

THE MIDWEST

Spring is certainly on its way and folks are ready to get out in the warm weather. Some areas experienced great moisture and warmer temperatures to green things up. We thought the market might take another dip, but it perked up this week, despite those who thought we were set for a downward spiral.

NUMBERS: Overall, the market was about \$2 higher this week. Negotiated trade happened at \$128 to \$129 throughout the countryside. Dressed cattle went for \$205 to \$208. The Fed Cattle Exchange was essentially a "No Sale" again this week - only a few pens sold. Fancy replacement heifers weighing 640-pounds brought \$1.85. Most replacement heifers brought somewhere in between \$950 to \$1,050. Weigh-up cows that went straight to kill brought 60 cents. Cows that were going to be fed for a longer term sold for 70-73 cents. Weigh-up drug free bulls sold for around \$1 per pound, everything else was lower. Five-weight steers brought \$1.85, while five-weight heifers stayed 30 cents back. Six-weight steers sold for \$1.60, while six-weight heifers averaged \$1.40. Grass cattle were once again in hot demand this week. Greener cattle sold higher.

TRENDS: Futures this week are looking good. However, June and August futures aren't keeping up. One source added in, "Packers are still needing cattle and exports have been staying strong...folks are starting to believe in the strength of the fat cattle market."

THE SOUTH

We lost ground last week, but gained it back this week. The futures bounced back, but there is still some concern that we need to bring the fats and futures prices back towards alignment. On the trade front, one source commented, "The noise from China has really grown the sparkle back in the industry."

NUMBERS: Replacement cattle were moderate to steady. Five-hundred weight steers brought \$1.58, while five-hundred weight heifers stayed near \$1.38. Slaughter cattle were up \$1 to \$2.

THE WEST

Futures are up again this week. We expect the cash trade will be a bit better. Packers are saying their supply of fat cattle is extremely short and will stay that way probably until the middle of May.