A monthly publication of the USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry, and Seed, Agricultural Analytics Division

Volume 12-16
December 2016

EGGS

Production

October table egg production totaled 625 million dozen, up 11 percent from October 2015. On November 1, the number of birds in the table egg flock was 305 million, up 8 percent compared to a year earlier. Egg-type hatching egg production was 85 million eggs, up 3 percent from a year ago. There were 1.04 billion broiler-type hatching eggs produced in October, even with last year. The broiler-type laying flock on November 1 was 53.3 million hens, 2 percent below September 2015. Shell eggs broken totaled 199 million dozen during October 2016, up 14 percent from October a year ago, and 1 percent above the 196 million broken in September.

Price

Table egg prices ended their usual fall rally early this year. The wholesale price of one dozen large Grade A eggs in the New York market put in its seasonal high of 81 cents/dozen during the first week of November and then began a slide that lasted through Thanksgiving, reaching 61 cents/dozen by about mid-month. Prices began an unusual second rally at the end of November and rose to 77 cents/dozen at the beginning of December. Breaking stock prices began November at 17 cents/dozen and tried to rally, reaching 21 cents/dozen briefly. But the increase faltered and breaking stock prices spent the second half of the month at 18 cents/dozen.

International Trade

October U.S. shell egg exports totaled 11 million dozen valued at $10.8 million. This was a drop of 19 percent in volume and 18 percent in value compared with September, but represents an increase of 8 percent in volume and a 25 percent decrease in value compared to 2015. For the first 10 months of 2016, shell egg exports were 17 percent lower in volume and 38 percent lower in value compared with 2015.

Egg product exports in October were valued at $11.6 million, 15 percent above September and 75 percent above 2015. The HPAI outbreak hit egg products manufacturers especially hard and in the fall of 2015 many were importing breaking stock to meet domestic commitments rather than exporting processed egg products. Through October, the value of egg exports was down 17 percent compared with last year. The top five export destinations for U.S. eggs and egg products in October were Mexico, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, and Jamaica.

TURKEY

Production

October turkey production totaled 525 million pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. October's daily production was 5 percent above September and 3 percent above October 2015, with part of the year-over-year increase due to a 1 percent increase in average dressed weights. Production should continue significantly higher than last year, as the number of poults placed in October was 8 percent above last year while the number of eggs in incubators on November 1 was up 11 percent. It bears mentioning, however, that net poult placements were about even with the October average for 2012 – 2014, so production may be settling in to its pre-HPAI levels. Cold storage holdings of turkey products on October 31 were up 13 percent compared with October 2015. Whole toms and whole hens were up 2 percent and 4 percent, respectively. Stocks of white meat items were up 58 percent, while dark meat stocks were down 22 percent year-over-year.

Price

Frozen whole turkey prices fell, as expected in November. Whole frozen hens fell 12 percent through the month and ended at 110 cents/lb., while whole frozen toms fell 8 percent to 109 cents/lb. Breast prices continued to be soft, with boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat falling 13 percent to close at 185 cents/lb. Dark meat prices, on the other hand, showed strength, with B/S thigh meat and tom drumsticks both up 5 percent, closing at 131 cents/lb. and 53 cents/lb., respectively.

International Trade

The United States in October exported 23.7 thousand metric tons of turkey products with a value of $56.7 million. This is a drop of 6 percent in volume and 1 percent in value compared with September, but an increase of 16 percent in volume and 6 percent in value compared with October 2015, when turkey processors were trying to meet domestic holiday demands following the HPAI outbreaks in the spring. Through October, turkey exports were 7 percent ahead of 2015 in volume but 1 percent below in value. Our five largest export destinations for turkey products in October were Mexico, Japan, Hong Kong, Canada, and the Dominican Republic.

CHICKEN

Production

Total chicken production in October was 3.42 billion pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production in October was 1 percent below September but 3 percent above October 2015. All of the year-over-year increase came as the result of increases in the number of birds processed. Average dressed weights, in contrast with previous upward trends, were unchanged. It appears that we will see modest increases in production in the near future. For the four weeks ending December 3, eggs in incubators and chicks placed were both up 2 percent compared to the same period last year.

