



Industry News - AM

Cattle on feed up 5 percent in March

By Rita Jane Gabbett on 4/22/2011

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.3 million head on April 1, 2011, up 5 percent from a year ago and in line with what market analysts were expecting.

The inventory included 7.12 million steers and steer calves, up 7 percent from the previous year and accounting for 63 percent of the total inventory, according to USDA's monthly Cattle on Feed report. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 4.10 million head, up 2 percent from a year ago.

Placements in feedlots during March totaled 1.92 million, 3 percent above this time last year. Market analysts were expecting a 4 percent increase, according to a *Dow Jones* poll.

Net placements were 1.87 million head. During March, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds totaled 380,000, while those placed at 600-699 pounds totaled 360,000. Placements of cattle and calves weighing 700-799 pounds totaled 588,000, and those placed at 800 pounds and greater totaled 590,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during March totaled 1.99 million, 4 percent above March, 2010 and exceeding market expectations. Analysts, on average, were expecting just a 3 percent increase.

USDA said this was the second highest fed cattle marketings for the month of March since the series began in 1996.