State’s Productive Capacity
changes in production of livestock and livestock products projected for 1955 on basis of trends

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Increasing demand for meat and other livestock products—associated with a huge increase of population and high level business activity—has been a dominant factor affecting California’s livestock and poultry industry. Except for feeding factors are relatively high prices for slaughter cattle—and by increasing dairy production costs. The number of cows is projected to 910,000 in 1955.

Milk production per cow increased steadily from 1942 when it averaged 265 pounds of milk fat per cow until 1950 when it averaged 289. A further increase to 300 pounds is projected for 1955. Some shift in breeds from Jersey and Guernseys to Holsteins is expected.

The 1955 attainable yield of milk per cow would be 7,798 pounds compared to 7,410 in 1950. The 1955 projected total production of milk will be 6,550 million pounds compared with 6,024 million in 1950 and 6,025 million in 1951.

Hogs
California regularly raises one third and ships in two thirds of all the hogs

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it slaughters. In addition, large quantities of cured meat—hams and bacon—and fresh pork are shipped into the state. California producers marketed about 800,000 hogs in 1951—431 under inspected slaughter—while in shipments for immediate slaughter amounted to 1,630,000.

Considering physical resources alone, California could produce many more hogs than it does. Producers have almost year-round pasture and a large local market and hogs can be produced on grains other than corn. However, other kinds of livestock have appeared more profitable to farmers.

Hog production was projected at about current levels for 1955.

Poultry
Two outstanding developments in poultry since 1940 have been the large expansion in production of commercial broilers and fryers and in turkeys. Both products have been priced relatively lower than red-meats since War II and have improved in quality.

California produced 23 million broilers in 1950, compared to 6 million in 1940—nearly a four-fold expansion in 10 years. This growth resulted directly from favorable chicken-feed price ratios coupled with increased production efficiency. Price ratios are favorable because of the strong demand for chicken meat. Improved technology and efficiency have permitted volume production at reasonable cost.

Broiler production is tentatively projected at 36 million in 1955.

Turkey production has had strong year-round consumer demand, generally favorable feed-price ratios and increased technology and efficiency.

Much of the further expansion in turkey production is likely to come in the Beltsville small white. These small 6–10 pound birds are gaining in popularity with consumers. Production of both the Beltsville and the larger Bronze turkeys are projected together at 12 million birds in 1955, compared with 8 million in 1951. Production in pounds would be projected at 177 million compared to 145 million.

In 1950, California had almost 50% more hens and pullets on farms than in the 1937–41 prewar period. Average rate of lay also had increased—from 153 to 186 eggs per bird. Thus, total egg production in 1950 was 79% above the prewar level. Meanwhile human population increased by 33%. But, the per capita consumption has also increased, so the State is still deficient in egg production. In 1951, 1.2 million cases, about 40 eggs per capita, were shipped into the State.

The January 1, 1955 inventory of hens and pullets is projected at 23,400,000, compared with 21,444,000 in 1951—an increase of 9%. Egg production is projected at 300 million dozen in 1955, compared to 270 million in 1951—an increase of 10%. Rate of lay is projected at 189 eggs compared to 186 eggs per layer.

Chickens raised—excluding broilers—have not kept pace with laying flocks. This means a larger proportion are raised for flock replacement, a smaller proportion for market. The deficit in market supply has been partly closed by expansion in commercial broilers.

The number of chickens raised was projected at 36 million compared with 32.4 million in 1951.

Projections of California’s considerably higher agricultural productivity in 1955 assume favorable farm prices and adequate supplies of production materials, but a somewhat smaller farm labor force. Improved farming practices and new technology are expected to be available and—being profitable—more widely used. Higher levels of production—to be attainable—must be profitable to farmers.

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Table trees when they reach three feet, but the greatest market demand is for trees between five and eight feet. A limited market exists for trees up to 20 feet. Most trees should be cut before they reach 12 feet in height. Trees too low in quality, or too big to be sold, should be cut back. Cutting should be done with a pruning saw with a curved blade. The saw leaves an undamaged stump and a clean butt on the tree which may not need further trimming.

On some species of trees it is possible to grow a second tree on the stump remaining after a tree has been harvested if one or more branch whorls are left when the tree is cut. A new tree can be grown from one of these branches in the same time or less than is required for the original tree. The base will be slightly bent but a good marketable tree can be taken from above this bend. With some species, including Douglas fir, white fir, and red fir, this method of stump-culture may be repeated several times.

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