Total chicken inventories held in cold storage on October 31 were less than 1 percent above levels at the end of September, and down 10 percent from October 2015. Whole broiler stocks were down 22 percent compared with September levels but were 65 percent above last year's levels. White meat holdings were up 4 percent on the month but down 4 percent on the year. Month over month, total dark meat stocks were up 4 percent, but were down 22 percent compared with last October. Leg quarter holdings were up 6 percent over September, but down 13 percent compared with 2015. Thighs and thigh meat inventories were down 5 percent month-over-month and down 37 percent year-over-year. Stocks of wings were down 4 percent on the month and up 11 percent on the year.

Price

Whole broiler prices increased seasonally in November, while most parts prices fell. The National composite price for a whole broiler increased 15 percent in November, ending the month at 84 cents/lb. The increase, which began in late October, is larger in magnitude than the increases of last fall and in the 2012 – 2014 average, but this year's price level is significantly below the three-year average. White meat prices continued to decline. The price of boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat fell 4 percent to 97 cents/lb. and, significantly, has been below the price of B/S thigh meat since early October. B/S thigh meat fell 6 percent during November and closed at 112 cents/lb. Leg quarter prices, after holding remarkably steady from August to October, fell 7 percent and were 24 cents/lb. at month's end. Drumstick prices fell 6 percent to 38 cents/lb. Wings, in contrast to other parts prices, rose during November, up 3 percent to 187 cents/lb.

International Trade

U.S. chicken exports for October totaled 257 thousand metric tons with a value of $239 million. This was down 4 percent in volume and 3 percent in value compared to September, but up 8 percent in volume and 3 percent in value compared with October 2015. Last fall, chicken exports were depressed due to AI-related import bans. For the first 10 months of 2016, chicken exports were up 3 percent in volume but down 8 percent in value compared to the same period in 2015. In October, Mexico, Canada, Hong Kong, Angola, and Colombia imported the most U.S. chicken.

BEEF/VEAL

Production

Despite one less slaughter day compared to 2015, October beef production was 4 percent above 2016, at 2.21 billion pounds, more than 1 percent above September output. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.64 million head, up 5 percent from October 2015 and up nearly 1 percent from the month before. The average live weight was down 9 pounds from last year, at 1,381 pounds. Accumulated beef production for 2016 was up 5 percent from last year. Veal production totaled 6.6 million pounds, 8 percent below last year (shy one production day), 6 percent above September, and a record low for the month of October. Calf slaughter totaled 48,300 head, up 20 percent on a yearly basis and 14 percent monthly. The average live weight was down 67 pounds from last year, at 237 pounds. January to October 2016 veal production fell 8 percent from 2015. Total stocks of beef in freezers at the end of October were up 3 percent from September and up 5 percent from last October. Boneless beef storage was also 3 percent higher monthly and up 5 percent yearly. Frozen inventories of beef cuts were down 7 percent from the month before but up 1 percent from 2015. Veal supplies in cold storage were 8 percent higher on a month-to-month basis, and 93 percent higher yearly.

Price

Live cattle prices (FOB, steers and heifers) continued the rally begun in mid-October, rising $10 per cwt to $114 per cwt, 8 percent below last year. The beef cutout value was more mixed, but rose $8 per cwt to $190 per cwt, 7 percent below the 2015 value. The 90 percent lean boneless beef price fell $2 to close at $191 per cwt, 4 percent below the 2015 price. After hitting a low in October not seen in nearly 8 years, 50 percent lean trim prices climbed out the $30's into the low $50's, before falling back to close at $46 per cwt, 14 percent above the 2015 level. Packer-owned veal carcasses fell $5 to $307 per cwt, down 32 percent from 2015, while non-packer owned veal carcasses held steady at $312 per cwt, 30 percent below 2015. The veal cutout average remained at $483 per cwt, 18 percent below the 2015 value.

