



# Cattle on Feed

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## United States Cattle on Feed Down Slightly

**Cattle and calves on feed** for the slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 10.6 million head on January 1, 2016. The inventory was slightly below January 1, 2015. The inventory included 7.16 million steers and steer calves, up 3 percent from the previous year. This group accounted for 68 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 3.41 million head, down 7 percent from 2015. January 1, 2016 heifers and heifer calves inventory is the lowest percent of total January inventory since the series began in 1996.

**Placements** in feedlots during December totaled 1.53 million head, 1 percent below 2014. Net placements were 1.45 million head. During December, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 375,000 head, 600-699 pounds were 355,000 head, 700-799 pounds were 355,000 head, and 800 pounds and greater were 440,000 head.

**Marketings** of fed cattle during December totaled 1.67 million head, 1 percent above 2014.

**Other disappearance** totaled 78,000 head during December, 8 percent above 2014.

**Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2015 and 2016**

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2015	2016	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed December 1 .....	10,816	10,800	100
Placed on feed during December .....	1,537	1,525	99
Fed cattle marketed during December .....	1,655	1,674	101
Other disappearance during December .....	72	78	108
On feed January 1 .....	10,626	10,573	100

**Number of Cattle on Feed, Placements, Marketings, and Other Disappearance on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: December 1, 2014 and 2015**

Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2014	2015	
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)
On feed November 1 .....	10,571	10,799	102
Placed on feed during November .....	1,794	1,607	90
Fed cattle marketed during November .....	1,475	1,532	104
Other disappearance during November .....	74	74	100
On feed December 1 .....	10,816	10,800	100

**Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots – United States: January 1, 2015 and 2016**

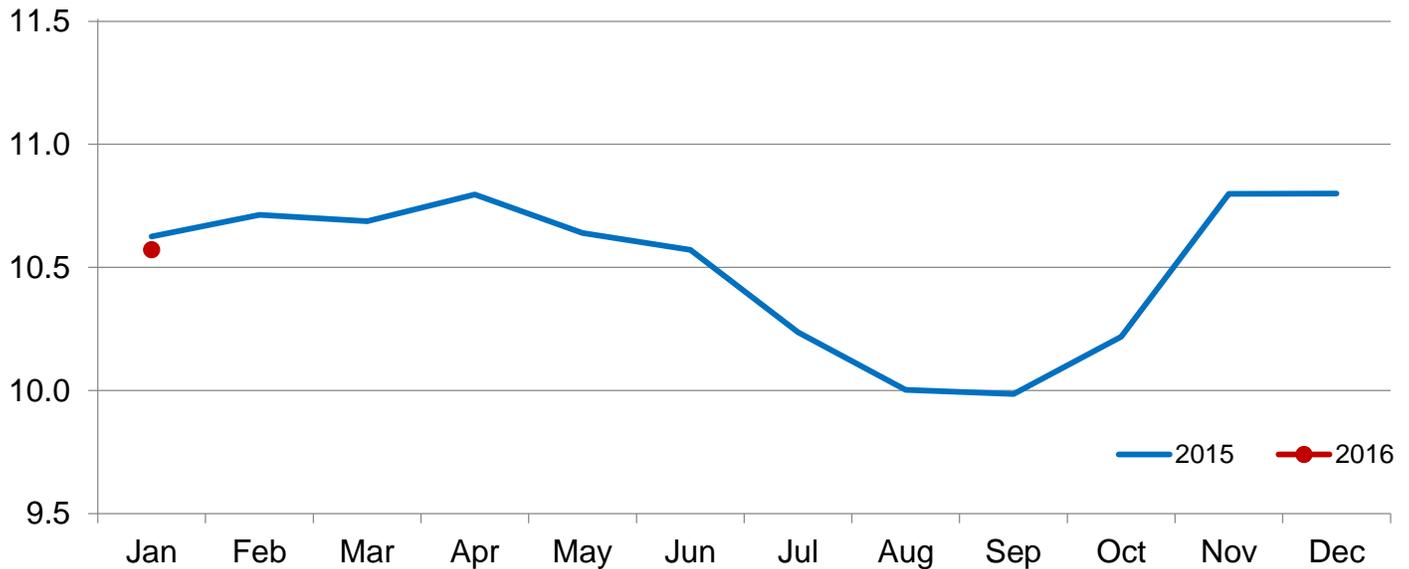
Item	Number		Percent of previous year
	2015	2016	
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(percent)
Class on feed January 1			
Steers and steer calves .....	6,948	7,164	103
Heifers and heifer calves .....	3,678	3,409	93

