



# MarketWATCH

## Labor Day demand could support beef price

By Benjamin Herrold

Iowa Farmer Today

A beef price decline trend slowed down at the end of July and the start of August, University of Tennessee ag economist Andrew Griffith says. Upcoming seasonal demand could provide some support.

"The price freefall for wholesale beef prices slowed this week despite packers continuing to pay strong prices for finished cattle," he says. "It is probably not an enjoyable talking point for packers when the highlight is prices not declining at the same pace as they have the past few weeks, but there is hope around the corner. That hope comes in the form of the last grilling holiday of the year on the horizon.

Labor Day weekend purchases will be on the front burner the next few weeks as many consumers will look to end summer with a bang."

That holiday could provide a demand boost, while the supply side seems to provide support for beef and cattle prices.

"At the same time, beef production appears to be

slowing," Griffith says. "Thus, the market has been primarily driven by strong beef demand, but the supply side will begin to play a larger role in beef price support if beef production continues to decline moving through the remainder of the year."

He says the trend of fewer heifers placed in feedlots is a sign of beginning to rebuild national cattle numbers, but for a while that will mean even tighter supplies.

"The supply side will continue garnering more attention as fewer heifers are placed in feedlots and cow slaughter continues to decline," Griffith says. "This will bring on some of the tightest beef supplies in over a decade, which will be telling in and of itself."

This price support should last a while, he says, based on the latest cattle inventory report.

"The data estimated a smaller calf crop and few signs of heifer retention and beef cow herd expansion," Griffith says. "The January 1, 2026, cattle inventory report may indicate a slightly larger beef cow herd, but it will be a marginal increase. This supports prices for another 18 months or so."

## PRICE COMPARISONS

Week ending Aug. 2  
Prices mostly cwt.

	8/3/2025	8/2/2024
<b>CATTLE:</b> National		
65-80% Ch. steers wt. avg.	\$368.44	
Average estimate weights	1,410	
Boxed Ch.600-900 lb.	\$364.32	
Boxed Sel. 600-900 lb.	\$341.59	
Avg. price Choice steer		
Live basis	N/A	
Dressed basis	\$385.00	Not available this week.
Feeder steers at river markets		
550-600#	N/A	
750-800#	\$370.01	

<b>HOGS:</b> Interior Iowa		
Iowa/Minn. direct wtd. avg.	N/A	
Average estimate weights	281.1	
Sows 1-3 300 lb. & up avg.	\$84.99	
Pork loins 13-19 lb.	\$99.71	
Wholesale carcass	\$116.22	
Early weaned 10 lb. avg. price	\$55.23	
Feeders 40 lb. avg. price	\$72.68	
<b>EGGS:</b> Grade A Large/d	\$7.16	

Prices gathered by IFT Publications from USDA information.

Questions, call 800-475-6655.

## HAY PRICES

Week ending July 29

Prices gathered by IFT Publications from USDA information.

### USDA Market News Iowa Hay Summary

Alfalfa 3x3 sq., supreme	\$240.00
Alf/Grass 3x3 sq., premium	\$235.00
Brome Grass, sm sq., good	\$180.00
Wheat, sm sq.	\$200.00-220.00

### Edgewood Livestock, prices per ton:

1st Crop Alfalfa 3x3 Lg. Squares	\$115.00
2nd Crop Alfalfa Mixed Lg. Rds.	\$75.00
Small Square Hay 3x3	\$1.50-2.50

### Fort Atkinson, prices per ton:

1st Crop, sm sq.	\$60.00
2nd Crop rds.	\$85.00

### Dyersville, prices per ton:

Large square dry cow/heifer	\$170.00
Round bale dry cow/heifer	\$100.00
Round bale grass	\$65.00
Round bale grinding	\$50.00
Oat hay round bale	\$15.00
Wheat straw square bale	\$140.00
Wheat straw round bale	\$75.00

### Rock Valley auction, prices per ton:

Alfalfa lg sq., premium	\$140.00
Alfalfa round, good/premium	\$122.50
Grass lg rds., premium	\$132.50

## LIVESTOCK FUTURES

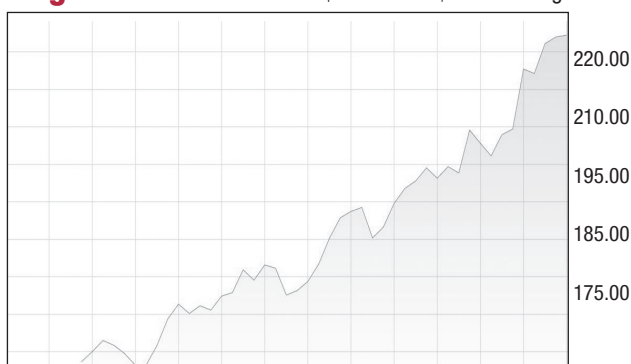
Find livestock futures quotes and links to charts on [AgUpdate.com](https://bit.ly/2HpdVcB) at <https://bit.ly/2HpdVcB>.

### Aug Lean Hogs CME H=\$108.38 L=\$107.32 Aug. 4



Source: www.barchart.com

### Aug Live Cattle CME H=\$232.45 L=\$229.125 Aug. 4



Source: www.barchart.com

## MIDWEST SHEEP AND GOAT MARKET July 23

Feeder lambs (32-38 lbs.)	\$300.00-335.00
Slaughter kids (33 lbs.)	\$510.00
Slaughter nannies/does (98 lbs.)	\$215.00
Slaughter ewes (200 lbs.)	\$225.00
Slaughter bucks (245 lbs.)	\$115.00
Slaughter bucks-billies (153 lbs.)	\$270.00

Average prices gathered from USDA information. Prices per cwt.

## DIRECT DELIVERED FEEDER PIGS Aug.1

	Head	Cash Range	Cash wt. Avg
10-12 lbs	69,188	\$38.00-65.00	54.19
40 lbs	7,650	\$66.00-77.00	72.68

Prices are quoted on a per head basis delivered to the buyer's farm.

These prices include freight and fees.

## SLAUGHTER/FEEDER CATTLE

Week ending Aug. 4

### Midwest Direct Slaughter

Negotiated cash trade was light to moderate on moderate demand. Boxed beef prices Aug. 1 averaged \$33.69. That is down \$5.68 from the previous report. The Choice/Select spread was \$21.27. Negotiated cash slaughter cattle on a national basis totaled about 62,243. Last week's total was 30,389 head.

Live Steer: 65-80% Choice	N/A
Dressed Steer: 65-80% Choice	\$382.00

### Iowa Direct Feeder Cattle

Steers: Medium and Large 1	N/A
Heifers: Medium and Large 1	N/A