International Trade

Compared to October 2015, beef and veal exports (including variety meats) increased 11 percent to 106 thousand MT and the export value rose 10 percent to $560 million. The export volume and value were up 5 percent from September. 2016 exports for the year to date are 9 percent higher than in 2015, but the value is down 3 percent. South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong were our largest export markets in October. Year-over-year beef import volumes were down 23 percent to 78 thousand MT, and were down 30 percent in value to $410 million. Compared to September, beef imports were down 16 percent and value was down 17 percent. Total yearly imports for 2016 so far were 12 percent lower in volume and 23 percent lower in value than in 2015. Canada, Mexico and Australia were the largest importers of beef to the U.S.

PORK

Production

While short one slaughter day compared to 2015, pork production rose 1 percent to 2.20 billion pounds, up 3 percent from September. Hog slaughter totaled 10.4 million head, up 2 percent from last October and up 3 percent monthly. The average live weight was down 1 pound yearly, at 282 pounds. Year-to-date pork production was up 1 percent from 2015.

Frozen pork supplies were down 7 percent from September and down 1 percent from October 2015. Bone-in picnics were up 33 percent from ending inventory levels for September, and up 28 percent from the previous October. Total hams in cold storage were down 23 percent on a monthly basis, and down 3 percent yearly. Pork trimmings were 11 percent lower than the month before and were down 13 percent year-over-year. Loins were up 12 percent on a monthly basis, and up 24 percent yearly. Stocks of pork bellies were down 17 percent from last month but up 16 percent from last October.

Price

The negotiated carcass price for barrows and gilts dropped to a low of $41 per cwt before closing November at $45 per cwt, down 12 percent from 2015. The pork cutout value stayed at roughly $74 per cwt through the month, 2 percent below the 2015 value. Trimmed, bone-in hams, 23-27 pounds, continued the gains, ending up $15 to $72 per cwt, 9 percent above 2015. Picnic meat combos, cushion out, lost $4, closing at $75 per cwt, 18 percent above last year. Pork trim, 72 percent lean added $4 to $47 per cwt, up 20 percent from the 2015 value. Pork belly primals lost $13 to end at $98 per cwt, down 10 percent yearly.

International Trade

Pork exports in October (including variety meats) were down 13 percent from 2015 to 198 thousand MT, and the value was down 16 percent to $504 million. Pork export volume was up 10 percent, and the value was up 6 percent from September. For 2016 to date, the total export volume was down 5 percent and down 3 percent in value from last year. The largest overseas markets for U.S. pork were Japan, Mexico and Canada. Compared to 2015, October pork imports were down 11 percent in volume to 38 thousand MT and down 13 percent to $126 million. The volume of pork imports fell 6 percent from September, and 7 percent in value. Year-to-date measures showed pork import volumes down 2 percent, but the value was up 3 percent from 2015. The countries of Canada, Italy and Poland imported the largest volumes of pork to the U.S..

LAMB

Production

October lamb and mutton production, at 11.7 million pounds, was 2.5 percent lower than both the year and the month before. Sheep slaughter totaled 181,600 head, 2.5 percent below last year and 6 percent below last month. The average live weight was 128 pounds, unchanged from October 2015. To date, 2016 commercial lamb and mutton production was down 1 percent from 2015. Lamb and mutton freezer stocks were 10 percent lower than the month before, and 28 percent below year earlier levels.

