

Tennessee Market Highlights

UT EXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

January 17, 2025

Number: 3

Trends for the Week Compared to a Week Ago

Slaughter Cows

\$1 to \$3 higher

Slaughter Bulls

\$2 to \$3 higher

Feeder Steers

\$5 to \$12 higher

Feeder Heifers

\$6 to \$11 higher

Feeder Cattle Index: 278.31

Fed Cattle

The 5-area live price on Thursday of \$203.56 up \$0.95 compared to last week and \$321.49 dressed, up \$1.41.

Corn

March closed at \$4.84 a bushel, up 14 cents since last Friday.

Soybeans

March closed at \$10.34 a bushel, up 9 cents since last Friday.

Wheat

March closed at \$5.38 a bushel, up 8 cents since last Friday.

Cotton

March closed at 67.6 cents per lb, up 0.59 cents since last Friday.

Livestock Comments by Dr. Andrew P. Griffith

FED CATTLE: Fed cattle traded steady to \$1 higher on a live basis compared to last week. Prices were mainly \$201 to \$206 on a live basis. Dressed trade was mainly \$321 to \$322.

The 5-area weighted average prices thru Thursday were \$203.56 live, up \$0.95 compared to last week and \$321.49 dressed, up \$1.41 from a week ago. A year ago, prices were \$172.29 live and \$273.00 dressed.

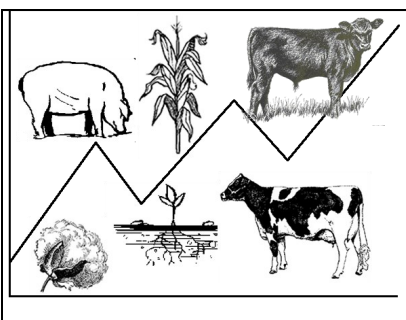
Finished cattle prices stayed above the \$200 water mark in both the North and the South. Prices in the South continue to lag prices in the North and that difference will be even more evident moving into late spring and summer. Despite the difference, \$200 is no longer a resistance point for finished cattle prices as they are expected to exceed this level consistently throughout 2025. In no way is this to say \$200 is now a major support price, because prices are expected to fall below the \$200 price level at different times throughout the year. Cattle feeders will be working to keep prices elevated as long as they can. They may need some help to keep them moving higher.

BEEF CUTOUT: At midday Friday, the Choice cutout was \$333.82 up \$0.41 from Thursday and up \$0.70 from two weeks ago. The Select cutout was \$321.45 up \$2.07 from Thursday and up \$7.88 from two weeks ago. The Choice Select spread was \$12.37 compared to \$19.55 a week ago.

Similar trends persist this week in boxed beef prices as the chuck and round continue to provide the support needed to keep both Choice and Select beef cutout prices elevated. The only slight difference this week when compared to last week is that the Choice box beef price stalled for the most part while the Select cutout price continued to increase. This is a typical

pattern for the dead of winter as end meats garner more attention this time of year compared to other seasons. Consumers do not demonstrate as much differentiation in Choice versus Select end meats as they do the middle meats, which results in the narrowing of the Choice Select spread when roasts are in higher demand. The Choice Select spread is nowhere near as narrow as has been in past years, which continues to point to how strong demand is for middle meats. There has certainly been some slight changes over the past decade as middle meats seem to get strong attention all 12 months of the year instead of just during grilling season and the holidays.

OUTLOOK: Based on Tennessee weekly auction average prices, steer prices were \$5 to \$12 higher this week compared to last week while heifer prices were \$6 to \$11 higher than the prior week. Slaughter cow prices were \$1 to \$3 higher than the previous week while slaughter bull prices were \$2 to \$3 higher than last week's prices. Cattle markets continue to steam roll higher as producers are looking for grass cattle for the spring green up. Some may think this appears a little early for such purchases, but market participants know supplies will be tight so they are already working to get some animals in inventory. The market may catch additional fire at the end of February and into March, but such price increase will just be a continuation of what is happening today. To put this current market run in perspective, a 525 pound steer in Tennessee is averaging about \$1,680 per head based on this week's prices. This compares to one year ago when the same class animal was closer to \$1,280 per head. The additional \$400 per head compared to a year ago should mean big profits for cow-calf producers and more cost for margin operators. Cur-



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Livestock Comments by Dr. Andrew Griffith

(Continued from page 1)

rent calf values should also be compared to feeder cattle and finished cattle values that are sitting near \$2,080 and \$3,030 per head for an 800 pound feeder steer and 1,500 pound finished steer, respectively. Thus, there is \$400 of margin from 525 pounds to 800 pounds and \$950 per head margin from 800 to 1,500 pounds. This puts the value of gain near \$145 per hundredweight carrying calves to feeder cattle weight and \$135 per hundredweight carrying steers from yearlings to finished weight. This is just a snapshot of relative prices in today's market and not expectations of prices. However, it does provide an idea of what that replacement cost is when selling animals today and placing new cattle in the operation. There appears to be a risky but profitable opportunity for most every operation given current cattle prices. This market opportunity is expected to persist in the near term but not forever.

