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CHICKEN

Production

Total broiler production in July was 3.47 billion pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production was up 1 percent compared to June and 4 percent compared to July 2014. The year-over-year increase was due to increases in both head slaughtered (2.6 percent) and average dressed weight (1.5 percent). Chicks placed for the four weeks ending August 29 were up 1 percent compared to the same period in 2014 and eggs set were unchanged. Total chicken in cold storage on July 31 was 6 percent above June levels and 22 percent above July 2014. Whole broiler stocks were up 5 percent on the month and 54 percent on the year. White meat holdings fell 5 percent compared to June, but were up 28 percent compared to July 2014. Dark meat overall was up 7 percent from June and up 24 percent from last July. After falling for the previous 3 months, leg quarter inventories were up 5 percent month-over-month and were up 17 percent year-over-year. Leg inventories remain high, up 28 percent for the month and 23 percent for the year. Wing holdings were up 22 percent from June, but were 8 percent below July 2014.

Price

After falling nearly 22 percent in July, whole broiler prices stabilized in August, trading between 82 and 83 cents/lb. all month. Breast meat prices staged a modest rally in August, with boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat prices climbing 8 percent to end at 145 cents/lb. Dark meat prices, however, struggled. Leg quarter prices fell 9 percent to 16 cents/lb. at month's end, B/S thigh meat fell 6 percent to 93 cents/lb., and drumsticks fell 3 percent to 31 cents/lb. Wings also lost 6 percent to end at 172 cents/lb.

International Trade

U.S. broiler exports for July totaled 228 thousand metric tons with a value of $231 million. This was down 11 percent in volume and 12 percent in value compared to June and down 21 percent in volume and 35 percent in value compared to July 2014. For the first 7 months of 2015, exports are down 10 percent in volume and 19 percent in value compared to the same period last year. The three largest importers of U.S. chicken products in July were Mexico, Canada, and Hong Kong.

TURKEY

Production

July turkey production totaled 445 million pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production was down 2 percent from June and down 11 percent from July 2014, as the effects of High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) continue to be felt. The average dressed weight of birds slaughtered in July was down 3 percent compared to both June and July 2015; producers are likely shifting production to lighter weight birds to meet Thanksgiving commitments. Poult placements in July were down 7 percent year-over-year, while eggs in incubators on August 1 were down 4 percent.

Turkey inventories on July 31 were 1 percent higher than at the end of July 2014, driven largely by increases in whole hen holdings. Whole hen inventories were up 9 percent year-over-year, whole toms were down 5 percent. Stocks of white meat were 9 percent above last year. Dark meat inventories were 44 percent above last July, compared to 72 percent up year-over-year at the end of June, and showed a modest decline from the end of June.

Price

Whole turkey prices continued to climb sharply in August. Whole hen prices rose 6 percent to close the month at 129 cents/lb., and whole toms rose 7 percent to 137 cents/lb. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat plateaued in August at a record high 565 cents/lb. Dark meat prices were also largely unchanged; B/S thigh meat held at 139 cents/lb., while tom drumsticks rose a penny to 62 cents/lb.

International Trade

The U.S. exported 18 thousand metric tons of turkey and turkey products in July with a value of $48 million. Exports were 3 percent lower in volume but 3 percent higher than in June. Compared to July 2014, however, exports were down 48 percent in volume and 31 percent in value. Through July, turkey exports were down 26 percent in volume and 17 percent in value compared to 2014. The top five export destinations for U.S. turkey in July were Mexico, Japan, Canada, Hong Kong, and Panama.

EGGS

Production

Table egg production in July was 544 million dozen, 12 percent lower than last July due to losses from High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). Broiler-type hatching egg production in July was up 4 percent compared to 2014. There were 1.6 billion broiler-type hatching eggs produced. Egg-type hatching egg production was 83 million eggs, 5 percent above last year.

Shell eggs broken totaled 167 million dozen during July, down 16 percent from July a year ago, and 13 percent above the 192 million broken in June. The number of table-egg layers in the national flock on August 1 was down 11 percent compared to 2014. Hatching egg layers for the table egg flock were up 5 percent compared to last year, and the broiler-type hatching egg flock was up 2 percent compared with last year. The number of pullets added during July for all types of egg production was even with last year.

