



ILLINOIS FARM AND FOOD OUTLOOK

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Urbana, Illinois 61801

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MORE MEAT FOR CONSUMERS

RECENT USDA REPORTS HAVE BEEN GOOD NEWS FOR CONSUMERS. These reports indicate that meat supplies are increasing and will total a bit more for 1976 than in 1975.

Per capita food consumption in 1975 was about 1 percent less than in 1974. But the consumption of animal products was down more than 2 percent. Most of this was accounted for by the sharp drop in pork supplies. Per capita consumption of pork was 66.6 pounds in 1974, but only 54.8 pounds in 1975.

POULTRY

The percentage increase in poultry meat for this year will be the largest for the various meats. Broiler production has been about 10 percent greater than a year ago, and is likely to continue near that level for the first half of 1976. The increase for the later half may be slightly less. Last year, consumption averaged almost 37 pounds per person. The record high was 38.4 pounds in 1972. The per capita consumption of turkey was about 8.3 pounds in 1975. Supplies will be up sharply in the first half of 1976, but the record figure of 9 pounds recorded in 1972 will not be exceeded.

BEEF

Beef supplies reached a new high in 1975. Per capita consumption was about 120 pounds. There will be a slight increase again in 1976, probably 3 or 4 pounds. The number of cattle slaughtered is not likely to be any higher, but the weight of the animals will increase because more fed cattle are being slaughtered. While the change in total supply will not be great, the supplies of fed beef will be much larger. The number of cattle in feedlots being fed for slaughter was up 28 percent at the first of the year. Since more of the cattle will be going through feedlots, fewer cattle will be going directly from pasture to slaughter so supplies of lower grade beef will be less. But again, more of the "choice" fed beef which most consumers prefer will be available. With the reduction in total cattle numbers, beef supplies may level off or be slightly reduced after this year.

PORK

The per capita consumption of pork in 1975 was the lowest in almost 40 years. Supplies of pork so far this year have been about 10 percent below those of 1975--

a very low year. Slaughter is now increasing. By summer, the supply of pork should be about up to last year's level. In the last half of 1976, the supply will continue to increase, and may be 10 to 12 percent greater than a year ago. In total, per capita pork supplies in 1976 will be only slightly above the appropriate 55 pounds of 1975 and far short of the 66.6 pounds in 1974. Indications are that hog numbers and pork supplies will keep going up in 1977. The size of this year's corn crop will be a major factor in determining the extent of this expansion.

SHEEP

Sheep numbers continue to decline, and the per capita consumption of lamb and mutton will drop below the 2-pound level of 1975. Veal had been at about the same level, but increased to 4.2 pounds per capita with the low level of cattle prices in 1975. Veal consumption is likely to decline sharply in 1976, due to the revived demand for cattle to go to feedlots.

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