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EGGS

Production

April table egg production totaled 591 million dozen, down 1 percent from April 2015. On May 1, the number of birds in the table egg flock was 302 million, up 1 percent compared to a year earlier. Egg-type hatching egg production was 93 million eggs, up 9 percent from a year ago.

There were 1.0 billion broiler-type hatching eggs produced in April, up 1 percent from last year. The broiler-type laying flock on May 1 was 54.8 million hens, even with 2015. Shell eggs broken totaled 188 million dozen during April 2016, up 3 percent from April a year ago, but 1 percent below the 189 million broken in March.

Price

Table egg prices appeared to show signs of strength in late April, but began to fall in early May. The price of one dozen large Grade A eggs in the New York wholesale market fell 28 cents during May, closing at 52 cents/dozen, its lowest level since July 2006. Breaking stock prices also fell sharply and ended the month at 18 cents/dozen, the lowest price since at least 1996.

International Trade

There were 10.7 million dozen shell egg exports in April, valued at $10.7 million. This was 16 percent lower in volume and 14 percent lower in value than March. Compared to April 2015, shell egg exports were down 35 percent in volume and 46 percent in value. For the first four months of the year, exports were down 33 percent in volume and 42 percent in value.

April egg products were valued at $7.9 million, down 24 percent compared to March and down 44 percent compared to April 2016. Through April, egg exports were down 43 percent compared to 2015. The top five export destinations for shell eggs and egg products in April were, Mexico, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, and Jamaica.

TURKEY

Production

April turkey production totaled 482 million pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production in April was up nearly 6 percent compared to March and up 2 percent compared to April 2015. Average dressed weights in April were even with March and almost 2 percent above last April. Poults placed in April were up 6 percent compared to 2015 and eggs in incubators on May 1 were up 5 percent, although year-over-year comparisons are difficult because of last year's losses due to avian influenza.

Cold storage inventories of turkey on April 30 were up less than 1 percent from April 2015. Whole bird stocks were down sharply, with hens and toms down 15 and 19 percent, respectively. Parts inventories, on the other hand, were up white meat holdings were up 35 percent, putting downward pressure on breast meat prices, while dark meat holdings were up a more modest 3 percent.

Price

Both whole hen and tom prices were volatile in May, but both ended the month near where they began. Whole hen prices were unchanged at 116 cents/lb., while whole tom prices fell 1 percent to 120 cents/lb. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat prices continued to fall during the first half of May, but appear to have reached a floor at 215 cents/lb. B/S thigh meat rose 1 percent to 105 cents/lb., while tom drumsticks were unchanged at 48 cents/lb.

International Trade

Turkey exports in April totaled 21 thousand metric tons valued at $46 million. April's exports were up 13 percent in volume and 5 percent compared to March, and were 9 percent higher than April 2015 in volume but 4 percent lower in value. Through April 2016 exports were 18 percent lower in volume and 13 percent lower in value than the same period in 2015. The top five export destinations for turkey in April were Mexico, Hong Kong, Japan, Canada, and the Dominican Republic.

CHICKEN

Production

Total broiler production in April was 3.3 billion pounds on a ready-to-cook basis. Daily production in April was 2 percent above March production and 3 percent above April 2015. About half the gains was due to increases in slaughter weight and half to increases in number of head slaughtered. In the near future any increases in production will be driven by slaughter weights; for the four weeks ending May 28, eggs set were even with the same period last year and chicks placed were 1 percent lower.

Total chicken holdings in cold storage on April 30 were up 2 percent compared to the end of March and up 5 percent compared to April 2015. Whole broilers were up sharply, with month-over-month gains of 14 percent and year-over-year gains of 33 percent. White meat stocks were up 1 percent for the month, but up 24 percent for the year. Overall dark meat inventories in cold storage were 2 percent above March but 30 percent below April 2015. Leg quarter stocks showed the sharpest year-over-year drop, 39 percent, but were 3 percent above the end of March. Wing inventories were up 3 percent for the month and were 76 percent above 2015's level.