Price

At the beginning of July, it appeared that egg prices had stabilized with no new HPAI outbreaks since mid-June. However, beginning July 10, the price of a dozen Grade A large eggs in the New York wholesale market rose 45 percent, reaching 274 cents/dozen on August 6. Prices remained there for 2 weeks before beginning to fall, and reached a new lower plateau of 239 the last week of August.

Breaking stock prices began their rise earlier than table eggs are rose more steeply. Breaking stock prices rose 67 percent from late June to their high of 244 cents/dozen, reached in early August. Prices began falling in mid-August and reached 169 cents/dozen by the end of the month, with prices still falling at a slow pace.

International Trade

Exports of shell eggs in July were 10.1 million dozen valued at $10.0 million. Compared to June, exports were up 1 percent in volume and 9 percent in value, but compared to last July, exports were down 44 percent in volume and 18 percent in value. For the first 7 months of 2015, exports of shell eggs were down 5 percent in volume but up 10 percent in value. Exports of egg products in July had a value of $7.3 million, up 10 percent from June, but down 48 percent from July a year ago. Through July, 2015 exports of egg products were down 16 percent compared to 2014. The three largest importers of U.S. shell eggs and egg products were Canada, Mexico, and Japan.

BEEF/VEAL

Production

July beef production was 2 percent lower than the prior year level, but up 2 percent from the previous month, at 2.05 billion pounds. Cattle slaughter was down 4 percent from last July but was 1 percent higher than in June 2015 at 2.49 million head. The average live weight was up 26 pounds from the 2014 level, at 1,346 pounds. July veal production fell 11 percent from last year to 6.9 million pounds, 1 percent below June’s volume. While calf slaughter was down 25 percent on a yearly basis at 36,500 head, it was up 4 percent from June. The average live weight was 322 pounds, up 47 pounds from last year. January to July 2015 accumulated beef production was down 4 percent from last year and total veal production was down 18 percent. At 455 million pounds, total beef in freezers in July was down 4 percent from June but up 24 percent from July 2014. Boneless beef supplies were 4 percent lower than the previous month, but 27 percent above year ago levels. Stocks of beef cuts were down slightly from June, and down 2 percent from last year. Frozen veal stocks were up 17 percent on a monthly basis but were down 3 percent on a yearly basis..

Price

Live cattle prices (FOB, steers and heifers) continued a decline begun in early April to $145 per cwt, 7 percent below the price at the end of August 2014 and the same value as the end of July. The beef cutout value regained $11 in August, closing at $244 per cwt, 2 percent lower than last August. 90 percent lean boneless beef prices fell early in the month, but recovered somewhat, closing down $3 to $282 per cwt, 6 percent below the prior year price. Alternatively, beef trim, 50 percent, rose in the first half of August, but closed the month down $3 to $65 per cwt, half the value in 2014. Packer-owned veal carcasses gained $4 to $459 per cwt while non-packer owned veal carcasses rose $1 to $451 per cwt. The veal cutout remained at $585 per cwt through August, 1 percent above the 2014 price.

International Trade

Compared to 2014, July 2015 beef and veal exports fell 10 percent to 92 thousand MT while the export value fell 11 percent to $556 million. This volume is down 5 percent and the value is 4 percent lower than in June. Total exports for the year so far remain down 10 percent in volume for the third month in a row, but value is down only 2 percent from 2014. Japan, Canada and South Korea were our largest export markets in July. Year-over-year beef import volumes were 9 percent higher at 99 thousand MT, and were up 14 percent in value to $567 million. Compared to June, beef imports were down 15 percent in volume and 17 percent in value. Total beef imports for the year are up from 2014 by 31 percent in volume and 48 percent in value. Australia, New Zealand and Mexico were the largest importers of beef in July.

