

Cooke County Crop and Cattle Report for Monday, May 6, 2019

Well the totals for last week's rains were from 5 to 7.5 inches, with a few locations closer to 8 inches. Needless to say there was water standing in fields and pastures once again, and the forecast for this week is, you guessed it, more rain! This was undoubtedly one of the wettest Aprils on record and May is starting off wet as well. Forecasters were sure right about the El Nino pattern this past winter and so far this spring. All the cattle are fat and happy with winter grass belly deep and spring grass on the way. Stockers look great with plenty to eat and good gains so far, calving season is over and no complaints there and May is the popular month to work the calves. Check out my articles and Cattle & Crop Reports on our office website for cattle information and many other subjects. Fields of Wheat, Oats, Milo and Corn are sopping wet with lots of water standing in places. It's good to have rain this time of year and one hates to complain and I'm not going to, because I still have haunting memories of all the droughts over the last 10-20 years. The Corn and Milo still looks pretty good this morning but if we get more rain this week we may begin to see some yellowing occur. Wheat and Oats look good for the most part, at least where flooding didn't lodge it. One good thing is we haven't had any hail or high winds so far. It's tough being a farmer & rancher but the weather is one thing we cannot control, we just have to grin and bear it. This past weekend was nice weather and I have reports that some folks that were in sandy or rocky soil done some fertilizing and weed spray Saturday. Even a few folks laid down some hay in sandy pastures I'm told, even though it was a little too wet and knows that they have a good chance of getting it rained on this week. Most of the hay that was baled up the last couple of weeks, in my opinion, from what I have seen, was baled too green with the moisture content too high (over 20%) and we may see some squatty bales soon where that occurred. Hay just doesn't cure as fast when nights are cool and mornings are damp. I understand trying to get it wrapped up to keep it from getting rained on, I have been there done that, but if it has over 18-20 percent moisture it's better to let it get rained on in my opinion. The ideal moisture content would be from 10-15 percent to avoid heat buildup in the bale which results in that black moldy hay, reduced bale size, and possible fire. More and more folks are trying Haylage where you put it up with high moisture content (30-65 percent) and wrap it with plastic making it air tight. It takes another piece of equipment to wrap the plastic on but it makes great feed. Something to think about anyway. It's all a tough call, but it's yours and Hey, You're the Boss!!!

In the markets as of May 4- Slaughter cattle trade lower at \$123. Current feed yard closeouts were \$12 in the black. The live cattle futures for June are at \$114, while May Feeder futures were \$137. The cash prices here in Texas for 750 lb feeder steers were at \$1.41 and 550 lb. stocker steers were at \$1.66. Average dress slaughter cows were \$3 lower at \$46-61 while bulls were \$1 lower at \$70-85

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