



The Farmer's “Market”



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Message from the President

ALAN HOSKINS

This year marks my forty-second year of involvement in the banking industry. During this time, I have been incredibly blessed to meet some extremely remarkable people. Whether it was a coffee grower on the island of Hawaii, an asparagus producer in Michigan, a corn grower from Illinois, a poultry producer from Florida, a senior official from the national USDA office or a speaker at a training event I was fortunate enough to be allowed to attend, one of the true joys of my career has been learning from each of them.

Over the period referenced above, there have been five people who truly shaped how I endeavor to conduct business. Of greater value, however, is the way they helped me transform as a person. Learning better ways to listen, how to ask the better questions to ensure the other party is truly heard and the importance of communicating openly, honestly and with empathy, especially during times of challenge, are three examples of how I greatly benefitted from their instruction. As you will note, the foregoing skills are as important in daily personal interactions as they are in business communications.

Changing the ways I listened, created questions and handled difficult conversations was not an easy process. It certainly did not happen overnight. The cost to do so was in taking time to learn the new skills, failing repeatedly and committing to improving the next service opportunity to a customer or conversation with a friend or family member and paying personally to attend learning opportunities. All of these related to staying the course to ensure I could serve others more effectively. I can certainly attest the value created greatly exceeded the cost to change.

By now, I feel confident some are curious as to how this article applies to you as the reader, and most likely, as an agricultural producer. Here are a few questions to ponder; what would it cost if you changed your current banking or lending relationship today? How easily can you identify the “dollar value” your current banker or lender has helped you create during the time they have served both you and your operation? What thoughts, ideas or observations have they posed for your consideration? How has the institution for whom the banker or lender works, independently from your primary contact person, provided education for you or others in your business? Is the created value solely monetary or are there other components of the created worth?

Congratulations to those of you who can quickly determine the value in your current lender, lending or banking relationship. That is probably a sign of true value being delivered to you the customer. For those of you unable to determine a benefit; what are the reasons you continue to do business with the person or institution? If you are in the latter category, I am not suggesting you immediately change lenders or banks. I am, however, proposing you discuss this with your current lender. If nothing changes after that conversation, then learning what other lending or banking options exist may be a good course of action for you to consider.

Wholesale Egg Prices Plummet, Retail Prices Remain Elevated

By Ryan Hanrahan
Successful Farming

Newsweek's Jasmine Laws reported that wholesale "egg prices in the U.S. have fallen to \$3.45 per dozen, reaching their lowest level in nearly five months, following a period of price volatility fueled by supply chain issues, bird flu outbreaks, and fluctuating consumer demand."

"Egg prices have experienced extreme fluctuations over the past year. On March 3, wholesale egg prices reached a record \$8.17 per dozen, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The spike was attributed to tight supplies and seasonal demand," Laws reported. "Since then, prices have declined more than 57% to \$3.45 per dozen, the lowest since late October 2024."

"A recent USDA Egg Market

Report noted that egg inventories have increased, contributing to the drop in prices," Laws reported. "The report also found that demand has eased slightly following the holiday season, reducing upward pressure on costs, and that there had been 'no significant' outbreaks of bird flu reported so far in March. The USDA data refers to wholesale egg prices."

"Retail prices, meanwhile, skyrocketed to an average of \$5.90 per dozen large Grade A eggs in February, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics," Laws reported. "That's nearly double what they were in February last year."

NBC News' Greg Iacurci reported Tuesday that "while there have been some early signs of easing prices, it's unclear how rapidly — and to what extent — consumers may get more relief, experts said."

"For one, there's generally a lag of at least two to three weeks between a change in wholesale costs and subsequent

see a continuation of high egg prices."

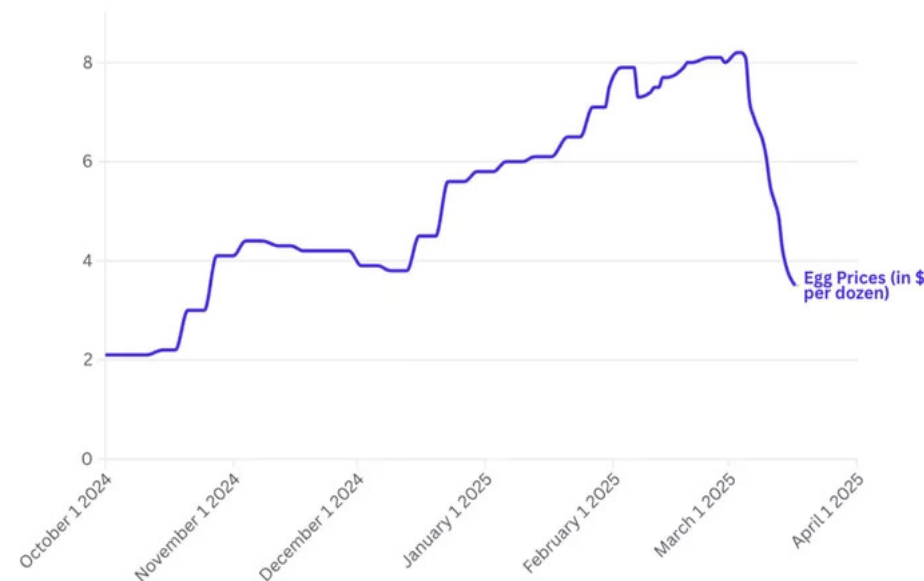
CBS News' Li Cohen reported Wednesday that "as the bird flu continues to wreak havoc on the U.S. egg supply, U.S. Customs and Border Protection data shows there have been significantly more egg products seized at U.S. borders than the number of seizures of the powerful synthetic opioid fentanyl so far in fiscal year 2025."

