

THE MIDWEST

PRICES: Everything was down this week - cash prices, futures, and the packers' bids! At the Fed Cattle Exchange, 1,659 head were offered and of that, 518 head sold for an average of \$115.04. Whole live trade was \$2-3 lower this week; at \$114-115, and dressed trade was bought at \$184-185. Carcass weights are up eight pounds this week.

TRENDS: Hearing that everything was lower this week might scare some people, however, listen to what one expert had to say: "The futures were hammered this week and the cash trade followed its lead. The packers took advantage of the lower prices and built up inventory while prices were cheap. One might initially think that that's a bad thing, but with the bigger kills that they are having, it may be saving us as way more meat is moving through the production line. I've come to notice that around this time of year the market is always looking for a bottom. Once we hit that bottom, the market eventually starts to etch up and prices rebound. It may be the best thing for us that the market is finding that bottom sooner rather than later, as then it can hopefully start to go up again. Typically speaking, the market goes up around Labor Day which is only a few short weeks away."

Another source mentioned that we need to remember that there is still a lot to be thankful about. "Thank goodness that feeders are continuing to make money. If they weren't, people would be getting ready to sell their calves and have even a smaller venue to offer them to. And on the other side of things, thank goodness feeders are pressing hard to get the fats pushed through the assembly line so that we aren't faced with cattle that are too big. If feeders were over feeding cattle right now, we would be all but broke."

And on that note, look at what Cassie Fish had to say about the cattle market this week, "It appears there was a large transfer of ownership from cattle feeder to packer this week at prices that significantly enhanced packer margins. This ought to support big kills as some plants are now buying for late August and early September. So maybe the break in futures, that inspired cattle feeders to sell aggressively, will have an indirect positive impact by ensuring kills big enough to maintain currentness. Shoving this much beef through the pipeline will keep a lid on boxed beef prices but that is really of little consequence to the packer who is focused on volume and sales realizations."

THE WEST

Experts in the West were happy to state that the cooler weather is helping get the gains on their calves that they were needing!

PRICES: Early this week before the futures took a fast spin downward, sale barns in the West capitalized on the cattle that they had to sell. Really nice pairs with 300-pound calves on their sides, sold for \$1,910. Yearlings weighing 985-990 brought \$1.4350. Steers weighing 890 pounds sold for \$1.47. Spayed heifers weighing 840-870 went for \$1.4550. Higher yielding weigh-up cows sold for .75/head, and lower yielding weigh-ups went for .62/head. Drugfree weigh-up bulls were anywhere from .82-.95/head.

TRENDS: Experts are being asked daily, "What's going on in the market and why?!" Some experts fear that there is still a possibility that we will run into a wall of fat cattle and have a mess on our hands. However, one expert stated, "Folks need to remember that this is SEASONAL!!! Every year our market is lower around this time and that's just how the math works. Most people breed their cows to calve in March/April, wean their calves in October, and then those calves are fat in the middle of July to the first of August. People need to try to be opposite of the market as much as possible. Maybe try fall calvers, or shoot with corn prices as low as they are maybe try taking some of your steers all the way to fat! We are fortunate that we are seeing better prices this year than we were last year. But people still need to try to market their cattle to the best of their abilities to capitalize on their earnings. Last year at this time there was a lot more unknown than what we know now. Our exports are in excellent demand, and more people are working now than in the past, thus helping the retail side of things."

THE SOUTH

Rain is the among the common talk in the south as folks try to put up hay but are short of luck! Cooler temperatures help grass grow, but worry about not getting enough hay baled still remains. As a whole, the market is softer this week than last; however, in the South, buyers didn't seem to pay attention much to the board and bought anyways.

PRICES: There has been a lot of interest from buyers in Oklahoma for lighter calves from the South. Slaughter cows and stocker cows were steady this week. Steer calves were \$1-10 better, and heifer calves were \$1-12 better. Steers weighing 800 pounds sold for \$1.39. And 600-pound steers brought \$1.54-1.55.