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EGGS

Production

February table egg production totaled 590 million dozen, up 3 percent from February 2016. On March 1, the number of birds in the table egg flock was 317 million, up 3 percent compared to a year earlier. Egg-type hatching egg production was 75 million eggs, down 11 percent from a year ago. There were 941 million broiler-type hatching eggs produced in February, down 5 percent from last year. The broiler-type laying flock on March 1 was 55.1 million hens, 1 percent below March 2016. Shell eggs broken totaled 186 million dozen during February 2017, up 13 percent from February a year ago, but 5 percent below the 196 million broken in January.

Price

Egg prices held their seasonal Easter rally during March. The price of one dozen large Grade A eggs in the New York wholesale market rose 47 percent through the month, opening at 64 cents/dozen and closing at 94 cents/dozen. Breaking stock prices held an even more impressive rally, rising 65 percent from 23 cents/dozen at the beginning of March to 38 cents/dozen by the end of the month, including a 10 cent increase between the third and fourth weeks of March. Breaking stock prices began to show a bit of weakness the first week of April.

International Trade

February exports of shell eggs totaled 10 million dozen valued at $9.7 million. This was 28 percent higher in volume and 27 percent higher in value than January, and 7 percent higher in volume but 1 percent lower in value than last February. For the first 2 months of 2017, shell egg exports are down 1 percent in volume and down 8 percent in value compared with 2016. Exports of egg products in February were valued at $10.7 million. This was 9 percent above January exports and 61 percent above last February's total. Through February, total 2017 exports of egg products were 52 percent above last year's total. In February, our five largest export destinations for shell eggs and egg products were Mexico, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea.

TURKEY

Production

Total U.S. turkey production in February totaled 18.0 million pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production fell 4 percent from January but was 6 percent above last February. The year-over-year increase reflects a 2 percent in average dressed weight, but more importantly, a 4 percent increase in the number of birds slaughtered. Continued large increases in turkey slaughter numbers are expected—poult placements for February were up 6 percent compared to 2016 and eggs in incubators on March 1 were also up 6 percent year-over-year. Total holdings of turkey on February 28 were up 11 percent compared with February 2016 levels. Whole hen stocks were up 10 percent and tom stocks were up 18 percent. Total holdings of both white and dark meat were up year-over-year as well, with white meat up 49 percent and dark meat up 14 percent.

Price

Turkey prices continue to track well below last year's levels. Whole hen and tom turkey prices were both down 1 percent in March, and both closed the month at 100 cents/lb. These prices are, however, close to the 2013–2015 average for March. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat prices continued in the doldrums, rising about 3 percent to close at 155 cents/lb., which is far below the March price of bone-in Grade A 4 – 8 pound breasts, which traded at an average price of 182 cents/lb. B/S thigh meat fell 8 percent to close at 122 cents/lb. While B/S thigh meat has fallen about 14 cents/lb. since the beginning of the year, it is still trading significantly above its price at this time last year, when it was 103 cents/lb. Tom drumsticks fell 3 percent to 47 cents/lb. at month's end.

International Trade

The U.S. exported 19.9 thousand metric tons of turkey products in February with a value of $41 million, 2 percent above January in volume but 5 percent below in value and 10 percent above February 2016 in volume but a decrease of 6 percent in value. Through February, 2017 exports have been 18 percent above 2016 in volume and 6 percent above in value. Mexico, Hong Kong, Canada, the Dominican Republic, and Japan were the five largest importers of U.S. turkey products in December.

CHICKEN

Production

The U.S. produced 3.15 billion pounds of chicken on a ready-to-cook basis in February. Daily production was down 5 percent compared to January, but up 2 percent compared to February 2016. Changes in February production were driven by changes in the number of birds slaughtered as average dressed weights were marginally below both month-ago and year-ago levels. Production should increase moderately in the coming weeks; for the four weeks ending April 1, both eggs set and chicks placed were 2 percent above the same period last year.

