

Prices of North Dakota Farm Products

By Perry V. Hemphill¹

The April 15, 1950, all-commodity farm price index for North Dakota was 243, one point higher than a month earlier but 10 points below that of April a year ago. However, a glance at the accompanying table will show this April 15, 1950, index to be approximately 240 per cent above the average North Dakota all-commodity farm price index for the five-year period of 1935 to 1939.

The slight increase in the April 15, 1950, North Dakota all-commodity farm price index was largely due to improvement in prices for farm crops. Spring wheat was up one cent for the month. (The North Dakota farm price of all spring wheat has hovered around the \$2 mark since August, 1948.) The farm price of corn on April 15 was 10 cents higher than a month ago, and highest since December, 1948. Oats, with an increase of three cents for the month, continues the upward trend which has prevailed since August, 1949. There has been no great change in the North Dakota farm price of barley for the past six months, but the April 15 price was 25 cents above that of a year ago. Rye, with a drop of two cents for the month, seems to be continuing the downward trend of the last seven or eight months.

There has been no great change in the farm price of flaxseed since the drastic price drop of about a year ago. The April 15, 1950, farm price of flaxseed was \$2.10 below that of a year ago. Potatoes continue the seasonal upward price trend in line with the price control schedule. Alfalfa seed farm price continues the upward trend of the past several months, but on April 15 was reported 80 cents per bushel less than a year ago. Sweet clover seed on April 15 was \$4.10 higher than the farm price of a year ago.

Comparison of North Dakota farm prices for April 15, 1950, with the U. S. parity price for the same date shows the following: all spring wheat 94 per cent, corn 71 per cent, oats 66 per cent, barley 78 per cent, rye 65 per cent, flaxseed 82 per cent, and potatoes 71 per cent. Farm prices for North Dakota crops are still well above pre-war prices. April 15 farm prices in comparison with the five-year period of 1935 to 1939 were all higher by the following percentages: all spring wheat 243 per cent, corn 196 per cent, oats 254 per cent, barley 300 per cent, rye 251 per cent, flaxseed 221 per cent, potatoes 211 per cent, alfalfa seed 219 per cent, and sweet clover 354 per cent.

April 15 North Dakota farm prices of livestock and livestock products were, in the main, lower than a month earlier. The beef cattle farm prices was 50 cents higher than the previous month, or \$1 higher than April of last year. Veal calves price was unchanged for the month, but 50 cents higher than a year ago. The farm price of lambs was 70 cents lower than a month earlier and \$2 below that of a year ago.

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PRICES OF NORTH DAKOTA FARM PRODUCTS

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CROPS: (\$ per bushel)

Year	Spring Wheat	Corn	Oats	Barley	Rye	Flax- seed	Pota- toes	Alfalfa Seed	Sweet Clover Seed
1929.....	\$1.00	\$.67	\$.33	\$.43	\$.79	\$2.85	\$1.33	\$17.40	\$3.50
1932.....	.36	.27	.09	.14	.22	.87	.23	7.50	1.40
1935-39.....	.83	.57	.24	.37	.43	1.60	.57	12.20	3.45
1947.....	2.53	1.97	1.00	1.90	2.32	6.18	1.44	18.90	6.40
1948.....	2.03	1.25	.60	1.09	1.28	5.65	1.40	26.30	7.90
1949									
April.....	2.02	1.04	.54	.86	1.05	5.63	1.45	27.50	8.10
1950									
February....	1.96	1.02	.56	1.07	1.06	3.52	1.20	25.00	11.00
March.....	2.01	1.02	.58	1.10	1.10	3.48	1.15	25.90	12.00
April.....	2.02	1.12	.61	1.11	1.08	3.53	1.20	26.70	12.20
U.S. Parity ⁴									
April.....	2.16	1.57	.93	1.43	1.67	4.29	1.70

LIVESTOCK AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS²

Year	Beef Cattle (cwt.)	Veal Calves (cwt.)	Lambs (cwt.)	Hogs (cwt.)	Milk Cows (Hd.)	Whsle. Milk (cwt.)	Retail Milk (qt.)	Butter- fat (lb.)	Wool (lb.)
1929.....	\$8.30	\$11.10	\$10.70	\$ 8.40	\$ 82.	\$2.45	\$.098	\$.44	\$.29
1932.....	3.30	4.20	3.95	2.65	30.	1.55	.076	.16	.07
1935-39.....	5.80	7.05	7.40	7.35	49.	2.05	.087	.34	.23
1947.....	17.80	20.70	20.70	23.30	151.	3.79	.151	.71	.41
1948.....	20.50	23.60	22.00	21.90	196.	4.37	.166	.80	.44
1949									
April....	17.80	20.80	21.20	16.80	188.	3.74	.165	.63	.43
April....	19.50	22.50*	24.80	17.50*	190.	3.70	.162	.63	.43
1950									
Feb.....	19.00	22.80	22.00	15.60	190.	3.70	.165	.64	.41
March....	20.00	23.00	23.50	15.50	190.	3.60	.165	.63	.41
April....	20.50	23.00	22.80	15.00	190.	3.50	.165	.61	.42
U.S. Parity ⁴									
April....	17.00	19.10	18.80	18.90	4.3469	.50

