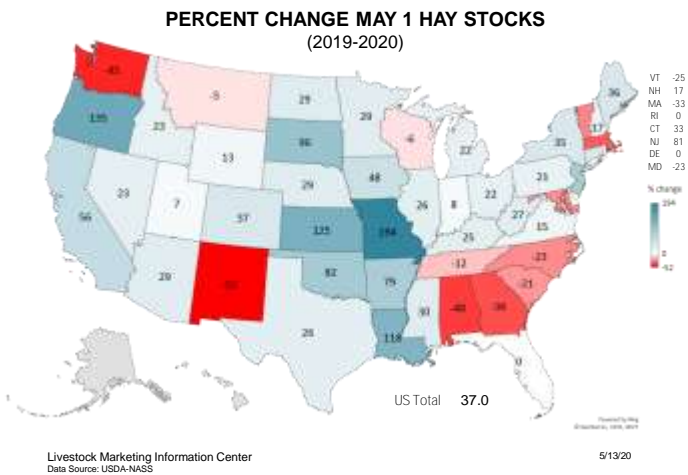


Two key pieces of data were released this week that indicate the status of hay supplies and current pasture and range conditions.

USDA NASS released the May 1 Hay stocks figure in the May Crop Production report on Tuesday. It showed a giant leap in hay inventory available, increasing 5.5 million tons from last year, a 37% jump. Kansas, Missouri, Oregon, and Louisiana saw increases in excess of 100% over last year. Great Plains corridor states all showed positive increases in hay available, while the Southeast was noticeably down compared to a year ago.



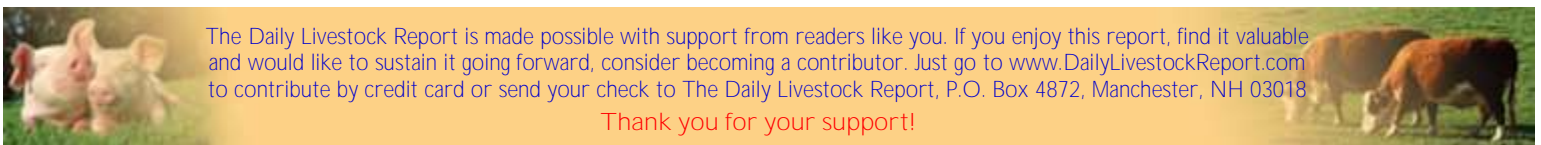
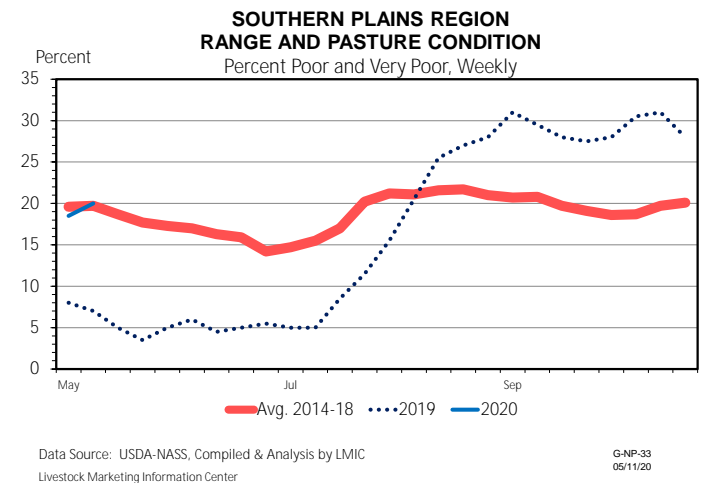
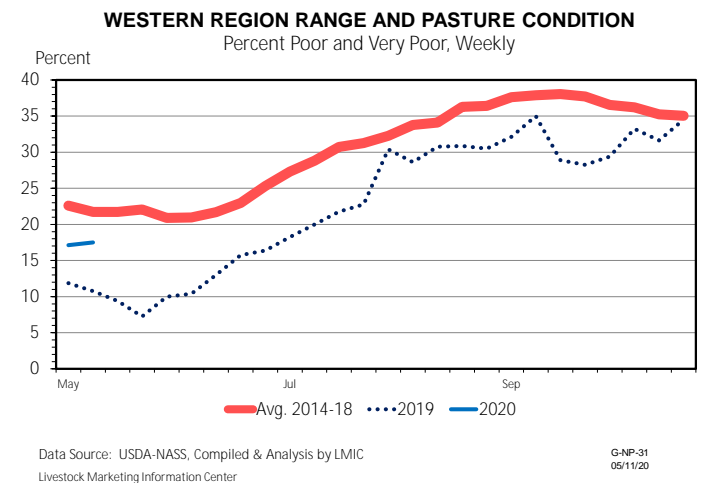
After several years of hay stocks on farm below 20 million tons, May 1, 2020 was the highest May figures since 2017. Last year, was the 2nd tightest hay stock level in our 48 season dataset. With these higher levels, hay prices should see declines this marketing year, but that could change quickly as the drought indexes show worsening conditions across the west. Great Plains states posted the highest absolute levels of stocks, while Western states, although showed a year-over-year increase, are still below normal levels.

May 4th kicked off the pasture and range reporting season (located in USDA NASS' Crop Progress report on Mondays), and with two weeks of data gives a better picture of where different regions are starting the year. As a reminder, pasture and range is categorized as very poor, poor, fair, good, and excellent. Those designations indicate how much supplemental feeding is required to maintain livestock condition. The definitions are available [here](#).

Overall, the U.S. is starting the year off with the percent of pasture and range in very poor to poor conditions near the five year average. Most regions with the exception of the Northeast are at or

below the five year average in these two categories. The Northeast however is already showing conditions exceeding 20% in very poor and poor conditions.

Last year pasture and range conditions were better than they appear at this time. Most regions are showing higher incidents of very poor or poor rated pastures and range compared to the prior year. On the drought monitor the West and Southern Plains are showing the most blanketed moisture issues. Those conditions have not materialized into forage issues, but potentially could be problematic for the larger volume of cattle placed on grass this year.



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