Price

Whole broiler prices began to show some strength in May. The National composite price for whole fryers and broilers rose 11 percent during the month and ended at 98 cents/lb., its highest value since last July. Parts prices were mixed. Boneless/skinless (B/S) breast meat rose in early May, but retreated by month's end, closing essentially flat at 119 cents/lb. Leg quarter prices continued their steady climb, rising 8 percent and ending the month at 30 cents/lb., the first time since March 2015 that that threshold has been crossed. Drumsticks rose 9 percent to 41 cents/lb. at the end of May. B/S thigh meat rose 2 cents to 102 cents/lb., while wings fell 14 percent to 153 cents/lb.

International Trade

Chicken exports in April totaled 245 thousand metric tons with a value of $237 million. Compared to March, April exports were even in volume but up 4 percent in value; compared to April 2015, exports were down 6 percent in volume and 16 percent in value. For the first four months of 2016, exports were down 4 percent in volume and 21 percent in value compared to 2015. April's top five export destinations were Mexico, Canada, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Iraq.

BEEF/VEAL

Production

Beef production, at 1.96 billion pounds, was 2 percent above the 2015 level down 6 percent from March. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.41 million head, up 1 percent from April 2015 and 5 percent below March. The average live weight was up 10 pounds from 2015, at 1,348 pounds. Accumulated beef production for the year so far was up 4 percent from 2015. Veal production in April, at 6.0 million pounds, was a record low, 10 percent below the 2015 volume and 6 percent below March production. Calf slaughter was 34,800 head, 2 percent below April 2015 and 3 percent below March 2016. The average live weight was down 25 pounds year over year, at 293 pounds. Veal production for 2016 to date was down 6 percent from 2015. Total stocks of beef in freezers at the end of April were down 3 percent from March and down 7 percent from the previous April. Boneless beef storage was also 3 percent lower than the month before, and was 6 percent lower than last year. Frozen inventories of beef cuts were down 5 percent on a monthly basis and 12 percent yearly. Veal supplies in cold storage were 7 percent lower on a month-to-month basis, and 6 percent lower than inventories at the end of April 2015.

Price

Live cattle prices (FOB, steers and heifers) increased from $124 per cwt, to $132, but closed May at $125, 22% below last May's price. The beef cutout value started the month down at $206 per cwt, but rose to $223, 14 percent below the 2015 value. The 90 percent lean boneless beef price held steady around $218 per cwt, 27 percent below the 2015 price. Trim, 50 percent lean lost $12, at the start of May to $49 per cwt, but regained nearly $5 by its close, 43 percent below the 2015 level. Packer-owned veal carcasses fell $4 to $359 per cwt, down 24 percent from 2015, while non-packer owned veal carcasses, fell $8 to close at $340 per cwt, 26 percent below 2015. The veal cutout average lost $5 at the start of May but regained $3 to close at $530 per cwt, down 10 percent from 2015.

International Trade

Compared to April 2015, beef and veal exports (including variety meats) fell 4 percent to 88.2 thousand MT while the export value fell 13 percent to $481 million. This volume is down 1 percent from March, and the value is down slightly. 2016 exports for the year to date are slightly higher than in 2015, but the value is down 13 percent. Japan, Mexico and South Korea were our largest export markets in April. Year-over-year beef import volumes were down 20 percent to 96 thousand MT, and were down 28 percent in value to $506 million. Compared to March, beef imports were down slightly, but up 2 percent in value. Total yearly imports for 2016 so far are 11 percent lower in volume and down 28 percent in value compared to 2015. Australia, Canada and New Zealand were the largest importers of beef.

PORK

Production

Pork production in April totaled 2.00 billion pounds, down 3 percent year, and down 7 percent from last month. Hog slaughter, at 9.37 million head, was down 3 percent from 2015 and down 7 percent from March. The average live weight was up 1 pound from last year to 285 pounds. Accumulated pork production for 2016 so far was less than 1 percent from 2015.

Pork supplies in cold storage were up 4 percent from March but down 9 percent from April 2015. Total hams in cold storage were up 35 percent on a monthly basis, and were down 4 percent year-over-year. 72 percent lean pork trimmings were 9 percent lower than in March and down 37 percent from the previous April. Pork belly stocks were 12 percent higher than last month and up 3 percent from the previous April.