ASK ANDREW, TN THINK TANK: Is this the right time to get in the cattle business or grow the cattle business considerably? This seems as if it is just the opposite question as what was discussed in last week's column, but this question was asked twice in the past week. The first thought is that buying into a

business that is at the top or near the top is not typically the best decision. However, that is not always the sole determining factor as other opportunities may present themselves due to that simple decisions. For instance, there may be neighbors looking to sell their herds and want someone to rent their ground. Sometimes a person has to take advantage of the longer-term opportunity of renting the neighbors ground and that may mean purchasing some cows at the top of the market. There are other similar instances, but a person still needs to put pencil to paper. In these special circumstances, it often takes long-term planning and budgeting to determine if this is a good decision. Thus, buying in when the market is high could still be a favorable decision for some market participants.

FRIDAY'S FUTURES MARKET CLOSING PRICES: Friday's closing prices were as follows: Live/fed cattle –February \$196.75 +0.15; April \$197.50 -0.18; June \$192.20 +0.23; Feeder cattle –January \$273.50 +0.05; March \$268.05 +0.33; April \$268.13 -0.08; May \$267.25 -0.40; March corn closed at \$4.84 up 10 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, cotton, and wheat were up; and soybeans were mixed for the week. Nearby corn futures have risen dramatically since the harvest low of \$3.85 on August 26th, closing January 17th at \$4.84. Moving forward there are five key factors that will determine if corn futures prices continue to strengthen or pull back.

	Previous	Current	Change
USD Index	109.50	109.21	-0.30
Crude Oil	76.61	77.83	1.22
DJIA	41,935	43,532	1,597

- 1) Exports. USDA estimates 2024/25 marketing year corn exports at 2.45 billion bushels, up 158 million compared to last year. The current export sales pace indicates that upward revisions to USDA's corn export estimates may be required. The current export sales pace exceeded last year and the five-year average. One factor that could hinder exports is the strong US dollar. Since October 1st the USD index has increased 8.1%. All else equal a higher USD makes U.S. exports more expensive to foreign countries.
- 2) Additional reductions to U.S. supply estimates. It seems unlikely that additional revisions to 2024 U.S. production estimates will occur. The January USDA WASDE report was a shocker, decreasing U.S. average yield by 3.8 bu/acre and production by 276 million bushels compared to the previous month. Usually, the January WASDE report is close to the final USDA estimates.
- 3) South American production. South American production will impact soybeans more than corn in the next 1-2 months. However, delays in Brazil's second crop corn planting (following soybean harvest) or dry weather in Argentina and Brazil could result in decreased production estimates and further reliance on U.S. supplies.
- 4) U.S. planted acreage. Corn planted acreage will have a greater influence on new crop prices, however increased acreage could take the top off the old crop corn market. Currently, the futures market has a price bias towards new crop corn over soybeans, wheat, and cotton. The November soybean-to-December corn futures price ratio is 2.25, which favors corn plantings over soybeans. An increase in planted acreage of 2-4 million acres could be the result.
- 5) Trade policy and tariffs/retaliatory tariffs. Tariffs and trade policy are wild cards. If the incoming administration imposes tariffs on foreign products, it is very likely that agricultural commodities will receive retaliatory tariffs which would decrease U.S. prices for farmers. If additional purchases of agricultural commodities, particularly from China, are negotiated,

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Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

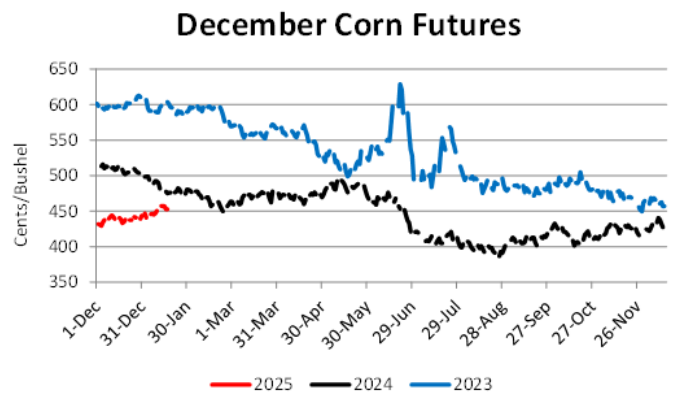
it could be a windfall for agricultural prices. The direction is highly uncertain, but trade policy and tariffs could move prices substantially in either direction.