PORK

Production

Pork production in July totaled 1.97 billion pounds, up 10 percent from 2015 but down 1 percent from June. Hog slaughter rose 11 percent from the previous year to 9.40 million head, but fell slightly from the previous month. The average live weight was down 3 pounds from last July, at 280 pounds. January to July 2015 accumulated pork was up 7 percent from last year. Frozen pork supplies at the end of July were up very slightly from June, but were up 19 percent from last July to 635 million pounds. Bone-in picnics in cold storage were up 11 percent from June, and up 40 percent from last year. Total hams were up 15 percent on a monthly basis and 39 percent yearly. Compared to June, total loins were down 9 percent, ribs were up 4 percent, and butts were up 5 percent. On a year-over-year basis, loins, ribs and butts were up 40, 37 and 10 percent, respectively. Pork trimmings in freezers were 7 percent below June's level, but 4 percent above 2014 supplies. Stocks of pork bellies continued to reflect strong demand and are 47 percent lower than last month, and 63 percent below July 2014.

Price

The negotiated carcass price for barrows and gilts was steady through August at $75 per cwt, but closed down at $73, 20 percent lower than 2014 value. The pork cutout gained $3 by mid-August but closed down again to $86 per cwt, 16 percent below August 2014's closing value. Trimmed, bone-in hams, 23-27 pounds, gained $12 to close at $74 per cwt, 23 percent below the 2014 value. However, picnic meat combos, cushion out, lost $13 to end August at $67 per cwt, 50 percent below the price in 2014. Pork trim, 72 percent lean, also lost $13 to $43 per cwt, 55 percent last year. Pork belly primals increased $8 to $162 per cwt, 40 percent more than in 2014.

International Trade

July pork exports (including variety meats) fell 4 percent over last year to 163 thousand MT while the value fell 24 percent to $426 million. Pork export volume and value were down 5 and 3 percent, respectively, from June 2015. Year-to-date export volume is again 5 percent lower, while value is down 18 percent. The largest overseas markets for U.S. pork were Japan, Mexico and Canada. Compared to 2014, July pork imports were up 7 percent in volume to 39 thousand MT, but were down 19 percent in value to $128 million. Pork import volumes decreased from the prior month by 11 percent and were down 13 percent in value. Cumulative imports for 2015 rose 18 percent from 2014, though the value was down 8 percent. Canada, Italy and Denmark were the largest importers.

LAMB

Production

Lamb and mutton production was down overall at 12.9 million pounds, 7 percent below July 2014 and 4 percent below June's production. Sheep slaughter dropped 11 percent below last year and 4 percent below June to187,100 head. The average live weight was 138 pounds, up 6 pounds from last July. January to July 2015 accumulated lamb and mutton production was down 4 percent from 2014. Lamb and mutton supplies in cold storage were 10 percent above last month's levels, and 15 percent higher than in July 2014.

Price

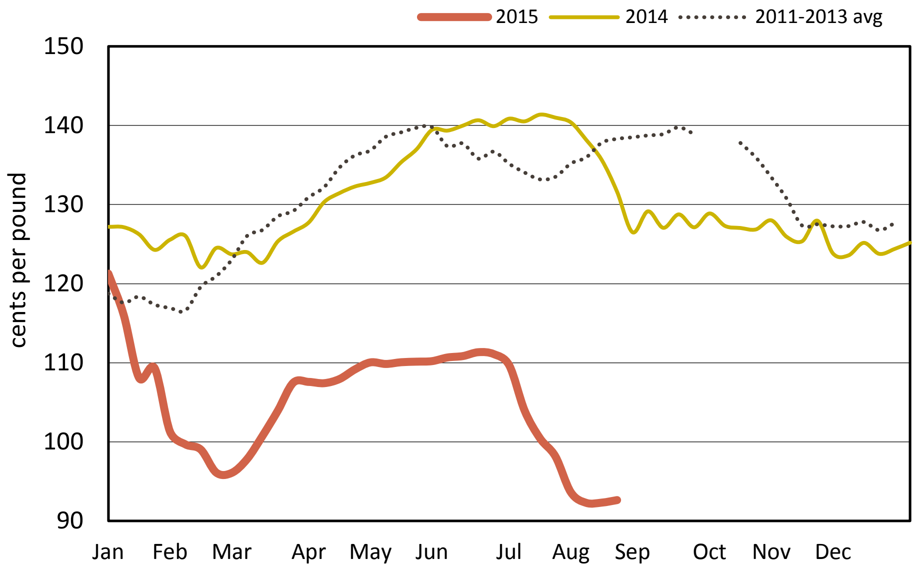
Negotiated live slaughter lamb prices lost $3 in August to end at $156 per cwt, mostly unchanged from the 2014 price. The lamb cutout rose $7 from the end of July to $359 per cwt, 2 percent below the price last August. Leg of lamb, trotter off prices were up $9 by mid-August, but remained steady for the remainder to end at $346 per cwt, 5 percent below 2014 prices. Boneless lamb shoulder prices in August closed up $11 to $554 per cwt, 5 percent above the 2014 price.

