

Tennessee Market Highlights

UTEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

December 13, 2024

Number: 50

Trends for the Week Compared to a Week Ago

Slaughter Cows

\$1 to \$2 lower

Slaughter Bulls

steady to \$2 lower

Feeder Steers

\$5 to \$10 higher

Feeder Heifers

\$4 to \$7 higher

Feeder Cattle Index: 263.07

Fed Cattle

The 5-area live price on Thursday of \$194.31 up \$3.96 compared to last week and \$303.40 dressed, up \$6.50.

Corn

March closed at \$4.42 a bushel, up 2 cents since last Friday.

Soybeans

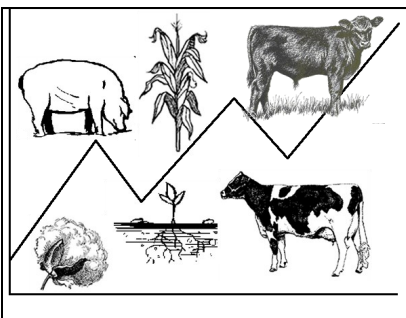
January closed at \$9.88 a bushel, down 5 cents since last Friday.

Wheat

March closed at \$5.52 a bushel, down 5 cents since last Friday.

Cotton

March closed at 69.27 cents per lb, down 0.84 cents since last Friday.



Livestock Comments by Dr. Andrew P. Griffith

FED CATTLE: Fed cattle traded \$4 higher on a live basis compared to last week. Prices were mainly \$192 to \$196 on a live basis. Dressed trade was mainly \$302 to \$305.

The 5-area weighted average prices thru Thursday were \$194.31 live, up \$3.96 compared to last week and \$303.40 dressed, up \$6.50 from a week ago. A year ago, prices were \$167.71 live and \$267.60 dressed.

This was a good week for the cattle feeder as they were able to achieve a higher price as the market looks to close out the year strong. This is a win for the cattle feeder in that they have been paying strong prices for new inventory, and it does not appear as if said new inventory is going to decline in price anytime soon. That is not to say feeder cattle prices will continue to increase at the rate they have the past few weeks, but there is no information at this time that would indicate a large price decline. Thus, cattle feeders will look to maintain current finished cattle prices as those levels will be necessary to achieve positive margins. If positive margins disappear then cattle feeders will bid lower for feeder cattle.

BEEF CUTOUT: At midday Friday, the Choice cutout was \$315.90 up \$0.66 from Thursday and up \$3.98 from a week ago. The Select cutout was \$282.85 up \$2.37 from Thursday and up \$5.19 from last week. The Choice Select spread was \$33.05 compared to \$34.26 a week ago.

The overall Choice cutout price has not made much of a move one direction or the other in recent weeks as it has traded in a \$15 range since August. However, primal values have certainly changed the past several weeks. For instance, the rib primal value increased \$56 per hundredweight from the beginning of November. The loin, brisket, and short plate have also

increased over that time period but only between \$4 and \$6 per hundredweight. Alternatively, the chuck (-\$33), round (-\$24), and flank (-\$12) have all declined in value. In other words, the rib is carrying the cutout right now, which is fairly typical for this time of year. Another point to make concerning these prices has to do with the price difference by grade. For instance, the primal rib value is over \$753 per hundredweight for Prime grade beef, \$628 for branded products, \$608 for Choice, and \$481 for Select. A similar pattern is clear in the loin as well. However, very little price difference is evident across the remaining primal cuts as they do not tend to fall in the high value cut arena.

OUTLOOK: Based on weekly auction market averages, steer prices were \$5 to \$10 higher compared to last week while heifer prices were \$4 to \$7 higher compared to the previous week. Slaughter cow prices were \$1 to \$2 lower compared to the previous week's weighted average price while bull prices were steady to \$2 lower compared to the prior week. There is one marketing week before most livestock auction markets close in observance of Christmas and the New Year holiday. This may not mean much to many producers, but it could have tax implications for 2024 and 2025 depending on a person's typical marketing schedule. Superseding tax implications, most producers desire achieving the highest price possible for their calf crop. The market has been steadily increasing the past couple of months for most classes of calves and feeder cattle. This trend is expected to continue into the new year as calf prices tend to creep higher heading toward spring grass. If seasonality is in play then this will certainly be the case. The one question that should really be answered is if there are any factors that