I don't know where corn futures prices are heading with certainty but a reasonable projection for nearby corn futures price range is \$4.50 to \$5.10, with a potential expansion of the trading range to \$4.30 to \$5.65 based on how the above five factors evolve.

Corn

Across Tennessee, average corn basis (cash price-nearby futures price) strengthened or remained unchanged at West, North-west, West-Central, and Mississippi River elevators and barge points and weakened at North-Central elevators and barge points. Overall, basis for the week ranged from 20 under to 23 over, with an average of 9 over the March futures at elevators and barge points. Ethanol production for the week ending January 10 was 1.095 million barrels per day, down 7,000 from the previous week. Ethanol stocks were 25.008 million barrels, up 0.860 million barrels compared to last week. Corn net sales reported by exporters for January 3-9 were net sales of 40.3 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year and 0.007 million for the 2025/26 marketing year. Exports for the same period were up 72% compared to last week at 58.4 million bushels – a marketing year high. Corn export sales and commitments were 65% 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 61%. Cash prices ranged from \$4.40 to \$5.08 at elevators and barge points. March 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.84, up 14 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2025 corn futures traded between \$4.69 and \$4.85. May 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.93, up 14 cents since last Friday.

Corn	Mar 25	Change	Dec 25	Change
Price	\$4.84	\$0.14	\$4.56	\$0.06
Support	\$4.69	\$0.20	\$4.46	\$0.04
Resistance	\$5.08	\$0.25	\$4.65	\$0.09
20 Day MA	\$4.59	\$0.08	\$4.45	\$0.04
50 Day MA	\$4.46	\$0.05	\$4.41	\$0.02
100 Day MA	\$4.37	\$0.03	\$4.43	\$0.01
4-Week High	\$4.85	\$0.13	\$4.59	\$0.07
4-Week Low	\$4.35	\$0.00	\$4.31	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Up	=	Up	=



Mar/May and Mar/Dec future spreads were 9 and -28 cents. December 2025 corn futures closed at \$4.56, up 6 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a \$4.60 December 2025 Put Option costing 41 cents establishing a \$4.19 futures floor.

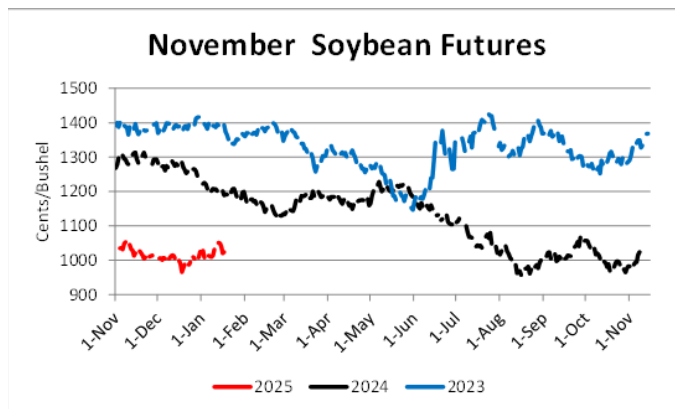
Soybeans

Across Tennessee the average soybean basis strengthened or remained unchanged at Northwest, West, and West-Central elevators and barge points and weakened at North-Central and Mississippi River elevators and barge points. Basis ranged from 25 under to 40 over the March futures contract, with an average basis at the end of the week of 11 over. Soybean net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 20.9 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year. Exports for the same period were down 7% compared to last week at 54.2 million bushels. Soybean export sales and commitments were 82% 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 81%. Cash soybean prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$9.83 to \$10.83. March 2025 soybean futures closed at \$10.34, up 9 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2025 soybean futures traded between \$10.18 and \$10.64. March soybean-to-corn price ratio was 2.16 at the end of the week. May 2025 soybean futures closed at \$10.44, up 6 cents since last Friday.

