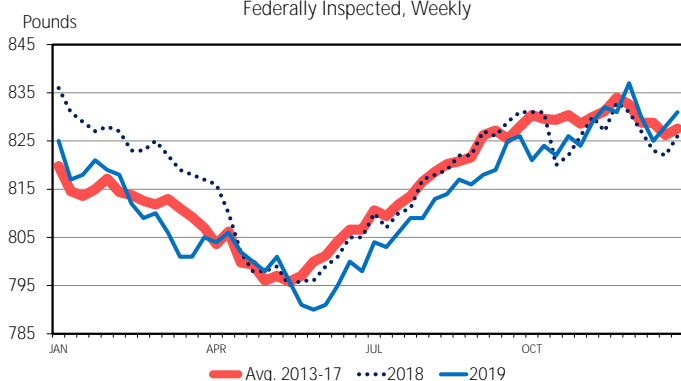


Steer and heifer dressed weights broke through year ago weights in September and have had strong gains over 2018 ever since. However, this corresponds to last year's significant dip in dressed weights due to poor feedlot performance. December steer dressed weights averaged more than 10 pounds higher per week than 2018's, while heifers averaged more than 5 pounds higher. Heifer dressed weights did not suffer near as heavily last winter, explaining the much smaller year-over-year gains.

Still, the combined effect of steer and heifer dressed weights has been about a 15 pound average gain over last year in the last 6

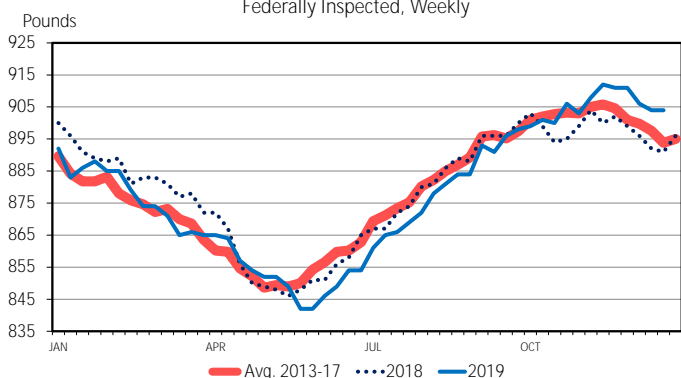
**CATTLE DRESSED WEIGHT**  
Federally Inspected, Weekly



Data Source: USDA-AMS & USDA-NASS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

C-S-18A  
01/03/20

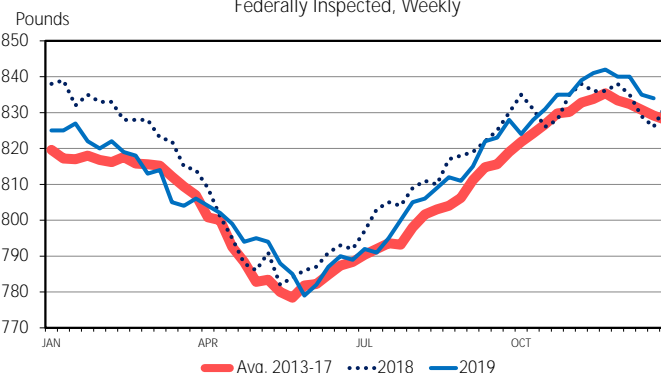
**STEER DRESSED WEIGHT**  
Federally Inspected, Weekly



Data Source: USDA-AMS & USDA-NASS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

C-S-18  
01/03/20

**HEIFER DRESSED WEIGHT**  
Federally Inspected, Weekly



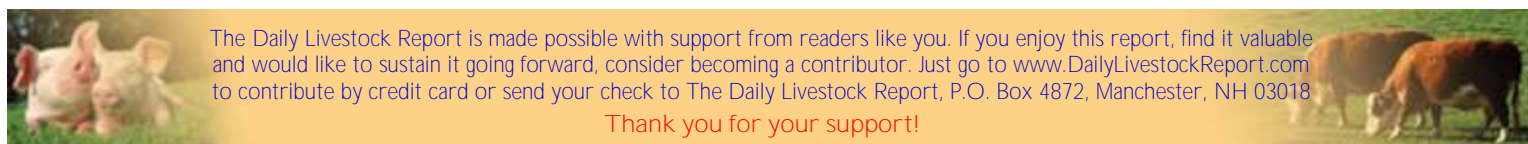
Data Source: USDA-AMS & USDA-NASS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

C-S-18B  
01/03/20

weeks of 2019. These strong gains are expected to continue through 2020 which will compare against weather-reduced performance of spring 2019. Livestock Marketing Information Center puts average cattle dressed weights in the first half of 2020 returning to weights seen in 2018, rising more than 5 pounds over the first half of 2019.

Although steer and heifer dressed weights have climbed above last year, the mix effect (proportion of cows, and bulls in the slaughter mix) has kept overall cattle dressed weights from adding nearly as much relative to 2018. Overall cattle dressed weights are only 5 or 6 pounds higher in the last two weeks of 2019 and previous weeks have shown smaller and sometimes negative gains in year ago comparisons earlier in the quarter. Higher numbers of beef cows relative to dairy cows in the slaughter mix have driven cull cow dressed weights lower. The proportion of cows in the slaughter mix has regularly been more than 20% of the slaughter mix in the fourth quarter of 2019. Additionally, bulls, although a small part of the slaughter mix, saw dressed weights decline in 2019 as well. The fourth quarter showed those weights decrease an average of 10 pounds below 2018 on a weekly basis.

These classes aggregate to the overall beef picture but supply very different markets downstream. Steers and Heifers make up the majority of muscle cuts, 50% lean trimmings, and tallow. Cull cows are primarily used for the 90% lean market, with the few heavier conditioned cows used for specialty cut markets. Bulls are an even greater specialty market and are often used in specific applications such as bologna.



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