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Livestock Comments by Dr. Andrew Griffith

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could knock this train off the tracks. There are any number of factors that could negatively influence cattle prices, but most of them could not be predicted. The two most obvious factors that may influence feeder cattle prices in a negative manner to start the year would be the change in presidential administrations and reopening imports of Mexican cattle. The change in presidential administrations seems obvious in that President elect Trump tends to play hard, and sometimes this has negative impacts on certain markets. As it relates to Mexican cattle, the abrupt stop of cattle flowing north does not mean those cattle will never come north. In fact, most of those cattle will still cross the border and make their way to U.S. operations. They will simply be a little later than normal and likely a little heavier. This does not mean either one of these factors will negatively influence the domestic cattle market, but they are two factors that could play into the market price.

ASK ANDREW, TN THINK TANK: This is not about cattle, but a question I often hear is “How are you doing?” Common answers may include “Doing well,” “Busier than a three-legged cat covering up poop,” or “Terrible.” At least 90 percent of

the time when this question is asked, the person asking the question is asking as a courtesy or to be kind but with the expected answer to be no more than one sentence. This is unfortunate in that sometimes there are people who simply need to give a five-sentence answer to get something off their chest whether good or bad. At the same time, those answering this question should not give a dissertation on how they are doing, because it can wear a person out. Some readers may think I have wasted their time if they have read this, and that may be the truth. However, here is my question for readers, how is your cattle business doing? This is a question that producers should be able to answer in three to five sentences. It should include the production aspect, financial standing, and future plans!

FRIDAY’S FUTURES MARKET CLOSING PRICES: Friday’s closing prices were as follows: Live/fed cattle –December \$193.65 +1.53; February \$192.03 +1.18; April \$193.00 +0.83; Feeder cattle –January \$257.65 -0.70; March \$257.68 -0.90; April \$258.53 -0.70; May \$258.55 -0.55; December corn closed at \$4.30 down 2 cents from Thursday.

Please use this link for cattle and market definitions: [Cattle and Beef Market Definitions Publication W801](#)

Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

Overview

Corn was up; cotton and wheat were down; and soybeans were mixed for the week.

2025 will be a challenging year for many Tennessee corn, soybean, cotton, and wheat farmers. Low commodity prices, disappointing 2024 yields, high input costs, and policy uncertainty will require farmers to make important agronomic, financial, and risk management decisions. Due to the complexity of modern farming, it is essential for farmers to surround themselves with a strong support network. Important roles in farmer support networks include:

	Previous	Current	Change
USD Index	106.04	106.99	0.95
Crude Oil	67.11	71.29	4.18
DJIA	44,626	44,856	230

Lawyer – Having appropriate legal advice is essential for agricultural enterprises. This can include a local lawyer for general legal matters but may also include specialized legal advice for more complex legal concerns. Paying for specialization is often cheaper in the long run.

Accountant – Nobody likes paying taxes, but it is essential for farmers to obtain assistance when preparing tax returns, planning purchases, or transitioning the farm to the next generation. A good accountant can save you money and assist if you have issues with the IRS.

Crop Insurance Agent – Crop insurance is the primary risk management tool for most crop producers. Crop insurance can be complicated to navigate and requires individual, policy specific, analysis to ensure that the farmer is receiving the most effective coverage for the premium paid.

Agricultural Lender – Agriculture is a capital-intensive business. Adequate and consistent access to operating and term debt is essential for most farmers. Having a primary agricultural lender that understands your operation and that will stick with you through agricultural cycles is imperative. This is not to say that all credit will be obtained through one lender. Farmers need to

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Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

make sure that the cost of credit is fully analyzed, and decisions make financial sense.

Broker / Marketer / Grain Merchandiser – Marketing is not a strength for most farmers. However, in times of low prices and tight margins marketing can be the difference between profit and loss. Obtaining expertise or a second opinion can be a tremendous benefit.