"According to the CBP data, there have been 413 drug seizure events involving fentanyl in fiscal year 2025, with December, January, and February all having fewer fentanyl seizures than in those months the year before," Cohen reported. "Meanwhile, there have been 5,572 egg product interceptions so far this fiscal year, the data shows. There were nearly 16,000 such interceptions in all of fiscal year 2024. In February, the agency's San Diego field

office reported a 158% increase in egg interceptions since fiscal year 2024."

"The rise in egg interceptions comes as the U.S. continues to battle an outbreak of avian flu that has devastated the poultry industry and caused a surge in egg prices and shortages in some stores," Cohen reported. "CBP has said most of the egg product interceptions that have occurred were because people were unaware that they couldn't bring those products across the border. 'Travelers are prohibited from bringing fresh eggs, raw chicken, or live birds into the U.S. from Mexico,' the agency notes."

U.S. Wholesale Egg Prices



Source: [Trading Economics](#), USDA

retail pricing — meaning consumers are still largely 'feeling the peak market when they go to buy eggs,' Rispoli said," according to Iacurci's reporting. "Plus, retailers ultimately choose 'how closely they want to track wholesale prices,' she said."

"Egg demand is also likely to stay elevated as the Easter holiday, which falls on April 20 this year, approaches, according to Kevin Bergquist, an egg analyst at the Wells Fargo Agri-Food Institute," Iacurci reported. "Egg prices will likely remain highly variable for the near future, but at a higher-than-usual level," Bergquist wrote in a March market update. "In the short term, we will likely

FRESHEN UP YOUR SPRING

Spring Garden Pasta Salad Recipe



Ingredients

- 8 oz rotini pasta
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup cucumber, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup Italian dressing
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water.
2. In a large bowl, combine pasta, tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, red onion, and feta.
3. Add dressing and parsley. Toss to coat.
4. Season with salt and pepper. Chill before serving.

USDA Forecasts More Corn and Wheat, Fewer Soybean Acres for 2025/2026

By Cassidy Walter
Successful Farming

At USDA’s 101st annual Agricultural Outlook Forum, the agency released the 2025/2026 Grains and Oilseeds Outlook. The outlook pegged U.S. corn and wheat acres higher year-over-year while soybean acres were expected to decrease. The outlook assumed normal weather conditions.

Combined, USDA estimated U.S. farmers will plant 225 million acres of corn, soybeans, and wheat, up less than 1% from the previous crop year.

In the report, USDA attributed corn’s boosted acres to “favorable prices relative to competing crops such as soybeans, cotton, and sorghum.”

“The U.S. corn outlook for 2025/2026 is for higher production, greater domestic use, lower exports, and higher ending stocks,” said USDA in the report. “The corn crop is projected at a record 15.585 billion bushels, up about 5% from the prior year. Corn planted area is forecast at 94 million acres, up 3.4 million from a year ago. The yield projection of 181 bushels per acre is based on a weather-adjusted trend assuming normal planting progress and summer growing season weather. With

beginning stocks down from the prior year, total corn supplies are forecast at a record 17.150 billion bushels.”

USDA said the lower soybean projection was a reflection of lower prices, “driven in part by large supplies in South America.”

“Larger global supplies leading to downward pressure on prices is expected to boost demand for oilseeds, meals, and oils in 2025/2026,” said USDA in the report. “Soybean production in Brazil, which was relatively equal to U.S. production only six years ago, surged in the last several years on higher demand from China, lower relative cost to expand planted area, and a weak currency. Brazil is harvesting a crop in 2025 that is expected to be 1.8 billion bushels larger or over 40% higher than the U.S. harvest in 2024. With supplies

outpacing demand over the next several months, South American stocks at the beginning of the 2025 U.S. harvest will be larger compared to prior years.”

USDA said the forecast for higher wheat acres was primarily reflecting an increase in winter wheat planted acres.

“The 2025/2026 U.S. wheat outlook is for higher supplies, unchanged total use, and increased ending stocks,” said USDA in the report. “U.S. wheat production is projected 2% below 2024/2025 at 1.926 billion bushels on a slight reduction in harvested area and a lower yield.”



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