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## LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

By U. S. Senator Strom Thurmond

A renewed interest has developed in South Carolina in the production of livestock, at least in the categories of beef and dairy cattle and sheep.

Since World War II, there has been an accelerated expansion in the production of cattle of the beef type breeds.

The South Carolina Crop Reporting Service has records going all the way back to 1867 which show there were 308,000 head of cattle on farms of the State in that year. Gradually the production of cattle in the State reached a high level of 434,000 head just after World War I. But by 1930 the number had fallen to 295,000.

Following World War II, production soared to a record year in 1955 with 646,000 head. Preliminary figures for 1956 indicate the production of cattle for that year was close to the peak of 1955.

Being myself a cattle grower on a small scale, I know of the great interest which has developed in South Carolina since World War II. I am informed by agricultural experts that beef produced in the State is of a quality on a par with any in the nation. However, most of our beef cattle are not fed out to a maximum finish because of the shortage of feed grains.

I am confident that South Carolina has a great future as a cattle producing State. Our temperate climate makes for a longer grazing period, and is a major factor in this potential. We have more water available than the average cattle growing State.



Our rolling topography lends itself, in many instances, to a cheap means of water storage. We do not have to cope with the problems of shelter which beset other cattle producing areas. But we still must produce more feed grains and develop our beef cattle to the highest quality possible before slaughtering. In my opinion, this will be done more and more so as to make South Carolina a really big beef producing State.

Another significant milestone in the development of South Carolina's livestock industry is the fact that in 1955 the State's 1500 grade "A" dairymen produced a sufficient quantity of milk to supply the bottle milk needs of the consuming public. As recently as 1953, over 25% of the milk for fluid consumption was imported into the State from other areas.

The rapid growth in the production of manufacturing milk is indicated by the fact that one of the largest milk processing companies in the nation closed one of its major plants in another state and moved the equipment to its plant in South Carolina in order to more than double its capacity. This plant is the largest of its type in the Southeastern part of the United States.

An undergirding factor in the growth of the livestock industry in South Carolina is the state-wide "Blanket of Green" program promoted by Clemson, the Agricultural College of the State. The fall, winter, and spring planting of small grains for grazing as well as for grain production purposes has given the State a literal blanket of green appearance year-round.



Another encouraging event has taken place in South Carolina in connection with livestock production. By 1950 there were only 3,000 head of sheep in the State, but since that time new woolen mills have moved into South Carolina. This has stimulated an interest in sheep production and I expect to see an upward trend as the mills add new facilities and need wool close at hand to fill their demands.

Overall I am encouraged with livestock developments in the State and believe that South Carolina has a fine outlook for the future in this field of agricultural economy.

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