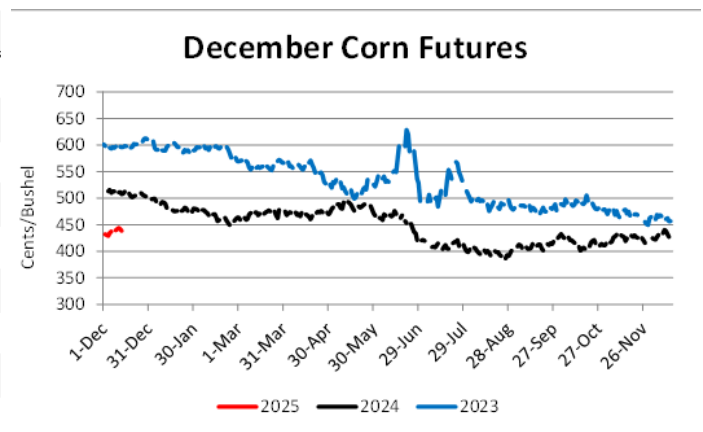
Crop Consultant / Agronomist – Every production year is different and will require problem solving so a crop can be produced and sold. Yield is important, however in periods of low prices and elevated input costs it is essential that each input is pulling its own weight economically. The cost of the input must be fully covered by financial benefits. A good agronomist can help navigate the agronomic challenges of the production season.

Extension Agent / Specialist – Extension provides a network to problem solve and connect producers with expertise to address problems and verify information independent of a financial motive. Searching the internet can be a powerful tool to assist in decision making. However, unfortunately the internet has carpet bombed the information landscape with absolute bullshit, so be wary of information sources.

Corn

Across Tennessee, average corn basis (cash price-nearby futures price) weakened or remained unchanged at Northwest, West, West-Central, North-Central, and Mississippi River elevators and barge points. Overall, basis for the week ranged from 32 under to 26 over, with an average of 2 over the March futures at elevators and barge points. Ethanol production for the week ending December was 1.078 million barrels per day, up 5,000 from the previous week. Ethanol stocks were 22.648 million barrels, down 0.355 million barrels compared to last week. Corn net sales reported by exporters for November 29-December 5 were net sales of 37.3 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year. Exports for the same period were up 13% compared to last week at 46.6 million bushels – a marketing year high. Corn export sales and commitments were 56% of the USDA estimated total annual exports for the 2024/25 marketing year (September 1 to August 31) compared to the previous 5-year average of 53%. Cash prices ranged from \$4.11 to \$4.98 at elevators and barge points. March 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.42, up 2 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2025 corn futures traded between \$4.37 and \$4.51. May 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.49, up 4 cents since last Friday.

Corn	Mar 25	Change	Dec 25	Change
Price	\$4.42	\$0.02	\$4.39	\$0.02
Support	\$4.39	\$0.07	\$4.35	\$0.04
Resistance	\$4.50	\$0.06	\$4.46	\$0.06
20 Day MA	\$4.37	\$0.02	\$4.36	\$0.00
50 Day MA	\$4.33	\$0.00	\$4.40	-\$0.02
100 Day MA	\$4.28	\$0.01	\$4.43	\$0.00
4-Week High	\$4.51	\$0.04	\$4.44	-\$0.07
4-Week Low	\$4.25	\$0.00	\$4.28	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Up	=	Up	=



Mar/May and Mar/Dec future spreads were 7 and -3 cents. December 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.39, up 2 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a \$4.40 December 2025 Put Option costing 34 cents establishing a \$4.06 futures floor.

Soybeans

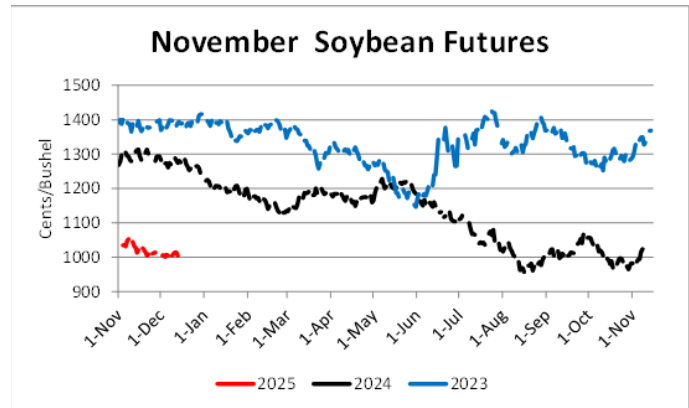
Across Tennessee the average soybean basis strengthened or remained unchanged at Northwest, West, West-Central, and Mississippi River elevators and barge points and weakened at North-Central elevators and barge points. Basis ranged from 22 un-

