

AG NOTES
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AUCTION

The popular equipment consignment auction held at the Bedford County Ag Center will be held on Saturday, February 26, with the sale starting a 9:00 am. Equipment will be received on Wednesday through Friday, February 23-25. For information contact Bob Morton at 931-842-1234.

GETTING CLOSER

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in birds in two states – a flock of commercial broiler chickens in Fulton County, Kentucky, and a backyard flock of mixed species birds in Fauquier County, Virginia.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, these avian influenza detections do not present an immediate public health concern. No human cases of these avian influenza viruses have been detected in the United States. As a reminder, the proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165 °F kills bacteria and viruses.

The danger that exists here is the devastation that this disease can have on our poultry population, both the backyard flocks and the commercial broiler operations. The economics of losses would affect all of the producers, the farm families, and the employees of one of the largest processors in the area.

Avian influenza (AI) is caused by an influenza type A virus which can infect poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and is carried by free flying waterfowl such as ducks, geese and shorebirds. All bird owners should prevent contact between their birds and wild birds and report sick birds or unusual bird deaths to State/Federal officials, either through their state veterinarian or through APHIS' toll-free number at 1-866-536-7593. APHIS urges producers to consider bringing birds indoors when possible to further prevent exposures.

This is serious business, and the fact that this has been detected in both of the Carolinas, Indiana, Kentucky and Virginia is alarming and we need to increase biosecurity to protect our poultry industry.

WHAT'S THE MARKET?

Drs. Andrew Griffith and Aaron Smith, livestock and crop economists with UT Extension, shared these comments.

Fed cattle traded \$1 higher compared to last week on a live basis. Prices on a live basis primarily ranged from \$140 to \$142 while dressed prices were mainly \$223 to \$225. The 5-area weighted average prices thru Thursday were \$140.35 live, up \$0.47 compared to last week and \$224.04 dressed, up \$2.25 from a week ago. A year ago, prices were \$113.78 live and \$180.07 dressed.

Based on Tennessee weekly auction market reports, steer prices this week were \$3 to \$5 higher compared to a week ago while heifer prices were \$4 to \$6 higher compared to last week. Cow prices were \$2 to \$4 higher while bull prices were \$2 to \$3 higher compared to the previous week. Cattle producers and traders appear to be extremely optimistic as it relates to cattle prices. Feeder cattle futures gained strength moving through the week, which resulted in calf and feeder cattle prices strengthening at auction markets as the week progressed.

Corn, soybeans, and wheat were up; and cotton was mixed for the week. March 2022 corn futures closed at \$6.51, up 31 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2022 corn futures traded between \$6.24 and \$6.62. May 2022 corn futures closed at \$6.50, up 29 cents since last Friday. New crop cash prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$5.46 to \$5.97. December 2022 corn futures closed at \$5.94, up 21 cents since last Friday.

March 2022 soybean futures closed at \$15.83, up 30 cents since last Friday. For the week, March 2022 soybean futures traded between \$15.59 and \$16.33. May 2022 soybean futures closed at \$15.86, up 29 cents since last Friday. New crop cash soybean prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$13.90 to \$14.63. November 2022 soybean futures closed at \$14.44, up 49 cents since last Friday.

Wheat cash prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$8.03 to \$8.20. March 2022 wheat futures closed at \$7.97, up 34 cents since last Friday. March 2022 wheat futures traded between \$7.54 and \$8.06 this week. New crop wheat cash prices at elevators and barge points ranged from \$7.39 to \$7.96. July 2022 wheat futures closed at \$7.98, up 37 cents since last Friday.

(Prices are getting higher, but so are the costs of raising this stuff!)

SPRING

I've attached a picture of buttercups that were the first ones sent to me. They are going to be popping up soon, and I can't wait! Come on, Spring!