Price

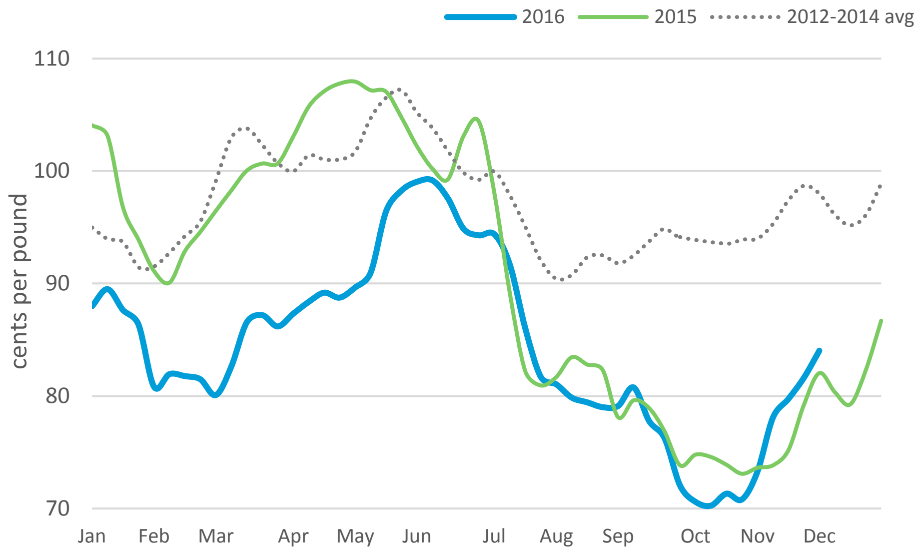
Negotiated live slaughter lamb dropped $6 in November, to $139 per cwt, down 5 percent from 2015. The lamb cutout regained $3, to $353 cwt, 3 percent below the 2015 value. Leg of lamb, trotter off prices rose $7 to also close at $353 per cwt, 1 percent below the 2015 price. Boneless lamb shoulder prices added $16 per cwt, to $572, up 4 percent from last year.

International Trade

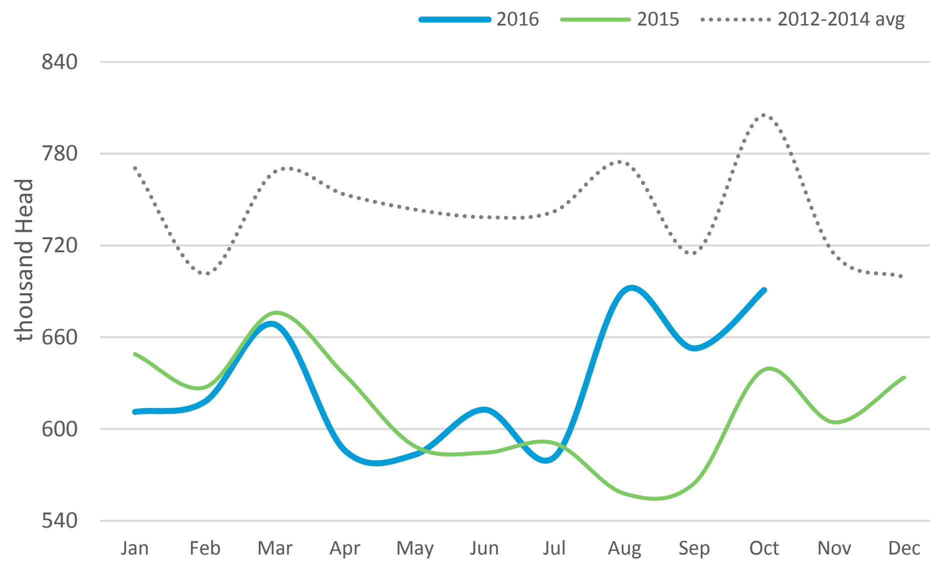
October lamb exports were up 6 percent from 2015 levels to 224 MT, and up 12 percent in value to $1 million. Compared to September, export volume was up 44 percent but the value was down 3 percent. Total exports for 2016 are higher by 9 percent in volume and 6 percent in value compared to 2015. Mexico, Barbados and The Netherlands were the largest export markets of lamb and mutton. U.S. lamb imports in October were down 36 percent from 2015 to 5 thousand MT, with the value of imports down 31 percent to $38 million. The import volume and value were both down 23 percent from September. For 2016 to date, imports are up 6 percent in volume but down 1 percent in value from 2015. Australia and New Zealand were the largest sources of imports.