Total holdings of chicken in cold storage as of February 28 were almost unchanged, up 1.5 percent from the end of January and down 2 percent from February 2016. Whole broiler stocks fell 6 percent compared with January and 2 percent compared with last February. White meat inventories were unchanged month-over-month and up 6 percent year-over-year. Overall holdings of dark meat were up 6 percent for the month and down 4 percent for the year. Leg quarter stocks were up 3 percent compared with January but down 2 percent compared with 2016. Stocks of legs, which account for a much smaller percentage of inventory levels than leg quarters, were up 38 percent from January and up 46 percent from last year. Wing inventories were even with January's levels, but up 5 percent compared with last February.

Price

Chicken prices showed strong increases in March, possibly due to fears of production restrictions related to the discovery of broiler premises infected with avian influenza. The National composite whole broiler price rose 14 percent in March, reaching 99 cents/lb. the third week of the month. Parts prices were also strongly up. Leg quarter prices posted a 10 percent gain to close at 30 cents/lb. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat rose 5 percent to 128 cents/lb. B/S thigh meat jumped 19 percent to 113 cents/lb., while drumsticks were up 12 percent to 43 cents/lb. Wings showed a stronger-than-usual seasonal jump of 6 percent to 189 cents/lb. in anticipation of March Madness.

International Trade

U.S. chicken exports in February totaled 246 thousand metric tons with a value of $222 million. Exports were down 2 percent in volume and 3 percent in value compared to January, but were up 2 percent in volume and 1 percent in value compared to January 2016. For the first two months of 2017, total chicken exports are up 7 percent in volume and 6 percent in value. The top five destinations for exports in December were Mexico, Canada, Hong Kong, Angola, and Taiwan.

BEEF/VEAL

Production

February 2017 beef production was 3 percent above 2016 (with one less slaughter day) and 9 percent below the January 2016 level at 1.93 billion pounds. Cattle slaughter was up 3 percent, at 2.37 million head, but down 8 percent on a monthly basis. The average live weight was down 12 pounds from last year, to 1,360 pounds. Veal production totaled 5.6 million pounds, 8 percent below last February, and 11 percent lower than January. At 40,200 head, calf slaughter was up 10 percent from the year before and down 14 percent monthly. The average live weight was down 46 pounds from last year, at 241 pounds. Total stocks of beef in freezers at the end of February were down 7 percent from January, and down 1 percent from the February 2016. Boneless beef storage was 7 percent lower than the month before, and was slightly lower than last year. Inventories of beef cuts were down 1 percent monthly and down 7 percent from year earlier levels. Veal stocks in cold storage were down 9 percent on a month-to-month basis but up 131 percent from levels for February 2016.

Price

After hitting a year-to-date high of $131 per cwt prices for live cattle prices (FOB, steers and heifers), at the end of March the price softened to $128 per cwt, 4 percent below last year. The beef cutout value climbed $29 per cwt to a high for the year of $223 before closing at $217 per cwt, 4 percent below the 2016 value. The 90 percent lean boneless beef price continues tracking the 2016 price pattern, rising from $212 per cwt to $218, down slightly from last year. Similar to the carcass and cutout values, the 50 percent lean trim price rose $27 to a 2017 peak of $107 per cwt, but fell to $103 per cwt, 14 percent above the 2016 level. Packer-owned veal carcasses rose $2 to $305 per cwt, while non-packer owned veal carcasses held steady at $299 per cwt, 18 and 17 percent below 2016, respectively. The veal cutout average remained at $435 per cwt through March, 19 percent below last year's value.

International Trade

Compared to February 2016, beef and veal exports (including variety meats) increased 9 percent to 90 thousand MT and the export value rose 16 percent to $509 million. The export volume and value were down 6 and 1 percent, respectively, from January. Japan, South Korea and Canada were our largest export markets in January. Year-over-year beef import volumes were down 13 percent to 72 thousand MT, and down 19 percent in value to $340 million. Compared to January, beef imports were down 12 percent and value was down 14 percent. New Zealand, Canada and Mexico were the largest importers of beef to the U.S.

PORK

Production

Pork production for the first month of 2017 totaled 1.99 billion pounds, down 1 percent from February 2016 (with one less slaughter day), and down 8 percent from January. Hog slaughter totaled 9.37 million head, down 1 percent from 2016 and down 7 percent monthly. The average live weight rose 1 pound from the previous year, to 284 pounds.