POULTRY AND EGGS²

FARM PRICE INDICES (1910-14=100)

Year	Chickens (lb.)	Turkeys (lb.)	Eggs (doz.)	N. Dak. Prices Rec'd	U. S. Prices Rec'd	U. S. Prices Paid	Ratio of Prices Pd. to Prices Rec'd ³
1929.....	\$.17	\$.22	\$.24	129	148	160	81
1932.....	.08	.11	.10	52	65	112	46
1935-39....	.12	.17	.28	101	107	125	81
1947.....	.21	.32	.35	308	275	240	128
1948.....	.24	.41	.36	292	285	259	113
1949							
April....	.19	.34	.36	245	249	250	98
April....	.24	.36	.35	253	260	246	103
1950							
Feb.....	.17	.32	.25	237	237	248	96
March....	.16	.34	.26	242	237	250	97
April....	.17	.34	.26	243	241	251	97
U.S. Parity ⁴							
April....	.2950				

¹Yearly prices are weighted average prices for crop year.

²Yearly prices are weighted average prices for calendar year.

³Ratio of North Dakota prices received to United States prices paid by farmers.

⁴Price which would give that commodity a parity ratio of 100, on U. S. average basis.

*Revised.

Hogs seem to be continuing the general downward trend which has been under way since the fall of 1948. For the month ending April 15, 1950, farm hog prices were down 50 cents, or \$2.50 lower than a year ago. The farm price for milk cows was reported as unchanged, both for the month and year. Livestock farm prices for North Dakota are also well above pre-war prices, as beef cattle were 353 per cent of the average farm price of 1935 to 1939, veal calves were 326 per cent, lambs were 308 per cent, hogs were 204 per cent, and milk cows were 388 per cent. Parity price comparisons as of April 15, 1950, are: beef cattle 121 per cent, veal calves 120 per cent, lambs 121 per cent, and hogs 79 per cent.

The April 15, 1950, report shows wholesale milk down 10 cents per hundred pounds for the month and 50 cents under the April farm price of a year ago. Retail milk was unchanged for the month but butterfat was down two cents from the March 15 farm price. Wholesale milk was 81 per cent of the U. S. parity price but 171 per cent of the 1935-39 average. Butterfat was 88 per cent of parity and 179 per cent of the 1935-39 average farm price. Wool was 84 per cent of parity but 183 per cent of the 1935-39 average.

In the poultry and egg group, chickens were up one cent per pound but turkeys and eggs were unchanged from the previous month of March 15, 1950. The parity price situation was 59 per cent for chickens and 52 per cent for eggs. Chickens were 142 per cent of the 1935-39 average farm price, and eggs were 93 per cent.

It may be of interest to note that, of all the North Dakota farm commodities contained in this report, the April 15, 1950, farm price of eggs is the only farm price that was lower than the 1935-39 average.

NEW FORMULA TELLS THE STORY

You could now weigh your live chicken and know in advance how many helpings to serve for your Sunday dinner—if you were a poultryman. This is done by a mathematical formula worked out by ARA poultry scientists. The equations were derived by weighing large numbers of individual live chickens and the dressed and eviscerated carcasses and edible meat obtained from them. They found that percentage yields are different for birds of different weights and that some breeds give a larger eviscerated carcass and more edible meat for each pound of live weight than others. In one particular study the Cornish won out over the New Hampshire, Rhode Island Red, and the crossbred. This information will be of value particularly to processors who buy quantities of poultry on a live basis as well as to institutions feeding large groups of people.—(USDA Agricultural Research Administration.)

An article in the December number of Botanical Gazette reports that the addition of tomato juice has given better results in germination of orchid seeds than methods previously used. Orchid seeds are extremely small. A single pod may contain half a million seeds. The seed consists of a small embryo without sufficient food material to support early growth of the seedling. Present methods involve growing the seeds on an agar medium supplied with sugars and other nutrients.—NDAC Botany News Letter.