**Number of Cattle on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2015 and 2016**

State	January 1, 2015	December 1, 2015	January 1, 2016		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	249	248	253	102	102
California .....	425	455	450	106	99
Colorado .....	900	890	870	97	98
Idaho .....	230	235	240	104	102
Iowa .....	640	630	620	97	98
Kansas .....	2,050	2,140	2,090	102	98
Minnesota .....	137	152	155	113	102
Nebraska .....	2,460	2,490	2,420	98	97
Oklahoma .....	255	275	270	106	98
South Dakota .....	230	250	255	111	102
Texas .....	2,500	2,510	2,430	97	97
Washington .....	210	205	195	93	95
Other States .....	340	320	325	96	102
United States .....	10,626	10,800	10,573	100	98

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

Million head

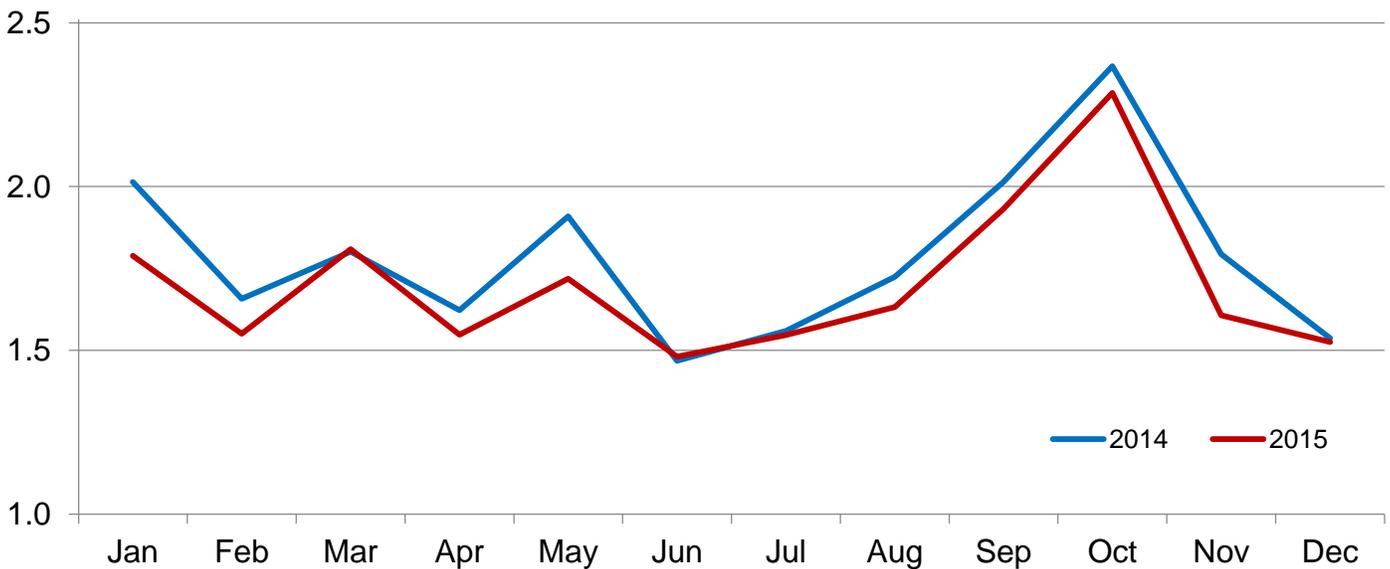


**Number of Cattle Placed on Feed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During December 2014 (1,000 head)	During November 2015 (1,000 head)	During December 2015		
			Number (1,000 head)	Percent of previous year (percent)	Percent of previous month (percent)
Arizona .....	26	27	31	119	115
California .....	51	50	49	96	98
Colorado .....	130	140	115	88	82
Idaho .....	45	42	43	96	102
Iowa .....	101	101	90	89	89
Kansas .....	330	305	335	102	110
Minnesota .....	17	13	16	94	123
Nebraska .....	385	440	390	101	89
Oklahoma .....	36	45	35	97	78
South Dakota .....	27	50	41	152	82
Texas .....	325	315	305	94	97
Washington .....	30	43	38	127	88
Other States .....	34	36	37	109	103
United States .....	1,537	1,607	1,525	99	95