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Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

Soybeans	Mar 25	Change	Nov 25	Change
Price	\$10.34	\$0.09	\$10.27	-\$0.04
Support	\$10.02	\$0.21	\$10.07	\$0.11
Resistance	\$10.51	-\$0.04	\$10.45	-\$0.11
20 Day MA	\$10.05	\$0.14	\$10.14	\$0.10
50 Day MA	\$10.03	\$0.03	\$10.14	\$0.01
100 Day MA	\$10.20	\$0.01	\$10.34	\$0.00
4-Week High	\$10.64	\$0.31	\$10.07	-\$0.32
4-Week Low	\$9.47	\$0.00	\$9.61	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Up	=	Up	=

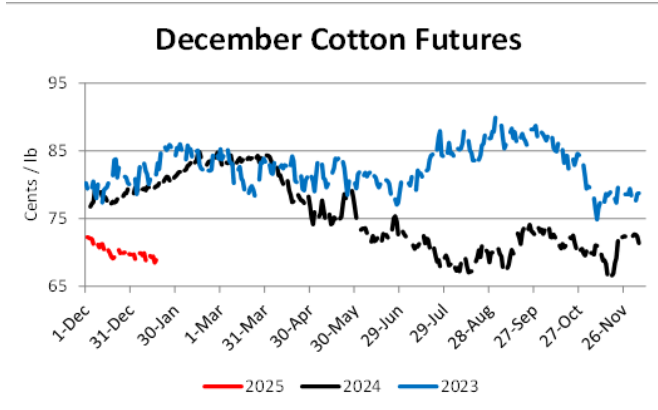


Mar/May and Mar/Nov future spreads were 10 and -7 cents. November 2025 soybean futures closed at \$10.27, down 4 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be achieved by purchasing a \$10.40 November 2025 Put Option which would cost 68 cents and set a \$9.72 futures floor. Nov/Dec 2025 soybean-to-corn price ratio was 2.25 at the end of the week.

Cotton

North Delta upland cotton spot price quotes for January 16 were 64.23 cents/lb (41-4-34) and 66.23 cents/lb (31-3-35). Adjusted World Price (AWP) decreased 0.68 cents to 53.98 cents. Cotton net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 316,200 bales for the 2024/25 marketing year and 1,300 bales for the 2025/26 marketing year. Exports for the same period were up 17% compared to last week at 224,800 bales. Upland cotton export sales were 78% 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 82%. March 2025 cotton futures closed at 67.6 cents, up 0.59 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2025 cotton futures traded between 66.6 and 67.98 cents. May 2025 cotton futures closed at 68.63 cents, up 0.37 cents since last Friday.

Cotton	Mar 25	Change	Dec 25	Change
Price	67.60	0.59	69.12	0.26
Support	65.86	0.12	67.88	-0.01
Resistance	68.20	-1.14	69.78	-0.71
20 Day MA	68.16	-0.39	69.55	-0.27
50 Day MA	69.65	-0.47	70.77	-0.34
100 Day MA	71.42	-0.20	71.62	-0.10
4-Week High	69.86	-0.61	70.65	-0.81
4-Week Low	66.60	-0.30	68.51	-0.19
Technical Trend	Down	=	Down	=



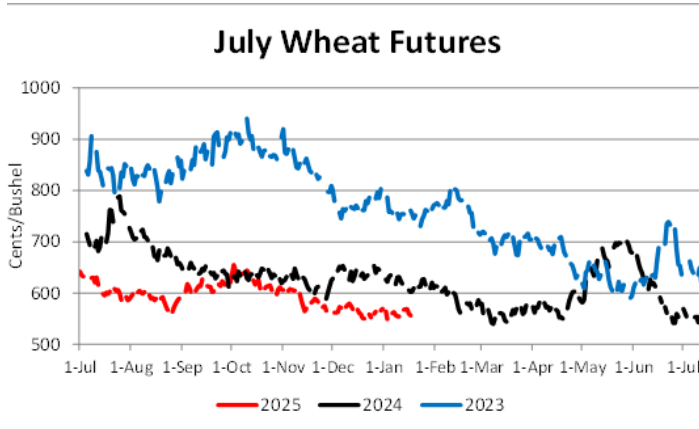
Mar/May and Mar/Dec cotton futures spreads were 1.03 cents and 1.52 cents. December 2025 cotton futures closed at 69.12 cents, up 0.26 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a 70 cent December 2025 Put Option costing 5.03 cents establishing a 64.97 cent futures floor.