Price

The negotiated carcass price for barrows and gilts gained $6 through May, closing at $74 per cwt, 7 percent below the 2015 price. The pork cutout value lost $8 to $74 per cwt, 14 percent below 2015. Starting the month at $72 per cwt, trimmed, bone-in hams, 23-27 pounds, fell $7 to $65 per cwt, 5 percent below 2015. Picnic meat combos, cushion out, dropped $11 to $77 per cwt, down 13 percent from last year's price. Pork trim, 72 percent lean fell from $82 per cwt, to $63, 6 percent below a year ago. Pork belly primals lost $8 in May, closing at $104 per cwt, 20 percent above the 2015 price.

International Trade

Pork exports in April (including variety meats) were down 6 percent from 2015 at 184 thousand MT while the value was down 9 percent to $451 million. Pork export volume was down 4 percent, and value was down 2 from March 2016. For 2016, the total export volume was down 4 percent and down 2 percent in value from last year.

The largest overseas markets for U.S. pork were Japan, Mexico and Canada. Compared to 2015, April pork imports were down 5 percent in volume to 37.9 thousand MT, but were up 11 percent in value to $134 million. The volume of pork imports decreased 16 percent from March, and was down 13 percent in value. Year-to-date measures showed pork import volume up 2 percent and value up 8 percent from 2015. Canada, Denmark and Poland were the largest importers of pork.

LAMB

Production

Lamb and mutton production in April was 12.8 million pounds, down 6 percent from 2015, a record low, and 8 percent below the March volume. Sheep slaughter totaled 189,000 head, 5 percent below last year and 8 percent below last month. The average live weight was 135 pounds, 2 pounds lower than 2015. Accumulated lamb and mutton production fell 1 percent from 2015. Lamb and mutton in cold storage was 2 percent lower than the month before, but 7 percent higher than year earlier levels.

