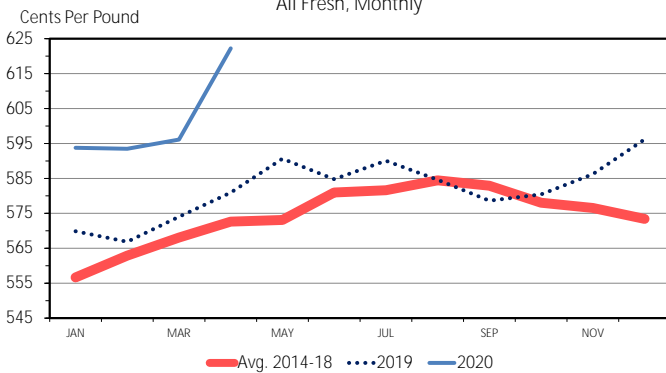


USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) released [retail meat price data](#) for the month of April on Tuesday, May 12, 2020. The data provides some insights into the meat demand picture that has been playing out since late March once the COVID-19 related issues started to occur. Retail prices for beef, pork, and chicken all increased in the month of April.

The all fresh retail beef price averaged just over \$594 cents per pound for the first three months of the year. In April, the price rose 4.4% in one month to \$622.2 cents per pound making this the highest recorded monthly price for the series. Similarly, choice retail beef price jumped 6.6% in one month to its highest recorded monthly price of \$644.4 cents per pound in April.

**RETAIL BEEF PRICE**  
All Fresh, Monthly



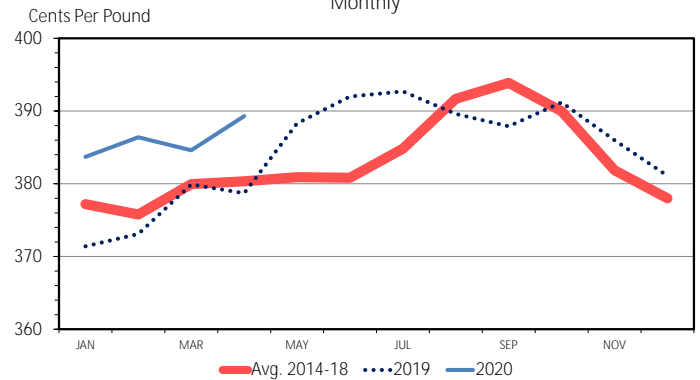
Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics & USDA-ERS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

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Since the start of the year retail pork prices have been tracking above last year's prices. In April, the trend continued with prices increasing 1.2% from last month and 2.8% over last year to \$389.3 cents per pound. The price is still well below the record seen in 2014 which peaked at \$421.5 cents per pound in September that year. But the upward trend continues the typical seasonal pattern of rising prices going into the summer months.

The retail chicken (whole fresh) price saw the largest jump of the three meats with April surging 12.2% in one month to \$157.1 cents per pound, a 7.4% increase from last year. April's price was the third highest monthly price behind June 2019 (\$159.0 cents per pound) and August 2014 (\$157.2 cents per pound). Prior to the jump in April, prices for the first three

**RETAIL PORK PRICE**  
Monthly



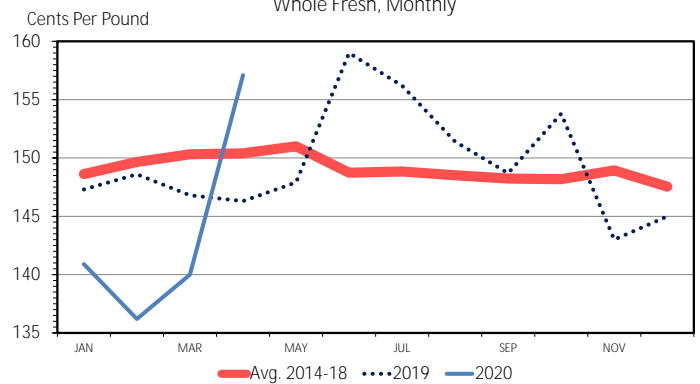
Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics & USDA-ERS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

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05/12/20

months of the year averaged \$139.0 cents per pound, well below the same period last year which averaged \$147.6 cents per pound.

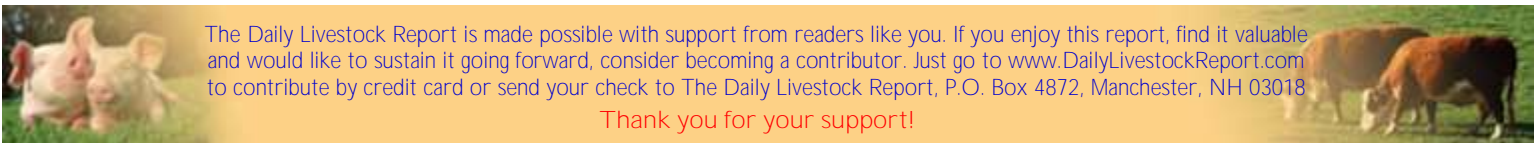
As consumers started increasing purchases at grocery stores in late March the demand surge led to temporary shortages in the meat case. When COVID-19 started to reduce available slaughter capacity in April the bottleneck led to lower available supplies at grocery stores, even though there was not a shortage of available animals. The spike in retail prices for beef, pork, and chicken are mostly due to the lower availability of meat supplies in April.

**RETAIL CHICKEN PRICE**  
Whole Fresh, Monthly



Data Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics & USDA-ERS  
Livestock Marketing Information Center

M-P-06  
05/12/20



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