Livestock Report – June 19, 2020

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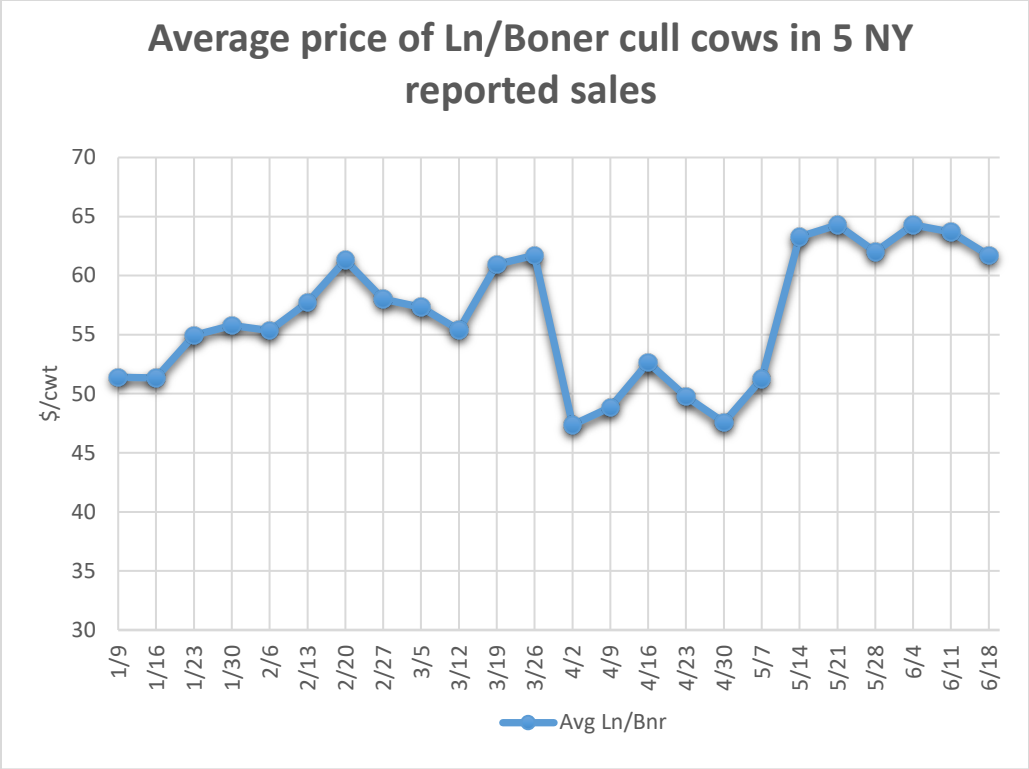
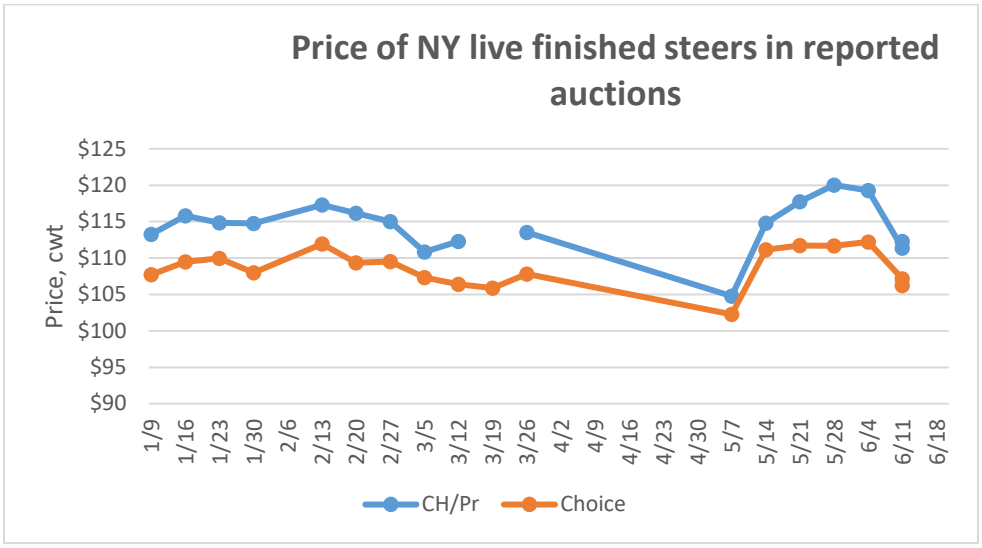
Cull cows and finished steers decline, while bull calves relatively steady.

The beef packing industry continues to operate at 98% capacity compared to this time in 2019. Finished steer weights are 826 lb, 2.6% higher than last year, with total beef production down 3.8%. According to Dr. Derrell Peel, OK State Livestock Marketing Specialist *"Weekly beef production is likely to exceed year earlier levels for the third quarter and perhaps for the balance of the year. Third quarter beef production is forecast to be nearly 6 percent higher year over year. Annual beef production for 2020 is forecast to be slightly higher year over year and a new record level at 27.3 billion pounds."* With increased production, consumer demand is key to supporting prices or at least keeping the decline moderate. Restaurants are slowly opening and this will help drive demand. It's interesting for me to see how restaurants have been innovative in seating with outside tents and special meal options meant to be eaten at a park or home. Diners may still be hesitant to eat inside even if available.