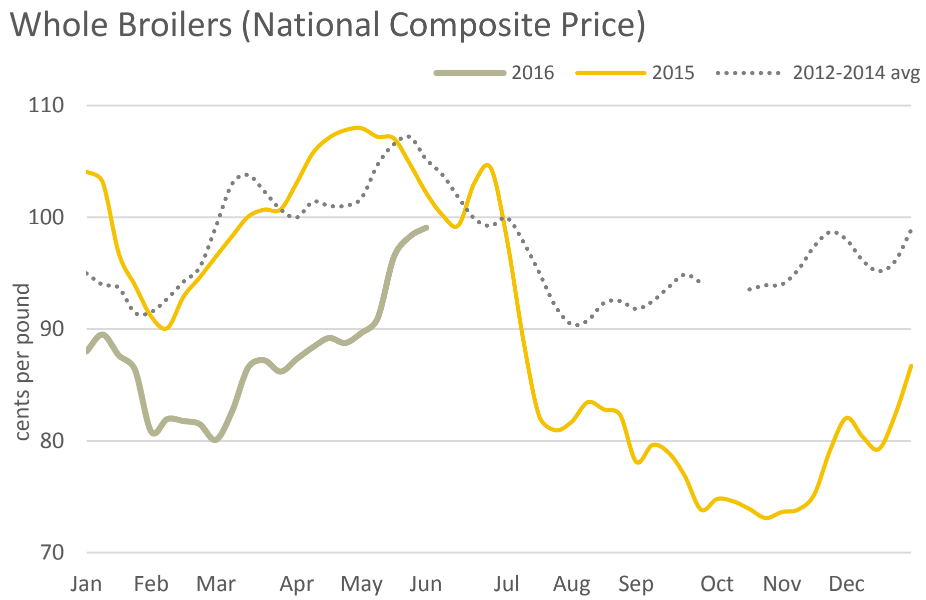
Price

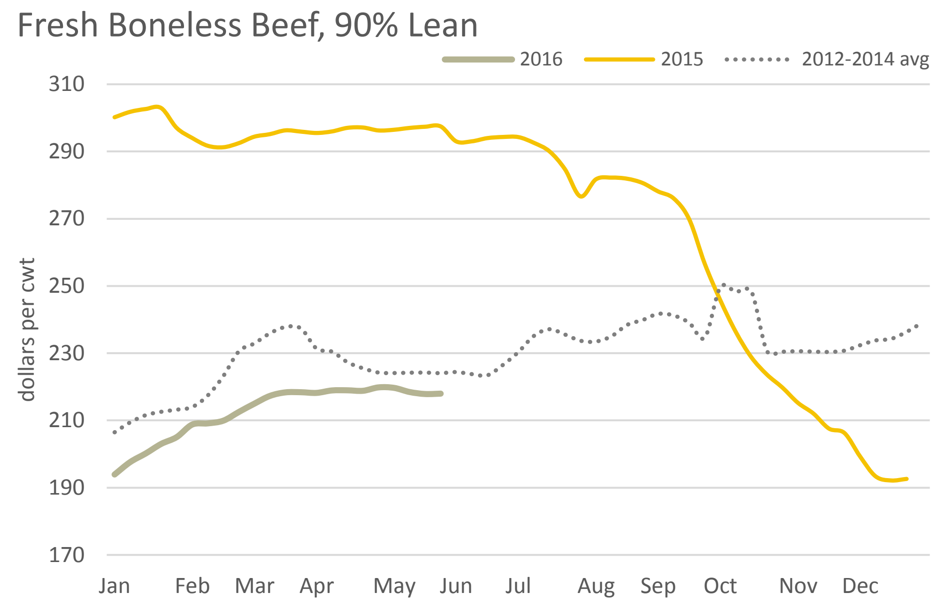
Negotiated live slaughter lamb saw a gain of $8 in May, ending at $140 per cwt, still 6 percent below the 2015 price. The lamb cutout added a marginal $3, closing the month at $344 per cwt, 4 percent below the 2015 value. Leg of lamb, trotter off prices had a net loss of $4, closing at $341 per cwt, 2 percent below the 2015 price. Boneless lamb shoulder prices lost $4 by the end of May, to $554 per cwt, 1 percent above 2015.