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Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

der to 35 over the January futures contract, with an average basis at the end of the week of 18 over. Soybean net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 43.1 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year. Exports for the same period were down 23% compared to last week at 68.3 million bushels. Soybean export sales and commitments were 75% of the USDA estimated total annual exports for the 2024/25 marketing year (September 1 to August 31), compared to the previous 5-year average of 75%. Cash soybean prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$9.68 to \$10.31. January 2025 soybean futures closed at \$9.88, down 5 cents since last Friday. For the week, January 2025 soybean futures traded between \$9.85 and \$10.03. March soybean-to-corn price ratio was 2.25 at the end of the week. March 2025 soybean futures closed at \$9.95, down 4 cents since last Friday.

Soybeans	Jan 25	Change	Nov 25	Change
Price	\$9.88	-\$0.05	\$10.06	\$0.01
Support	\$9.84	\$0.01	\$10.02	\$0.05
Resistance	\$10.03	\$0.01	\$10.20	\$0.08
20 Day MA	\$9.90	-\$0.05	\$10.10	-\$0.07
50 Day MA	\$10.01	-\$0.08	\$10.28	-\$0.08
100 Day MA	\$10.15	-\$0.04	\$10.42	-\$0.04
4-Week High	\$10.13	-\$0.31	\$10.31	-\$0.29
4-Week Low	\$9.75	\$0.00	\$9.97	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Down	=	Down	=

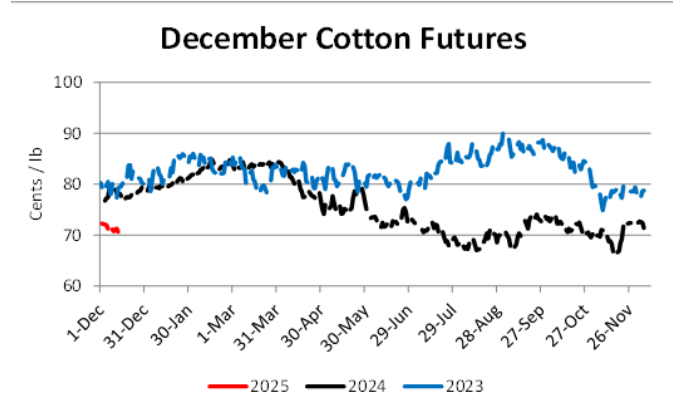


Jan/Mar and Jan/Nov future spreads were 7 and 18 cents. November 2025 soybean futures closed at \$10.06, up 1 cent since last Friday. Downside price protection could be achieved by purchasing a \$10.20 November 2025 Put Option which would cost 70 cents and set a \$9.50 futures floor. Nov/Dec 2025 soybean-to-corn price ratio was 2.29 at the end of the week.

Cotton

North Delta upland cotton spot price quotes for December 12 were 66.59 cents/lb (41-4-34) and 68.59 cents/lb (31-3-35). Adjusted World Price (AWP) decreased 1.52 cents to 56.22 cents. Cotton net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 153,000 bales for the 2024/25 marketing year and 3,300 bales for the 2025/26 marketing year. Exports for the same period were down 13% compared to last week at 137,400 bales. Upland cotton export sales were 66% of the USDA estimated total annual exports for the 2024/25 marketing year (August 1 to July 31), compared to the previous 5-year average of 73%. March 2025 cotton futures closed at 69.27 cents, down 0.84 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2025 cotton futures traded between 69.05 and 70.75 cents. May 2025 cotton futures closed at 70.41 cents, down 0.94 cents since last Friday.