Wheat

Wheat net weekly sales reported by exporters were net sales of 18.9 million bushels for the 2024/25 marketing year and 0.3 million bushels for the 2025/26 marketing year. Exports for the same period were down 53% compared to last week at 7.2 million bushels. Wheat export sales were 77% 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 85%. Wheat cash prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$4.97 to \$5.32. March 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.38, up 8 cents since last Friday. The March wheat-to-corn price ratio was 1.11. March 2025 wheat futures traded between \$5.28 and \$5.52 this week. May 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.50, up 7 cents since last Friday.

Crop Comments by Dr. Aaron Smith

Wheat	Mar 25	Change	Jul 25	Change
Price	\$5.38	\$0.08	\$5.60	\$0.06
Support	\$5.30	\$0.13	\$5.52	\$0.13
Resistance	\$5.50	\$0.03	\$5.72	\$0.03
20 Day MA	\$5.40	-\$0.01	\$5.60	\$0.00
50 Day MA	\$5.52	-\$0.05	\$5.70	-\$0.04
100 Day MA	\$5.75	-\$0.01	\$5.92	-\$0.01
4-Week High	\$5.54	-\$0.15	\$5.73	-\$0.11
4-Week Low	\$5.26	\$0.00	\$5.47	\$0.00
Technical Trend	Flat	+	Up	=



Mar/May and Mar/Jul future spreads were 12 and 22 cents. July cash contracts at elevators and barge points ranged from \$5.14 to \$5.49. July 2025 wheat futures closed at \$5.60, up 6 cents since last Friday. Downside price protection could be obtained by purchasing a \$5.70 July 2025 Put Option costing 48 cents establishing a \$5.22 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>

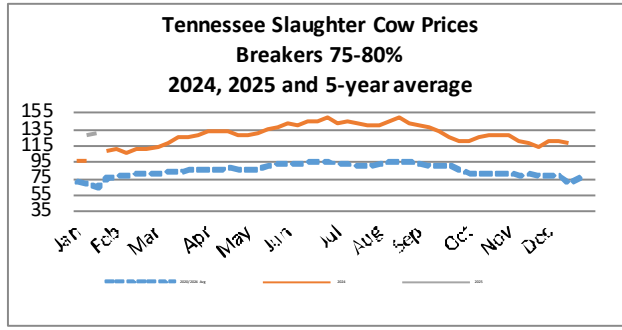
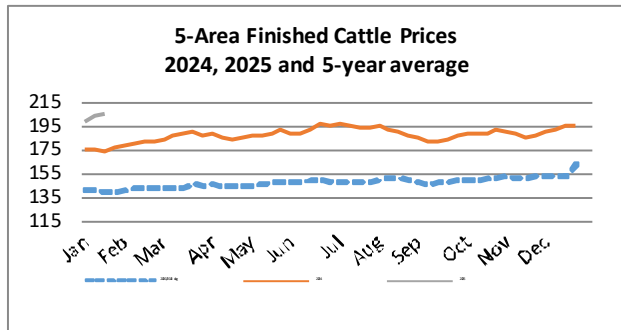
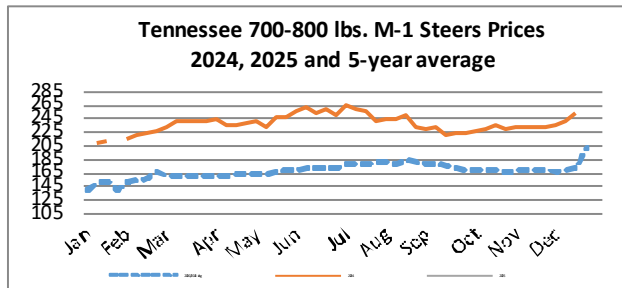
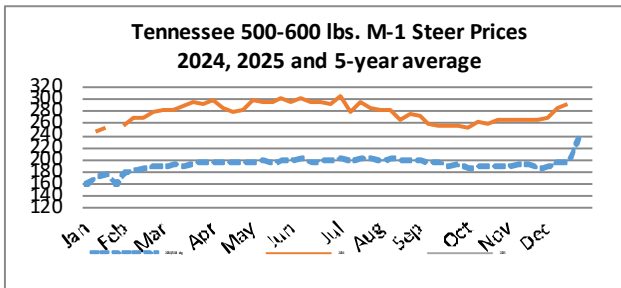
USDA AMS: Market News - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/search-market-news>