Pork supplies in cold storage were up 9 percent from January, but were down 9 percent from last February. Bone-in picnics were 6 percent lower than ending inventory levels for the month prior, and were down 24 percent from last year. Total hams in cold storage were 32 percent higher on a monthly basis and were up 9 percent on a yearly basis. Pork trimmings were up 10 percent from the end of January and down 5 percent from last year. Loins were down 4 percent on a monthly basis and 11 percent yearly. Inventories of ribs were 9 percent higher than last month and 3 percent below January 2016. Pork butts in freezers were 5 percent over levels in January, but down 4 percent from the year before. Pork belly stocks were 15 percent higher than last month but down 74 percent from last year.

Price

The negotiated carcass price for barrows and gilts fell slightly through March, losing $1 to close at $66 per cwt, 8 percent above 2016. The pork cutout value lost $4 per cwt, to close at $77 per cwt, down slightly from the 2016 value. Trimmed, bone-in hams, 23-27 pounds also fell $1 to $56 per cwt, 4 percent above 2016. Picnic meat combos, cushion out prices increased $9 per cwt before dropping $2 to $84 per cwt, 36 percent higher than last year. Pork trim, 72 percent lean ended up $3 to close at $68 per cwt, 17 percent higher than in 2016. Pork belly primals continued to fall, losing $17 per cwt to $131 per cwt, 2 percent higher on a yearly basis.

International Trade

Pork exports in February (including variety meats) were up 15 percent from 2016 to 193 thousand MT, and the value was up 18 percent to $469 million. Pork export volume was down 3 percent from January, and the value was down 4 percent. The largest overseas markets for U.S. pork were Japan, Mexico and Canada. Compared to 2016, February pork imports were down 13 percent in volume at 37 thousand MT, and down 6 percent in value to $131 million. The volume of pork imports fell 4 percent from January, but the value gained 2 percent. The countries of Canada, Poland and Italy imported the largest volumes of pork to the U.S.

LAMB

Production

Lamb and mutton production was 11.2 million pounds in February 2017, down 10 percent from 2016 (with one less slaughter day), and down 9 percent from January. Sheep slaughter totaled 159,000 head, 9 percent less than last year and down 10 percent from the previous month. The average live weight was 140 pounds, down 2 pounds from a year ago. Lamb and mutton in cold storage was 26 percent higher than at the end of January, but 36 percent lower than year earlier levels.

Price

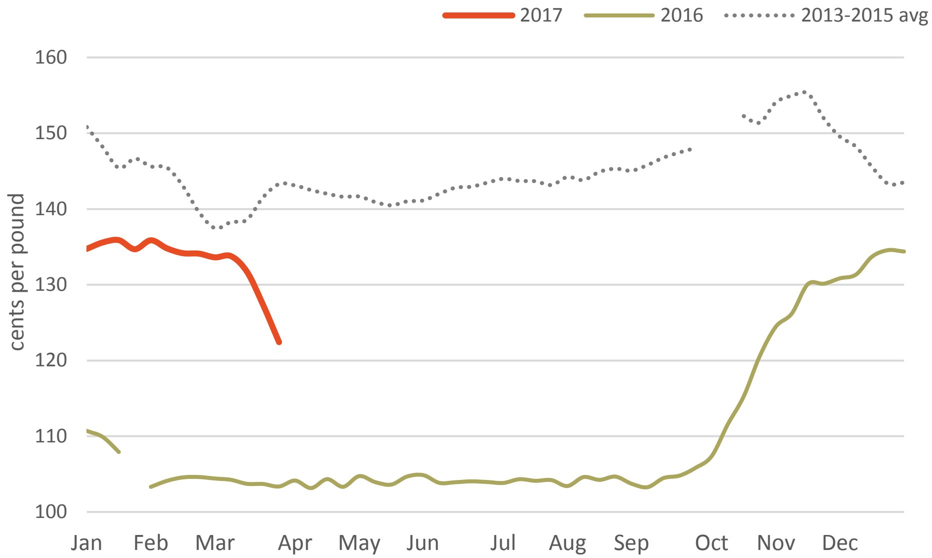
Most likely due to seasonal demand, negotiated live slaughter lamb prices spiked $14 per cwt in March to $154 per cwt, up 18 percent from 2016. The lamb cutout value saw an increase of $15 to $374 cwt, slightly below 2016. Leg of lamb, trotter off prices added $35 through the month, closing at $345 per cwt, 2 percent below the 2016 price.

