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April, 2026 Monthly Market Report

Slaughter Cows
Canners................$ 1.55 to $ 1.72
Boning/Utility.........$ 1.73 to $ 1.80
Cutters................. $ 1.81 to $ 1.88

Slaughter Bulls.........$2.07 to $2.30

Bred Cows...........$2400.00 to $4,500.00 /head

Cow/Calf Pairs.......$ 3300.00 to $5,100.00

Feeder Calves

Feeder Steers/Bulls Large Frame #1	(avg prices)	Feeder Heifers Large Frame #1	(avg. prices)
200 to 300 lbs.......$4.01 to $7.98	$ 6.71	$2.25 to $7.38	$ 5.81
300 to 400 lbs...... $3.80 to $7.11	$ 5.87	$2.18 to $6.18	$ 5.24
400 to 500 lbs...... $3.72 to $5.83	$ 5.04	$2.12 to $5.65	$ 4.73
500 to 600 lbs...... $3.61 to $5.20	$ 4.39	$2.06 to $4.93	$ 4.10
600 to 800 lbs...... $3.15 to $4.47	$ 3.96	$1.85 to $4.32	$ 3.65

Month End Summary

April's ending averages continued to show the bullishness of the market strength. Closing averages compared with those of March showed all classes from $10 to $15 cwt higher. Slaughter cows and bulls also continued to show the strong demand as did the stocker cows.

Beef demand showed the historically transition from a "soft market" to the seasonally demand for beef products as the weather allows more grilling out gatherings. Typically, May and June are the two strongest months for beef demand with beef prices remaining far above the levels seen a year ago. Competing meats such as pork and chicken continued to remain well below the beef prices in March a year ago. Declining placement figures for the past two periods have posted right at 770,000 head drop for the same period proving we don't have the inventory to sustain our recent demand. The southern border remains closed due to the screwworm threat and the recently imposed tariffs have dented the supply of cattle from Canada to the tune of 41% less.

Beef imports have increased to supply the American consumer showing a 13% increase over the same period as last year. It appears beef is poised to suffer a loss of market share not because oof price but because we are simply producing less beef. All the slaughter plants have readjusted their slaughter hours lower to accommodate less volume which in turn is raising operating costs for all plants.

As we moved into April many areas continued to report hot and dry weather which was forcing the remaining cattle on wheat fields to the markets. This weather driven selling has increased in some areas forcing market supplies on certain classes to increase and this could well produce a window affecting the normal time delivering of the feeder cattle. It appears this scenario is presenting a conflict for the lighter weight offering that must have rain on these parched pastures. These cattle are moving into a marketplace hot for replacement numbers as empty pens occupy a large portion of the plains. It appears many of the Colorado feedlots among other states are choosing to not replace empty pens with these high feeder prices. As is the "cattle on feed" total is showing to be the lowest since 2020.

It appears the demand calendar ahead continues to be favorable. This favorable demand is hitting a market where our domestic supplies remain excessively tight. Mother's Day, Memorial Day , Father's Day and the Four of July continue to represent the core of the grilling season which historically generates strong beef movement.

Closer to home our marketing numbers remain steady with a year ago although we are witnessing a lot of lighter weight classes moving earlier than usual. No doubt the demand and prices are drawing them out. The East Texas area appears to remain in good shape moisture wise. Let's hope this holds true.

Case Craycraft