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, January 10, 2025---Thursday, January 16, 2025

	Friday Average	Monday Average	Tuesday Average	Wednesday Average	Thursday Average
No. 2 Yellow Soybeans	-----\$/bushel-----				
Northwest	9.96		10.21	10.18	9.96
North Central	10.40		10.58	10.53	10.29
West Central			10.63	10.58	10.34
West	10.55		10.83	10.75	10.49
Mississippi River	10.52		10.73	10.69	10.44
Yellow Corn					
Northwest	4.73		4.77	4.81	4.78
North Central	4.61		4.55	4.59	4.55
West Central			4.95	4.99	4.95
West	4.91		4.95	4.99	4.98
Mississippi River	4.87		4.93	4.96	4.92
Wheat					
Northwest	4.91		5.06	5.07	4.98
North Central	5.16		5.31	5.32	5.23
Mississippi River	5.11		5.26	5.27	5.18
Cotton	-----\$/pound-----				
Memphis	64.51-66.51	65.14-67.14	65.00-67.00	65.27-67.27	64.23-66.23



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, January 13, 2025

	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	327.50	415.00	370.11	344.68	279.36
400-500 lbs	310.00	365.00	332.20	321.52	265.40
500-600 lbs	265.00	330.00	307.64	297.37	249.87
600-700 lbs	260.00	309.00	283.92	266.32	229.09
700-800 lbs	237.50	271.00	259.48	237.58	209.15
Steers: Small Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	---	---	---	---	202.50
400-500 lbs	285.00	310.00	297.50	---	223.27
500-600 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
600-700 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
Steers: Medium/Large Frame #3					
300-400 lbs	295.00	355.00	329.45	305.73	235.57
400-500 lbs	267.50	325.00	297.05	292.52	226.04
500-600 lbs	270.00	312.00	292.57	269.98	220.36
600-700 lbs	210.00	277.50	254.83	234.53	211.06
700-800 lbs	212.50	256.00	245.82	---	184.61
Holstein Steers					
300-400 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
500-600 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
700-800 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
Slaughter Cows & Bulls					
Breakers 75-80%	119.00	136.00	128.46	125.69	94.29
Boners 80-85%	117.00	138.00	127.68	124.10	91.32
Lean 85-90%	98.00	121.00	111.74	113.24	81.18
Bulls YG 1	140.00	180.00	153.33	147.91	113.81
Heifers: Medium/Large Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	290.00	357.50	318.18	305.72	239.68
400-500 lbs	255.00	325.00	289.24	264.56	229.56
500-600 lbs	240.00	300.00	263.92	253.16	215.25
600-700 lbs	220.00	255.00	238.88	237.76	196.33
Heifers: Small Frame #1-2					
300-400 lbs	---	---	---	---	202.54
400-500 lbs	210.00	260.00	234.56	---	199.19
500-600 lbs	220.00	241.00	230.50	---	178.65
600-700 lbs	---	---	---	---	---
Heifers: Medium/Large Frame #2-3					
300-400 lbs	250.00	327.50	286.49	276.23	221.37
400-500 lbs	230.00	305.00	265.14	---	205.13
500-600 lbs	215.00	272.50	246.82	---	196.71
600-700 lbs	207.00	241.00	226.27	---	183.40

Cattle Receipts

This week:5,380

Week ago:1,637

Year ago:6,831

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

Graded Sales, Video Board Sales, Video Sales & Loads

Browning Livestock Market Video/Internet Auction - Lafayette, TN

Weighted Average Report for 1/6/25

For complete report:

https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/ams_3467.pdf

Knoxville Livestock Center - Knoxville, TN

1/14/25

1 load ML 1 preconditioned steers, 862 lbs., medium flesh, 60 percent black/bwf and 40 percent Continental, \$258.50

Columbia Livestock Center (UPI) - Columbia TN

1/15/25

1 load of 62 Steers, 827 lbs, M/L, 1's, 5 Fleshed, 100% Blk/BWF, Weaned 150+ days and vaccinated twice, \$263.00

Hardin County Stockyard - Savannah, TN

1/15/25

76 Steers, 655 lbs, M&L #1, 70 Blk/BWF 6 CharX, 5 flesh, value added \$307.00

Graded Goat & Sheep Sales

Columbia Graded Sheep and Goat Sale-Columbia, TN
Weighted Average Report for 1/13/25

Total Receipts: 1,095

For complete report:

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

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

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