International Trade

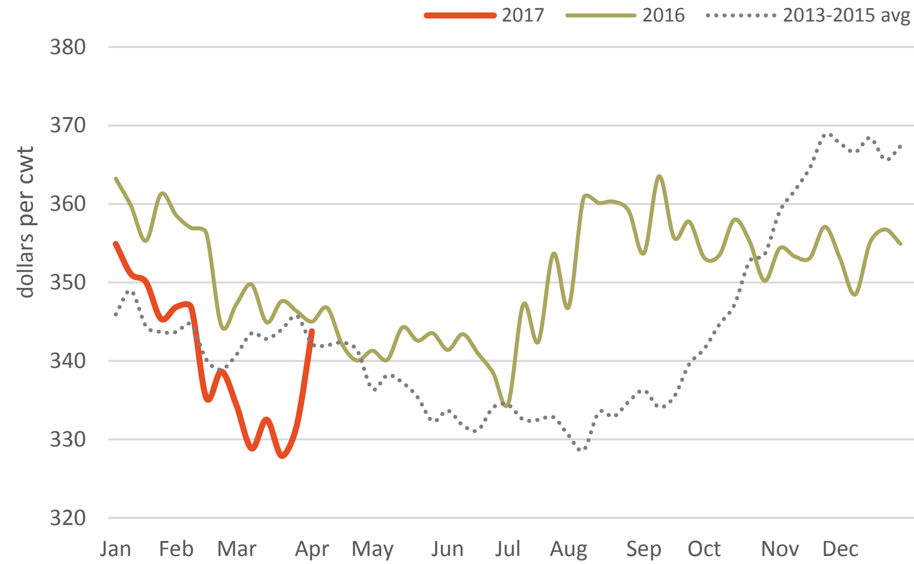
January lamb exports were up 11 percent from 2016 levels to 122 MT, and up 38 percent in value to $899,000. Compared to January, export volume was down 37 percent and the value was down 9 percent. Mexico, the Netherlands Antilles and The Bahamas were the largest export markets of lamb and mutton. U.S. lamb imports in February were up 4 percent from 2016 to 9.1 thousand MT, with the value up 1 percent to $60 million. The import volume and value were down 6 and 13 percent, respectively, from January. Australia, New Zealand and Mexico were the largest sources of imports.