Cotton	Mar 25	Change	Dec 25	Change
Price	69.27	-0.84	70.49	-0.80
Support	68.64	-0.71	70.00	-0.70
Resistance	70.38	-1.15	71.42	-0.86
20 Day MA	70.50	-0.46	71.52	-0.34
50 Day MA	72.06	-0.52	72.36	-0.23
100 Day MA	71.85	-0.12	71.93	-0.09
4-Week High	72.15	-1.60	72.71	-0.64
4-Week Low	68.40	0.00	70.10	0.00
Technical Trend	Down	=	Down	-



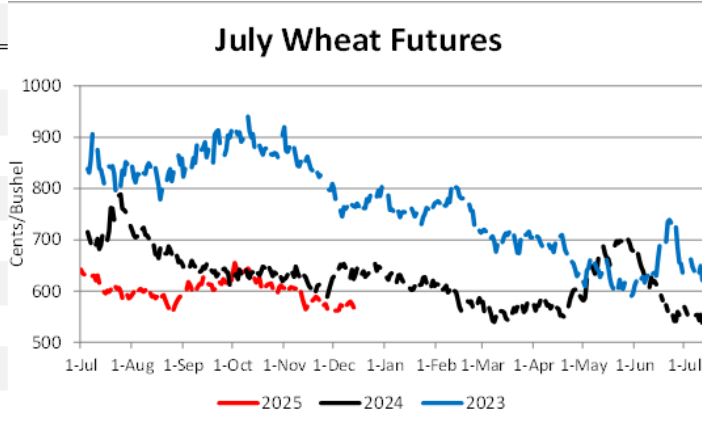
Mar/May and Mar/Dec cotton futures spreads were 1.14 cents and 1.22 cents. December 2025 cotton futures closed at 70.49 cents, down 0.8 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a 71 cent December 2025 Put Option costing 4.06 cents establishing a 66.94 cent futures floor.

Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

Wheat

Wheat net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 10.7 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year. Exports for the same period were down 38% compared to last week at 7.3 million bushels. Wheat export sales were 69% of the USDA estimated total annual exports for the 2024/25 marketing year (June 1 to May 31), compared to the previous 5-year average of 76%. Wheat cash prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$5.13 to \$5.47. March 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.55, down 5 cents since last Friday. The March wheat-to-corn price ratio was 1.25. March 2025 wheat futures traded between \$5.51 and \$5.69 this week. May 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.62, down 3 cents since last Friday.

Wheat	Mar 25	Change	Jul 25	Change
Price	\$5.52	-\$0.05	\$5.68	-\$0.03
Support	\$5.45	-\$0.04	\$5.61	-\$0.03
Resistance	\$5.64	\$0.00	\$5.80	\$0.03
20 Day MA	\$5.57	-\$0.03	\$5.73	-\$0.03
50 Day MA	\$5.80	-\$0.06	\$5.96	-\$0.06
100 Day MA	\$5.82	-\$0.02	\$5.99	-\$0.01
4-Week High	\$5.77	-\$0.19	\$5.94	-\$0.17
4-Week Low	\$5.40	\$0.00	\$5.55	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Down	-	Down	-



Mar/May and Mar/Jul future spreads were 10 and 16 cents. July cash contracts at elevators and barge points ranged from \$5.23 to \$5.58. July 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.68, down 3 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a \$5.70 July 2025 Put Option costing 45 cents establishing a \$5.25 futures floor.

Additional Information:

Links for data presented:

U.S. Export Sales - <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/export-sales/esrd1.html>

USDA FAS: Weekly Export Performance Indicator – <https://apps.fas.usda.gov/esrquery/esrpi.aspx>

EIA: Weekly ethanol Plant Production - https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_pnp_wprode_s1_w.htm

EIA: Weekly Supply Estimates - https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_sum_sndw_a_EPOOXE_sae_mbbl_w.htm

Upland Cotton Reports - <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/epasReports?area=home&subject=ecpa&topic=fta-uc>

Tennessee Crop Progress - https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Tennessee/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/