Cull Cows. The average price of Lean/Boner cull cows in NY was $61.71/cwt with a high of $80.14 for Premium White cows. Premium White cows are generally younger, have white fat and adequate marbling. Cuts from these cows are used by economy steak houses and smaller retailers. The number of cows in the 5 auctions covered by NYS Livestock Reporter have mostly remained in a band of 436 – 485 cows since May 30.



Finished cattle.
The average price for Choice/Prime and Choice steers for last week was $113.38/cwt and $106.23/cwt, respectively. This was a decline from the previous week and approximately $2/cwt year over year. While CattleFax member reported prices for slaughter steers were higher in the 1st quarter of 2020, they have generally lower or equal to NYS. CattleFax price for week ending June 19 was $100.75/cwt compared to the average NYS price of $109.26/cwt.

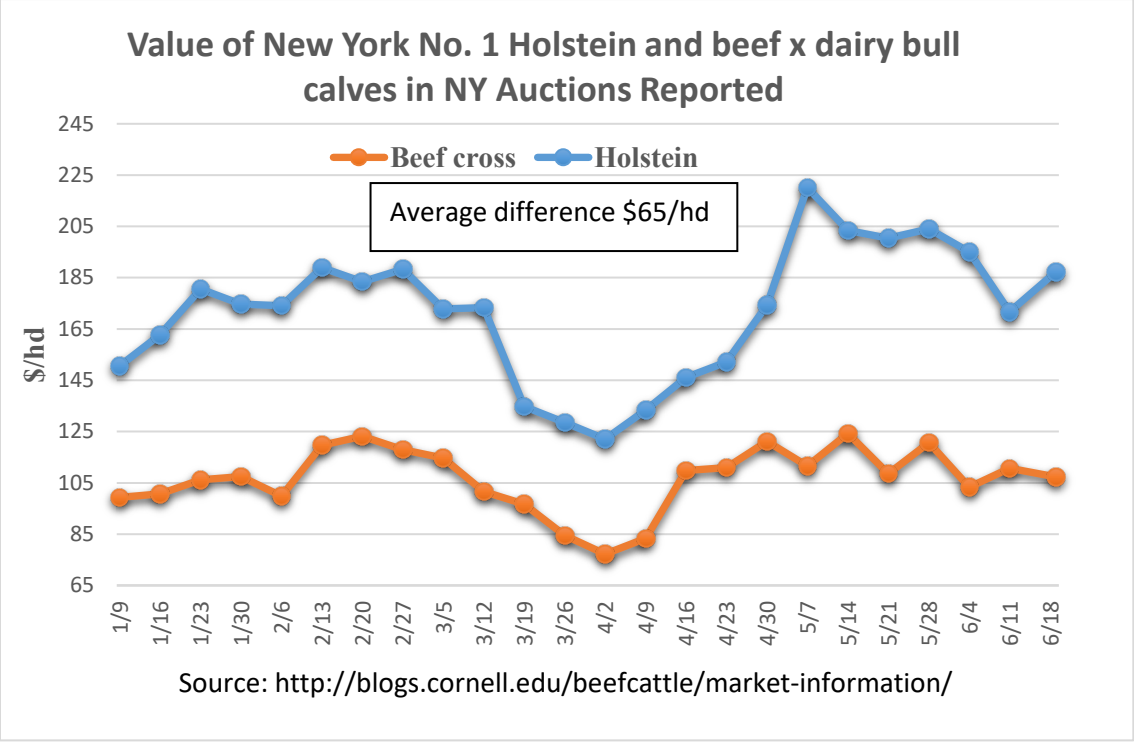


Feeder cattle. There were no significant Feeder Sales to report.

Dairy bull calves. The graph below shows the difference in value ($/hd) of No. 1 Holstein and beef x dairy bull calves. There has consistently been a premium for the beef cross calves and since the first of the year the premium has averaged $65/hd.

The guidelines for a Holstein bull calf to be graded are:

- The calf must show all physical characteristics of the Holstein breed. Calves may not show signs of age past 2 weeks old. Testicles must not show any swelling.
- The calf must be alert, have clear and bright eyes, and a wet nose.
- There can be no sign of swelling in the Carpal joints.
- Pastern joints must be straight and no signs of weakness.
- The navel cord must be dry, preferably dipped with some type of antibiotic, and there can be no swelling.
- The hock should be relatively straight both horizontality (no knock knee) and vertically.
- The tail should be completely dry. There can be no signs of scouring now or in the past.
- The tail head should show some roundness of flesh covering.



Source: http://blogs.cornell.edu/beefcattle/market-information/

Additional NYS cattle auction prices can be found at: https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/feeder-and-replacement-cattle-auctions#NewYork.

(Funds to support the NYS Market News program come from New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets project "Stocker cattle: Using underutilized grasslands to improve economic viability of the Southern Tier while providing viable careers for beginning farmers.").