International Trade

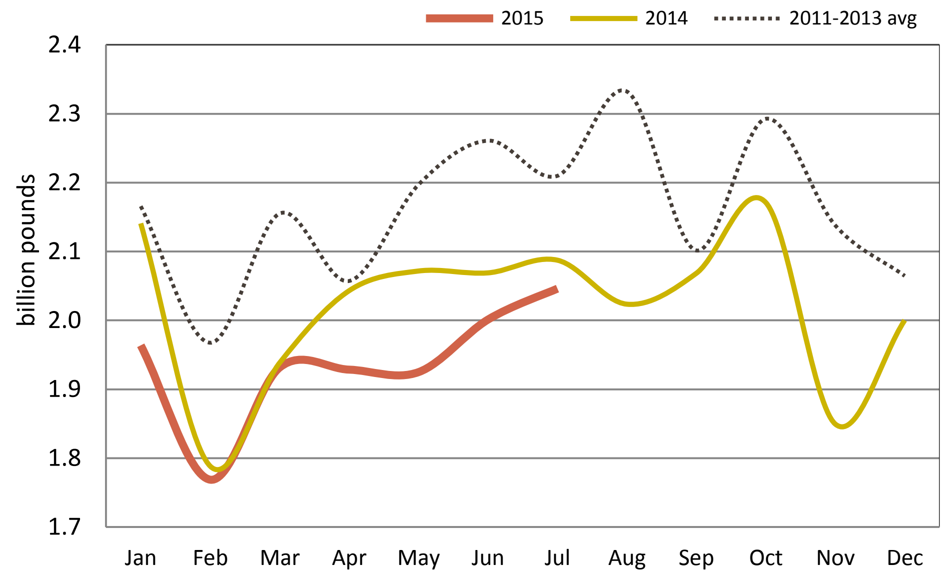
Lamb exports were down 62 percent from 2014 levels to 128 metric tons, and were down 58 percent in value to $835,000. Compared to June, export volume was down 20 percent and export value was 2 percent lower. Year-to-date lamb exports are down 40 percent in volume and 39 percent in value from 2014. Mexico, Canada and the Leeward Islands were the largest export markets of lamb and mutton in June. July U.S. lamb imports were down 13 percent over 2014 to 5,505 MT, and the value of imports fell 25 percent to $45 million. On a monthly basis, the volume and value of lamb imports dropped 34 and 31 percent, respectively, from June levels. Australia, New Zealand and Chile were the largest importers.