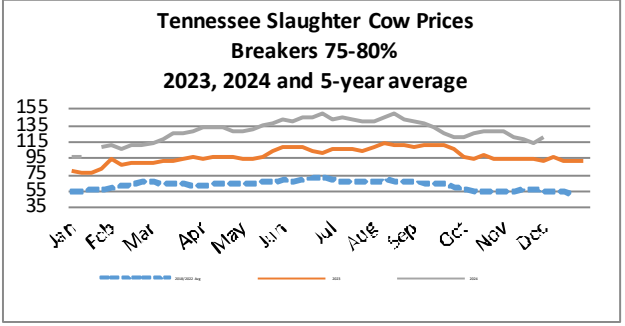
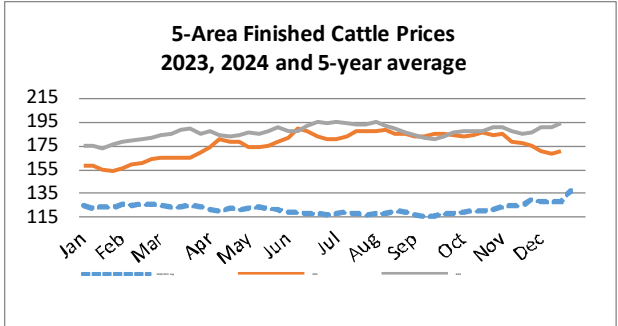
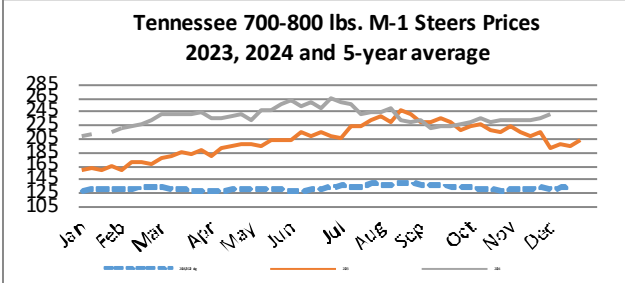
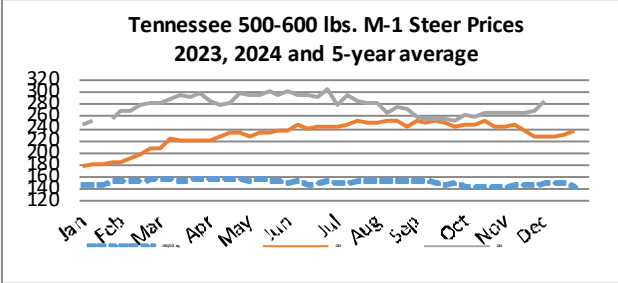
U.S. Crop Progress - <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1048>

USDA AMS: Market News - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/search-market-news>

If you would like further information or clarification on topics discussed in the crop comments section or would like to be added to our free email list please contact me at aaron.smith@utk.edu.

Prices Paid to Farmers by Elevators

Friday, December 6, 2024---Thursday, December 12, 2024					
	Friday Average	Monday Average	Tuesday Average	Wednesday Average	Thursday Average
No. 2 Yellow Soybeans	-----\$/bushel-----				
Northwest	9.73	9.68	9.73	9.74	9.75
North Central	10.24	10.20	10.25	10.26	10.21
West	10.28	10.25	10.30	10.31	10.31
Mississippi River	10.21	10.19	10.24	10.25	10.27
Yellow Corn					
Northwest	4.45	4.46	4.53	4.52	4.48
North Central	4.11	4.14	4.21	4.18	4.12
West	4.65	4.67	4.75	4.73	4.64
Mississippi River	4.57	4.60	4.67	4.66	4.59
Wheat					
North Central	5.12	5.14	5.17	5.18	5.14
Mississippi River	5.42	5.44	5.47	5.38	5.33
Cotton	-----\$/pound-----				
Memphis	66.61-68.61	66.45-68.45	65.98-67.98	66.65-68.65	66.59-68.59