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

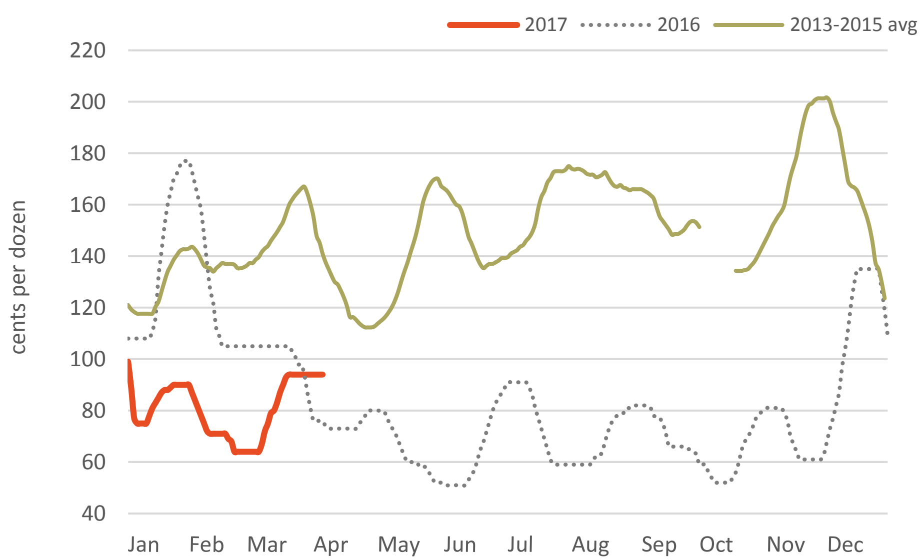
Fresh Boneless/Skinless Turkey Thighs



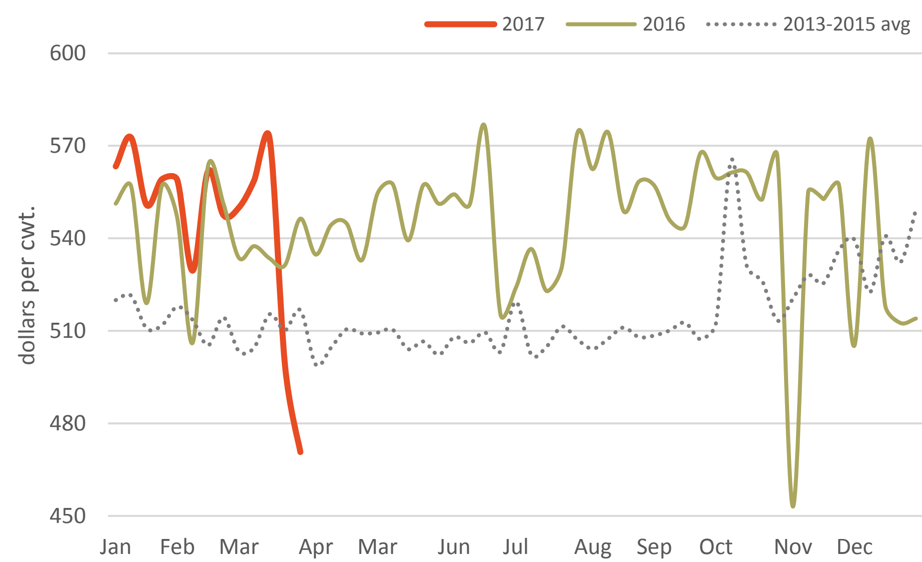
Weekly Lamb Cutout Value



NY Shell Egg Price (Grade A Large - Wholesale)



Weekly Boneless Lamb Shoulder Prices (208)



Source: USDA AMS Agricultural Analytics Division

April in Paris

15 Municipalities in the U.S. are named Paris. These are the top 10

Paris, Texas pop. 25,171

TX is #1 grower of **Upland Cotton**

5.6 MM bales in 2015

Paris, Tennessee pop. 10,156

TN is #2 grower of **Meat Goats**

115 MM head in 2016

Paris, Illinois pop. 8,837

IL is #1 grower of

Sorghum

Paris, Kentucky pop. 8,553

KY is #2 grower of **Tobacco**

150 MM lbs. in 2015

Paris, Maine pop. 5,183

ME is #1 lander of **Lobster**

122 MM landed in 2015

Paris, New York pop. 4,411

NY is #1 producer of **Sour Cream**

263 MM lbs. in 2015

Paris, Arkansas pop. 3,532

AR is #1 grower of **Rice**

11 B lbs. in 2016

Paris, Missouri pop. 1,220

MO has the #2 **Calf Crop**

1.9 MM head in 2016

Paris, Idaho pop. 513

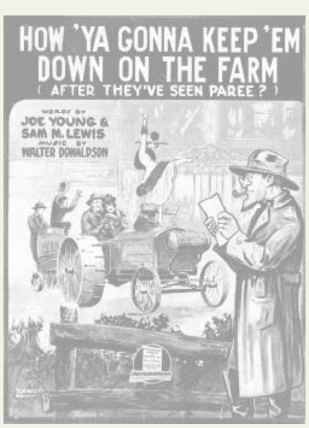
ID is #1 grower of

Potatoes

Paris, Pennsylvania pop. 732

PA is #1 producer of **Mushrooms**

594 MM lbs. in 2016



In 1919, when this song was published, the U.S had 6,448,343 farms and the rural pop. was 48.6% In 2012 – there were 2,109,303 farms and the rural pop. was 15%

Source: USDA AMS Agricultural Analytics; NASS