly. The average live weight was 138 pounds, down 10 pounds from February a year ago. Lamb stocks grew 26 percent from the prior year but fell 7 percent from the month before.

Price

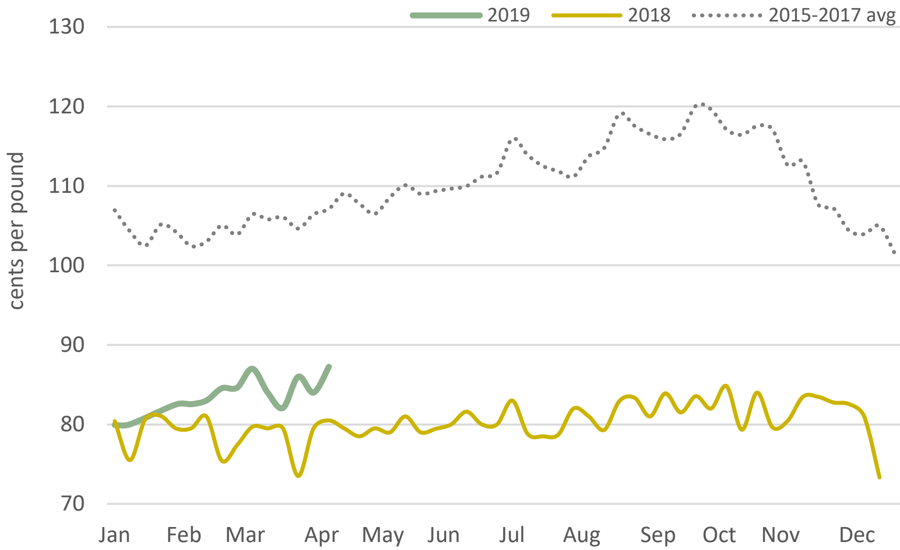
The negotiated live slaughter lamb price increased $4, ending the month at $145 per cwt, slightly below the price in 2018. The lamb cutout rose $10 through March, to $382 per cwt, 3 percent higher than in 2018. Leg of lamb, trotter-off prices added $5 to close at $36 per cwt, 1 percent above the March 2018 price. Boneless lamb shoulder prices added $5 per cwt to $531, down 6 percent from last year.

International Trade

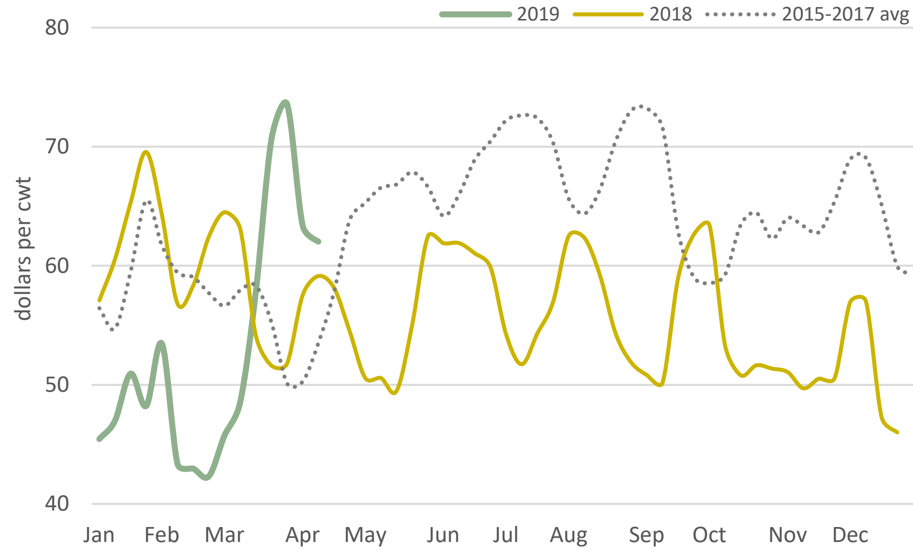
February 2019 lamb exports rose 18 percent from the 2018 level to 244 MT and 31 percent in value to $1.5 million. Compared to January, export volume was 1 percent lower while the export value added 32 percent. Total lamb export volume for 2019 to date was 46 percent higher than 2018, at a value which was 38 percent higher. Mexico, Netherlands Antilles and The Bahamas were the largest export markets for U.S. lamb and mutton in February. Lamb imports in February 2019 were down 24 percent from 2018 at 8 thousand MT, while the value of imports was up 4 percent to $74 million. Compared to January, the import volume and value fell 32 and 33 percent, respectively. Cumulative imports were down 6 percent although the value was up 24 percent. Australia, New Zealand and Mexico were the largest sources of lamb and mutton imports to the US in February 2019.