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

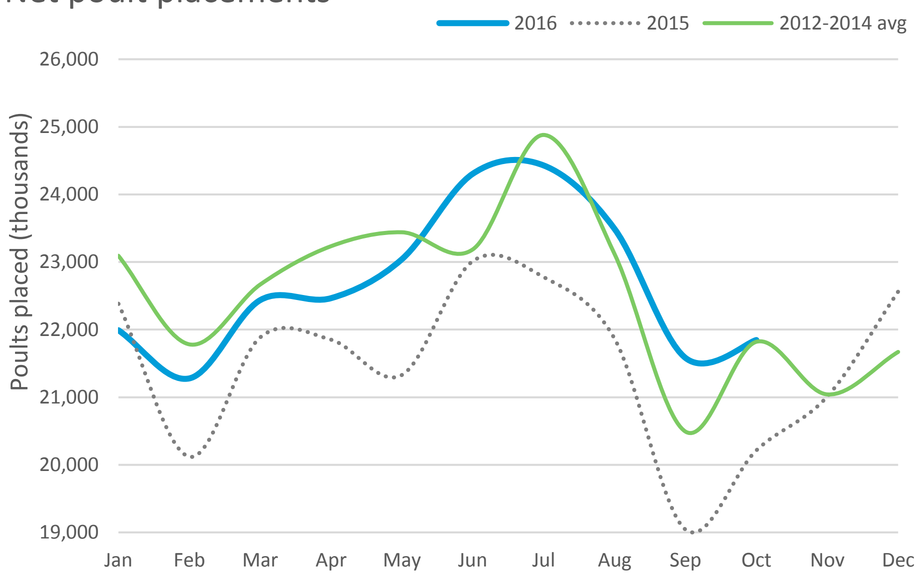
Whole broilers (National composite price)