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

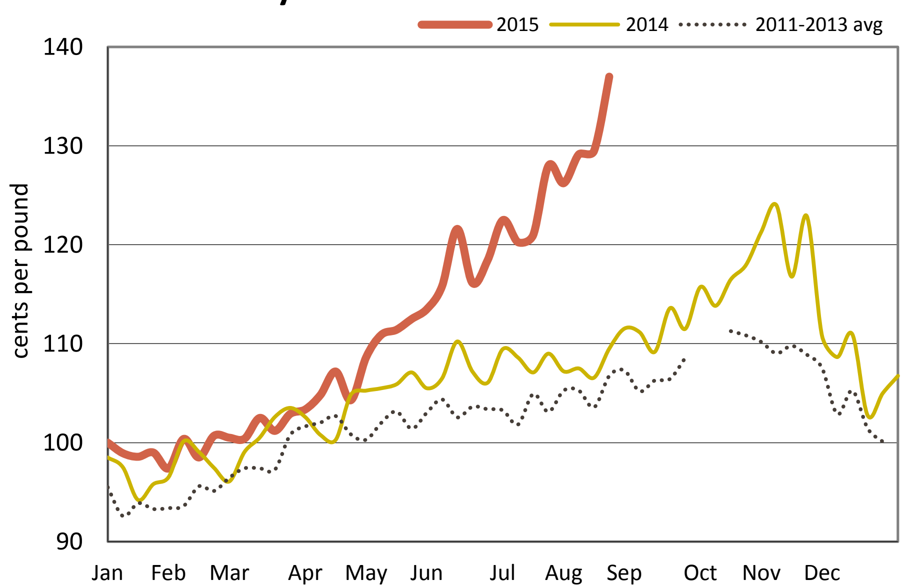
Northeast B/S Broiler Thighs



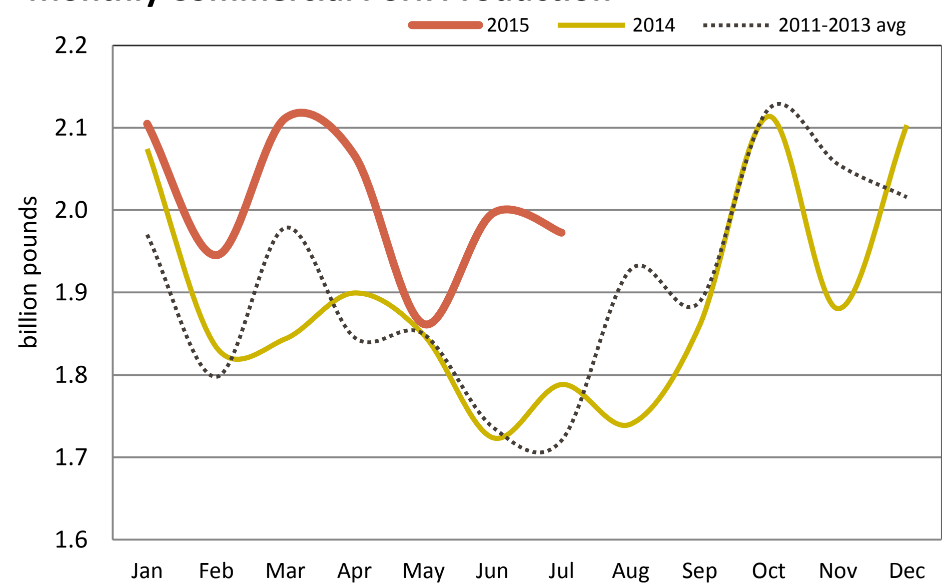
Monthly Commercial Beef Production



Whole Tom Turkeys - National



Monthly Commercial Pork Production



Everybody Loves A Chicken*

September is National Chicken Month

#1 **82**lbs.

Chicken is by far the most consumed meat protein in America. In 2014, chicken consumption outpaced #2 beef by 31% and #3 pork by 43%!

10% **$2.47**

In 2014, the most popular chicken cut in U.S. supermarkets was the value-pack bnls/sknls breast, comprising 10% of all sales promotions for chicken at an average cost of $2.47/lb.

The Big 3

(% of 2014 Production)

GA #1 15%

AL #2 12%

AR #3 11%

Cecile Steele

Founder of the Commercial Broiler Industry

In Sussex County, Delaware

In 1923, she mistakenly received 500 chicks for layer replacement, 10 times what she ordered. She decided to raise them and, 18 weeks later, sold the 387, 2.5lbs. survivors for $0.62/lb. In1924, she ordered 1,000!

174,000,000

Number of broilers produced in 2012 in Sussex County, Delaware, the top broiler producing county in the U.S.

(Census 2012)

$32,700,000,000

Value of broilers produced in 2014

$600

Value of Mrs. Steele's broilers produced in 1923.

In 2014, the U.S. Processed…

8,300,000,000

conventional broilers

234,000,000

antibiotic-free broilers

16,300,000

Certified organic broilers.

******"Everybody Loves A Chicken"*- words & music by Bobby Jones, 1912

Source: USDA AMS AAD, NASS, National Chicken Council