Questions, comments, or suggestions for articles?
Contact Sherry.Wise@ams.usda.gov.

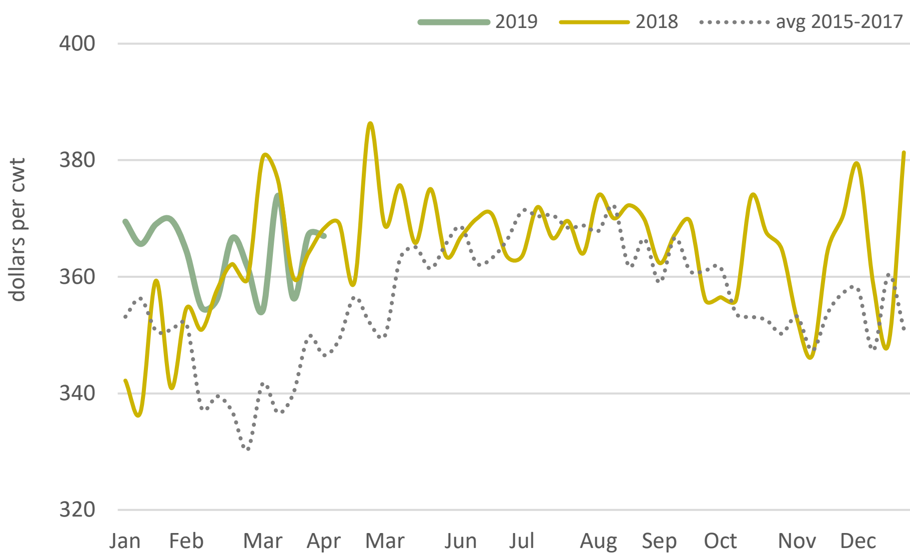
Weekly National Hen Turkey Prices, 8-16 lbs



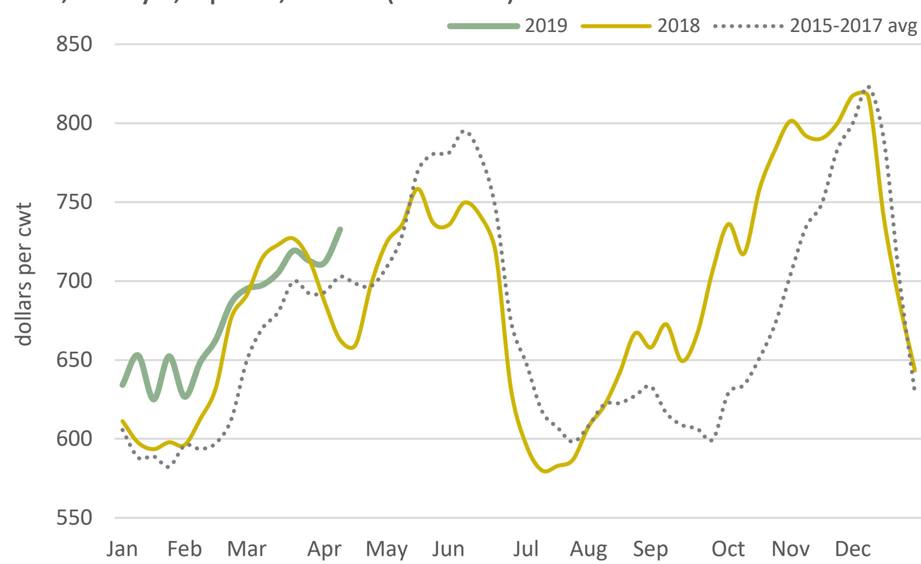
Ham, Bone-in, Trimmed 23-27#, Trim Spec 1



Weekly Leg of Lamb, Trotter Off, Prices (233A)



Rib, ribeye, lip-on, bn-in (109E 1)



Spring Lamb

Easter/Passover is the most active marketing season for lamb when more lamb is consumed than at any other time of the year.

The 2018 Easter/Passover season accounted for 20% of annual lamb cut marketings or an estimated

84 million pounds

In 2018, the U.S. imported **273** million lbs. of lamb and produced **153** million lbs. for a total of

426 million pounds

In 2018, **LEG** cuts were the most marketed cut for Easter/Passover, accounting for **58%** of all lamb cuts

48 million pounds

In 2018, California and Colorado produced **25%** of the nation's market lambs,

468 million head

In 2018, the U.S. lamb crop totaled

3.24 million head

Source: USDA AMS Agricultural Analytics and NASS.