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

Million head



**Number of Cattle Placed on Feed by Weight Group on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During December									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
	(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 .....	35	25	30	25	25	25	40	40	130	115
Kansas .....	60	50	75	75	100	105	95	105	330	335
Nebraska .....	65	50	95	95	85	95	140	150	385	390
Texas .....	145	115	75	70	65	70	40	50	325	305
Other States .....	135	135	90	90	57	60	85	95	367	380
United States .....	440	375	365	355	332	355	400	440	1,537	1,525

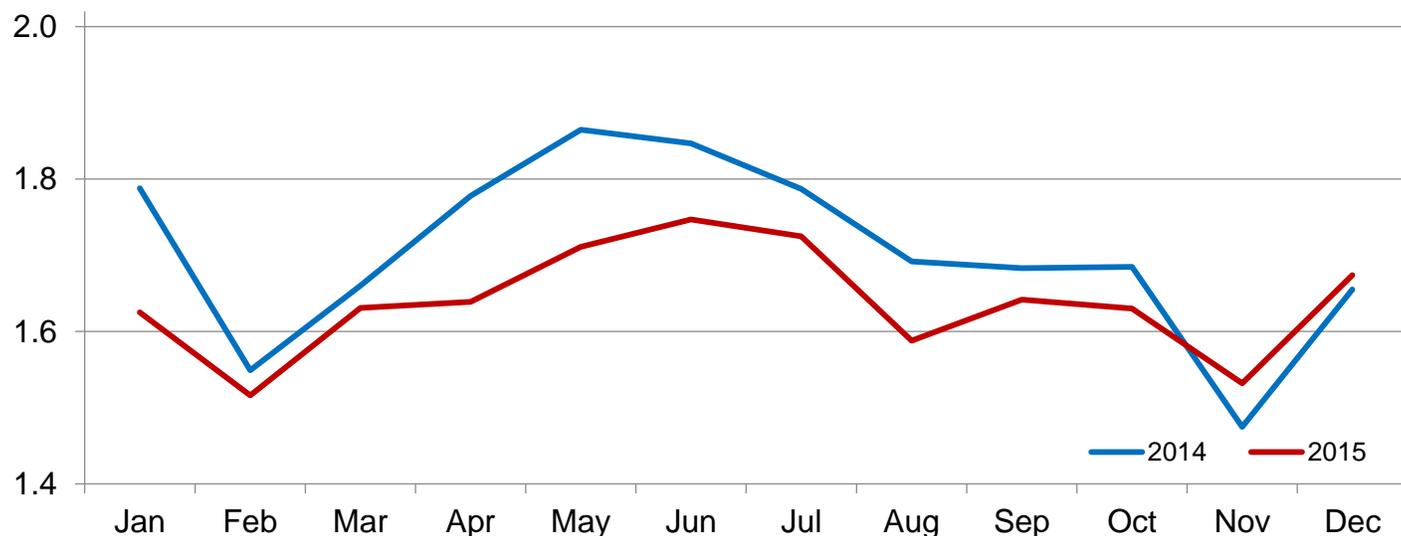
State	During November									
	Under 600 lbs		600-699 lbs		700-799 lbs		800+ lbs		Total	
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015
	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)	(1,000 head)
Colorado .....	45	35	40	35	30	30	40	40	155	140
Kansas .....	65	55	75	70	95	85	85	95	320	305
Nebraska .....	120	115	115	110	85	60	155	155	475	440
Texas .....	160	110	95	80	80	75	50	50	385	315
Other States .....	165	155	110	97	79	60	105	95	459	407
United States .....	555	470	435	392	369	310	435	435	1,794	1,607