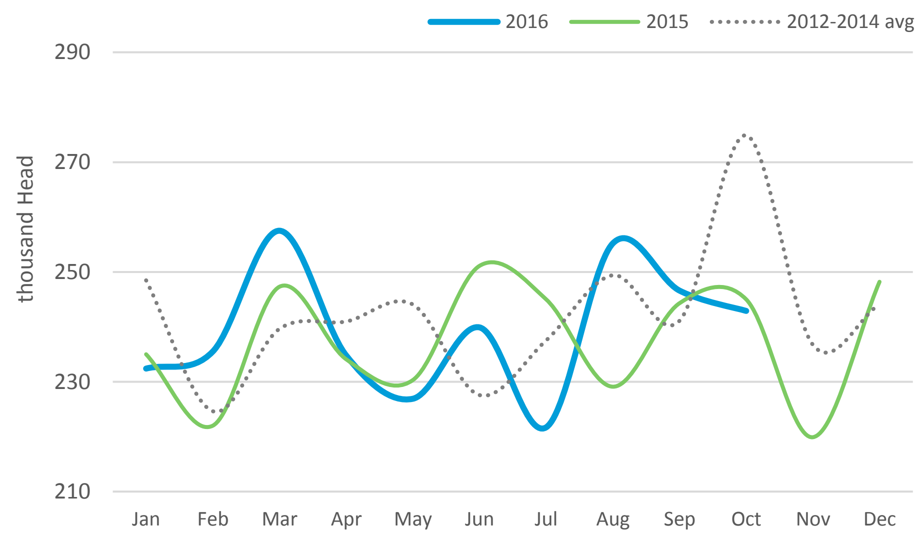
Monthly F.I. Heifer Slaughter



Net poult placements

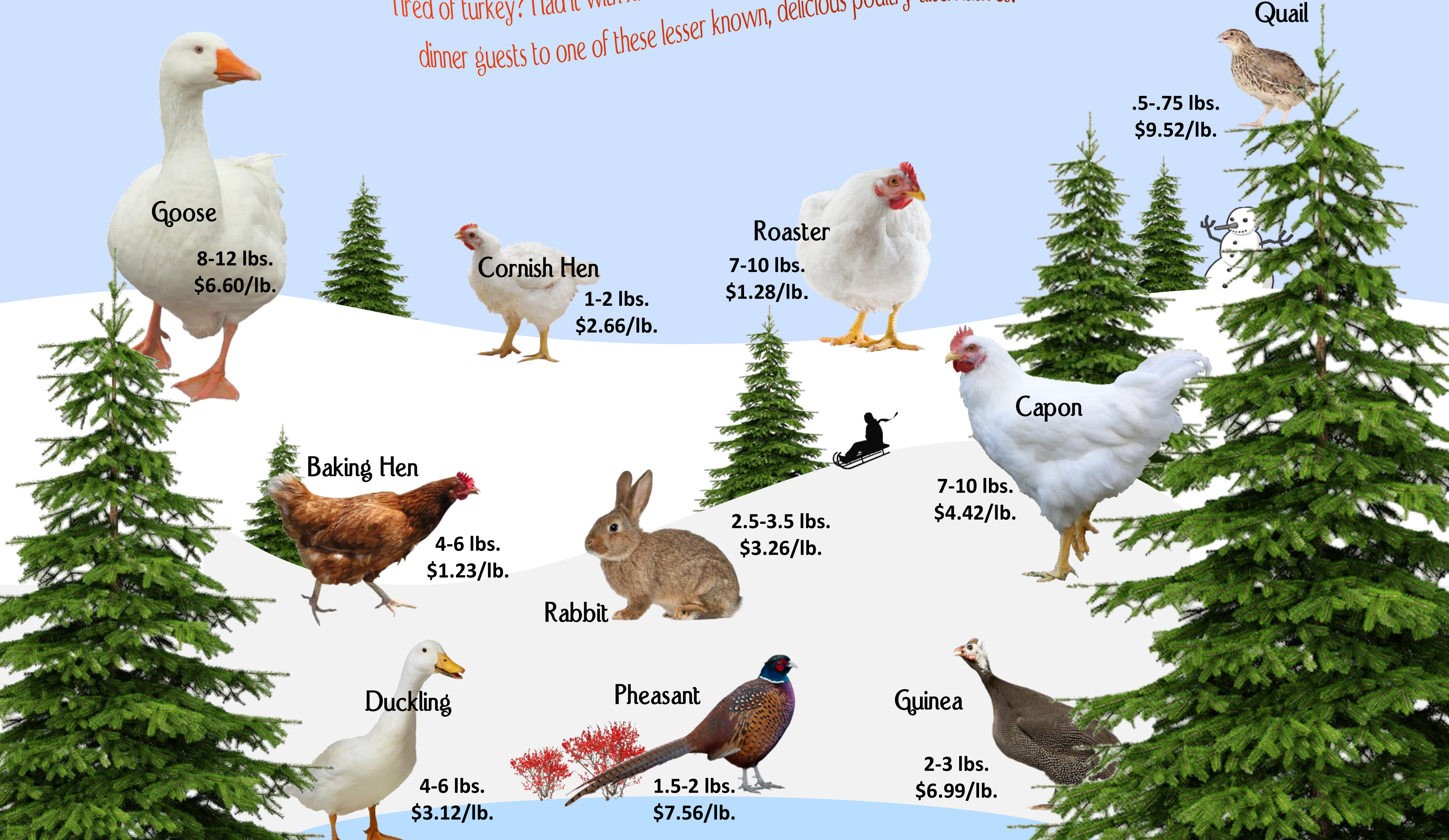


Monthly Federally Inspected Sow Slaughter



A Plethora of Palatable Poultry Proffers

Tired of turkey? Had it with ham? Beef a bother? This year, treat your holiday dinner guests to one of these lesser known, delicious poultry alternatives.



Source: USDA Agricultural Analytics; NASS; avg. sale prices from Thanksgiving 2016