Futures Settlement Prices: Crops & Livestock

- Corn: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/grain-and-oilseed/corn.html>
- Soybeans: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/grain-and-oilseed/soybean.html>
- Wheat: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/grain-and-oilseed/wheat.html>
- Soybean Meal: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/grain-and-oilseed/soybean-meal.html>
- Cotton: <https://www.theice.com/products/254/Cotton-No-2-Futures/data?marketId=5352193>
- Live Cattle: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/livestock/live-cattle.html>
- Feeder Cattle: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/livestock/feeder-cattle.html>
- Lean Hogs: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/livestock/lean-hogs.html>
- Class III Milk: <https://www.cmegroup.com/trading/agricultural/dairy/class-iii-milk.html>

Prices on Tennessee Reported Livestock Auctions for the week ending Monday, December 9, 2024

	This Week			Last Week's	Year Ago
	Low	High	Weighted Average	Weighted Average	Weighted Average
-----\$/cwt-----					
Steers: Medium/Large Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	300.00	387.50	342.21	324.46	258.00
400-500 lbs	285.00	342.00	322.00	296.76	232.25
500-600 lbs	250.00	315.00	284.02	267.47	222.88
600-700 lbs	243.00	277.50	259.15	251.52	208.00
700-800 lbs	220.00	255.00	239.74	231.36	193.10
Steers: Small Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	311.00	327.50	319.14	---	---
400-500 lbs	250.00	270.00	260.00	254.35	---
500-600 lbs	230.00	260.00	246.71	232.74	---
600-700 lbs	224.00	235.00	229.71	---	---
Steers: Medium/Large Frame #3					
300-400 lbs	270.00	350.00	309.53	290.82	227.74
400-500 lbs	217.00	317.00	293.12	272.10	225.74
500-600 lbs	235.00	285.00	259.65	244.17	203.26
600-700 lbs	220.00	250.00	241.58	224.86	185.54
700-800 lbs	190.00	230.00	222.06	216.00	172.50
Holstein Steers					
300-400 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
500-600 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
700-800 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
Slaughter Cows & Bulls					
Breakers 75-80%	106.00	134.50	119.15	112.19	89.87
Boners 80-85%	104.00	126.00	116.63	110.77	87.05
Lean 85-90%	93.00	115.00	105.17	98.75	77.26
Bulls YG 1	130.00	165.00	147.15	142.27	114.72
Heifers: Medium/Large Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	255.00	340.00	294.22	274.37	210.18
400-500 lbs	245.00	290.00	269.14	255.24	199.67
500-600 lbs	225.00	275.00	245.63	234.11	191.47
600-700 lbs	210.00	250.00	228.24	223.83	177.14
Heifers: Small Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	220.00	295.00	250.92	229.80	201.99
400-500 lbs	210.00	250.00	224.93	203.30	180.23
500-600 lbs	210.00	230.00	220.77	213.80	144.24
600-700 lbs	175.00	210.00	195.00	212.27	151.76
Heifers: Medium/Large Frame #2-3					
300-400 lbs	230.00	290.00	269.98	252.47	192.88
400-500 lbs	217.00	270.00	246.86	233.56	182.73
500-600 lbs	190.00	250.00	228.27	219.08	168.99
600-700 lbs	190.00	227.50	212.93	207.04	161.27

Cattle Receipts

This week:8,709

Week ago:10,058

Year ago:5,916

Link to report: https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2063.pdf

Graded Sales, Video Board Sales, Video Sales & Loads

TLP Beef Alliance Sale - Columbia, TN

12/5/24

Total Receipts: 246

For complete report:

https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2078.pdf

East Tennessee Livestock Center Graded Holstein Steer Sale

- Sweetwater, TN

12/6/24

Total Receipts: 760

For complete report:

https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2072.pdf

Knoxville Livestock Center - Knoxville, TN

12/11/24

1 load ML 1 preconditioned Steers, 665 lbs., medium flesh, mostly black/bwf, \$287.00

East Tennessee Livestock Center Video Sale

- Sweetwater, TN

12/11/24

1 load out of 79 steers from BQA certified producer; Est weight 880 lbs; 95% L&M-1s and 5% L&M-2s; 100% BLK/BWF; \$252.75

Graded Goat & Sheep Sales

Columbia Graded Sheep and Goat Sale-Columbia, TN

Weighted Average Report for 12/9/24

Total Receipts: 1,253

For complete report:

https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_2081.pdf

Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

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USDA / Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market News Service <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/farms/news.html>

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