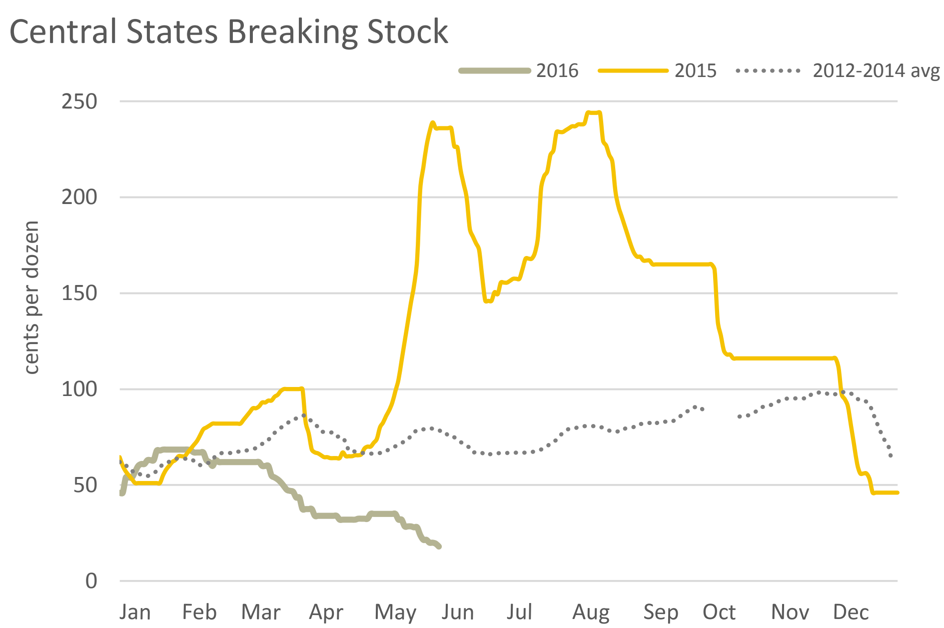
International Trade

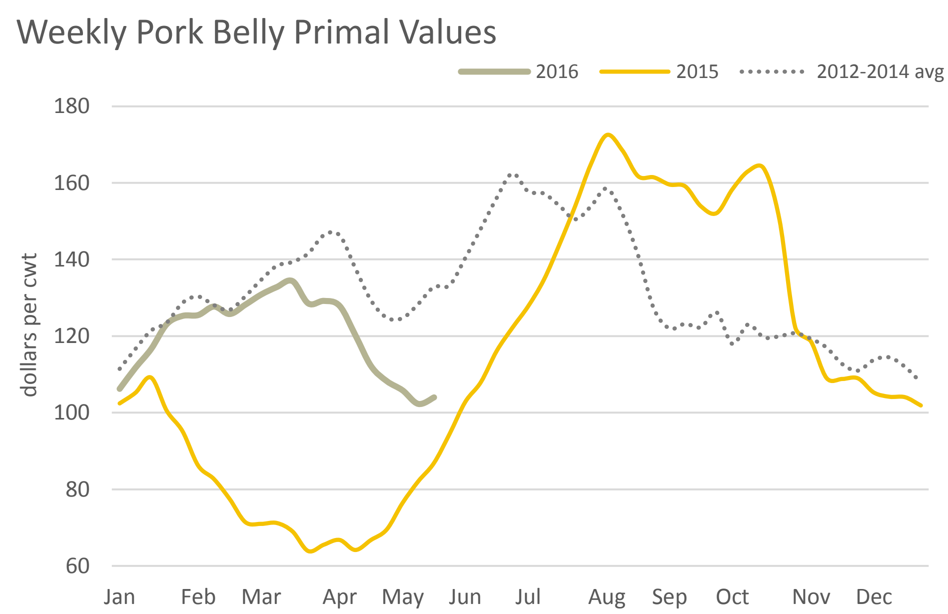
April lamb exports were up 83 percent from 2015 levels to 166 metric tons, and were up 64 percent in value to $1.1 million. Compared to March, export volume was down 22 percent but the value was up 3 percent. Total exports for 2016 are 11 percent higher in volume but 2 percent lower in value than in 2015. Mexico, and the Netherland Antilles were the largest export markets of lamb and mutton. U.S. lamb imports in April were down 5 percent over 2015 at 8.1 thousand MT, with the value of imports down 9 percent to $55 million. Compared to March, the import volume was down 26 percent and the value of lamb imports fell 29 percent. For 2016 to date, imports are up 22 percent in volume and 8 percent in value over last year. Australia and New Zealand were the largest importers.

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


Whole Broilers (National Composite Price)
2016
2015
2012-2014 avg
110
100
90
80
70
cents per pound
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec


Fresh Boneless Beef, 90% Lean
2016
2015
2012-2014 avg
310
290
270
250
230
210
190
170
dollars per cwt
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec


Central States Breaking Stock
2016
2015
2012-2014 avg
250
200
150
100
50
0
cents per dozen
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec


Weekly Pork Belly Primal Values
2016
2015
2012-2014 avg
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
dollars per cwt
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

HENNERY THE 8

1 Conventional

Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns in stacked rows of cages, 6-7 hens per cage.
67-86 sq. inches per hen

2 Enriched Colony

Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns in stacked rows of enclosures; allows for natural behaviors, 60 hens per colony.
116 sq. inches per hen

3 Aviary

Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns and roam freely in multiple vertical levels of the building.
130-150 hens per aviary.
144 sq. inches per hen

Currently, **302** million hens make up the U.S. table egg layer flock. These hens are kept in one of **8** caged and cage-free production systems.

268 million are housed either in conventional or enriched cage systems while the remaining **34** million are raised cage-free.

Of the cage-free birds, **15** million are raised USDA Certified Organic, including pasture-raised organic hens. Barn and aviary systems account for **17** million, with another **2** million raised free-range. The remaining cage-free hens, pasture-raised, account for **1** million birds.

Recently, many companies have begun to pledge to use only eggs from cage-free systems, most by **2025**

To meet these commitments at current usage rates would require **156** million additional non-organic, cage-free hens.

Note: a hennery is an enclosure for chickens.

Source: USDA AMS Agricultural Analytics, Market News, and the United Egg Producers.

4 Barn

Hens are housed inside climate-controlled barns and roam freely in a single level of the building.
Flock size varies by barn (avg. 8-10K)
216 sq. inches per hen

5 Free Range

Hens have access to the outdoors for at least part of the day with housing provided for protection from climate and predators. Flock sizes vary by farm.
>2 sq. feet per hen

6 Pasture Raised

Same as free range except hens are kept outdoors and provided shelter in colder climates.
>25 sq. feet per hen

7 Organic

Hens raised in accordance with the National Organic Program standards. Flock sizes vary by farm.

8 Pasture-Raised Organic

Hens raised in accordance with the NOP standards and are kept outdoors and provided shelter.