**Number of Cattle Marketed on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Month – States and United States: 2014 and 2015**

State	During December 2014 (1,000 head)	During November 2015 (1,000 head)	During December 2015		
			Number	Percent of previous year	Percent of previous month
			(1,000 head)	(percent)	(percent)
Arizona .....	26	21	21	81	100
California .....	54	45	49	91	109
Colorado .....	135	125	130	96	104
Idaho .....	34	36	37	109	103
Iowa .....	80	107	97	121	91
Kansas .....	370	295	370	100	125
Minnesota .....	13	11	12	92	109
Nebraska .....	440	385	440	100	114
Oklahoma .....	39	39	38	97	97
South Dakota .....	30	38	35	117	92
Texas .....	365	360	370	101	103
Washington .....	42	42	45	107	107
Other States .....	27	28	30	111	107
United States .....	1,655	1,532	1,674	101	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: 2014 and 2015

State	During December 2014 (1,000 head)	During November 2015 (1,000 head)	During December 2015		
			Number (1,000 head)	Percent of previous year (percent)	Percent of previous month (percent)
Arizona .....	3	1	5	167	500
California .....	7	5	5	71	100
Colorado .....	5	5	5	100	100
Idaho .....	1	1	1	100	100
Iowa .....	1	4	3	300	75
Kansas .....	10	20	15	150	75
Minnesota .....	1	1	1	100	100
Nebraska .....	15	15	20	133	133
Oklahoma .....	2	1	2	100	200
South Dakota .....	2	2	1	50	50
Texas .....	20	15	15	75	100
Washington .....	3	1	3	100	300
Other States .....	2	3	2	100	67
United States .....	72	74	78	108	105

**Number on Feed by Class on 1,000+ Capacity Feedlots by Quarter – States and United States:  
2015 and 2016**

State	Steers and steer calves			Heifers and heifer calves		
	Jan 1, 2015	Oct 1, 2015	Jan 1, 2016	Jan 1, 2015	Oct 1, 2015	Jan 1, 2016
	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)	(1,000 Head)
Arizona .....	246	236	247	3	4	6
California .....	395	430	420	30	30	30
Colorado .....	580	570	590	320	260	280
Idaho .....	140	145	165	90	75	75
Iowa .....	490	450	470	150	150	150
Kansas .....	1,100	1,100	1,160	950	920	930
Minnesota .....	109	118	127	28	20	28
Nebraska .....	1,620	1,520	1,560	840	750	860
Oklahoma .....	170	180	185	85	75	85
South Dakota .....	145	118	150	85	87	105
Texas .....	1,600	1,740	1,740	900	750	690
Washington .....	123	120	125	87	75	70
Other States .....	230	200	225	110	95	100
United States .....	6,948	6,927	7,164	3,678	3,291	3,409

## Terms and Definitions of Cattle on Feed Estimates

**Cattle on feed** are steers and heifers 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 steers and heifers 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 steers and heifers 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 12 of the 16 States. Data collected from the remaining 4 States are used to establish the "Other States" estimates. These 4 States include Illinois, 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 0.5 percent. This means that chances are 2 out of 3 that the final estimate will not be above or below the current estimate of 10.6 million head by more than 0.5 percent. Chances are 9 out of 10 that the difference will not exceed 0.9 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 41,000 head, ranging from 0 to 97,000 head. During this period the initial estimate has been above the latest estimate 12 times and has been below the latest estimate 6 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 .....	0.5	0.9	41	0	97	6	12
Placements .....	0.6	1.1	7	0	28	13	5
Marketings .....	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0

## 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](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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Sherry Bertramsen – Livestock Slaughter .....	(202) 720-3240
Doug Bounds – Hogs and Pigs .....	(202) 720-3106
David Colwell – Sheep and Goats .....	(202) 720-8784
Donnie Fike – Dairy Products .....	(202) 690-3236
Michael Klamm – Cattle, Cattle on Feed .....	(202) 720-3040
Mike Miller – Milk Production and Milk Cows .....	(202) 720-3278

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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](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov).

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