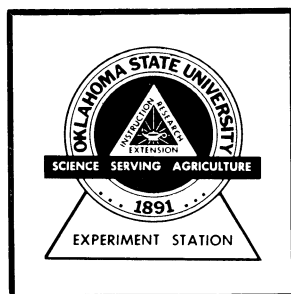


MARKETING PREFERENCES OF OKLAHOMA LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

**By Adlowe L. Larson
and Gene Crosby**

**Bulletin B-556
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Marketing Preferences of Oklahoma Livestock Producers

By Adlowe L. Larson and Gene Crosby

Department of Agricultural Economics, Oklahoma State University

Introduction

Objective

This study was designed to determine the practices livestock farmers now employ in disposing of their product, and to determine and evaluate their preferences for marketing services. The determination of farmers' present marketing practices, and an appraisal of their preferences for various markets and marketing services, may enable marketing agencies to serve their customers better by modifying, adding to, or deleting existing services. The specific objectives of the study reported in this bulletin were to:

1. Describe basic characteristics of the farms and cattle enterprises in the areas studied;
2. Determine farmers' livestock marketing practices;
3. Determine farmers' livestock marketing services preferences; and
4. Suggest market modifications in livestock marketing activities.

Related Problem Studies

Comparatively little work has been done with regard to livestock producers' marketing practices and preferences. Several livestock marketing studies have been made in recent years, but in most of these the description and analysis of marketing practices and preferences was secondary to a study of some other farm enterprise characteristic. Kohls and Gifford studied some aspects of farmer's market choices and their

relation to market news availability.¹ Recent Oklahoma work in livestock marketing related to this study includes a livestock marketing practices and preferences survey by Jenkins, Marousek, and Briscoe.²

Procedure

The survey from which the data used in this study were obtained consisted of 446 livestock producer interviews secured in the summer of 1956. The interviews were conducted in 11 Oklahoma counties chosen as being most representative of the general livestock producing areas of the state. The counties included were grouped into four natural areas, with each area having many characteristics of terrain and farm industry in common.

Certain parts of the state were intentionally excluded from consideration since it was believed that they were not representative of the general livestock producing industry. Two of these were the "big pasture" areas of the Osage, and the Panhandle country. These areas contain many large acreages and are relatively stable with respect to their livestock production and marketing system. A third was the mountainous southeastern part of the state.

All information presented here is analyzed on either an area basis, a size of farm cattle enterprise basis, or both. The four areas studied are shown in Figure 1. Counties surveyed in each area were:

Area 1	Beckham, Greer, and Jackson
Area 2	Alfalfa, Garfield, Kingfisher, Canadian, and McClain
Area 3	Lincoln and Seminole.
Area 4	Muskogee.

The four cattle enterprise size groups were defined as follows:

Size Group 1	1 to 10 head of cattle.
Size Group 2	11 to 20 head of cattle.
Size Group 3	21 to 50 head of cattle.
Size Group 4	Over 50 head of cattle.

The size groups were based on the number of cattle on each farm because cattle are by far the most important type of livestock in the

¹ R. L. Kohls and John Gifford, "Farmer's Choice of Hog Markets", *Journal of Farm Economics*, Vol. 39, February, 1957, p. 67.

² Sidney L. Jenkins, Gerald E. Marousek, and Nellis A. Briscoe, *Livestock Marketing Practices and Preferences in Northeastern Oklahoma, 1957*, Department of Agricultural Economics, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, and Marketing Division, Oklahoma State Board of Agriculture, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Processed Series P-307, November, 1958.

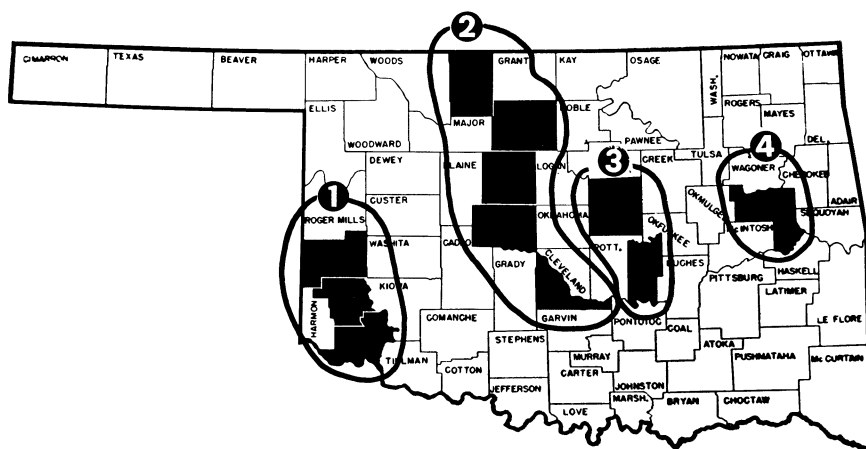


Figure 1. Map shows the four areas of Oklahoma chosen as being the most representative of the general livestock producing areas of the state.

areas surveyed, and the distribution of other types is very irregular.

The one to ten group includes the “small size family herd”. Such herds primarily supply milk and meat for home consumption, with occasional sale of surplus milk, cream, and calves.

The 11 to 20 group includes “large size family herds” and may represent an auxiliary farm enterprise in the form of either a small dairy herd producing milk for manufacturing or a small herd of grade beef cows.

Those in the 21 to 50 group are the smaller commercial beef herds and the larger commercial dairy herds. They represent a major farm enterprise and include grade A dairy herds, grade or purebred beef that there may be some combination of these.

Farms having cattle enterprises with 50 or more head were mostly beef cattle operations. These were either cow and calf range operations or steer and feedlot arrangements. Such large commercial herds were frequently the farm’s main enterprise, though some shared the position with grain production, especially in the western areas.

Description of Farms Included

The following information shows the basic farm structure in the survey areas with respect to size and major enterprise.

Distribution of Farms by Size and Area

In Area 1 the farm size distribution is relatively uniform. However, the distribution changes considerably in moving from western to eastern areas. In Area 4, the eastern-most area, 60 percent of the farms were in the 0-to-160-acre size group and only 4 percent were larger than 640 acres. (Figure 2.)

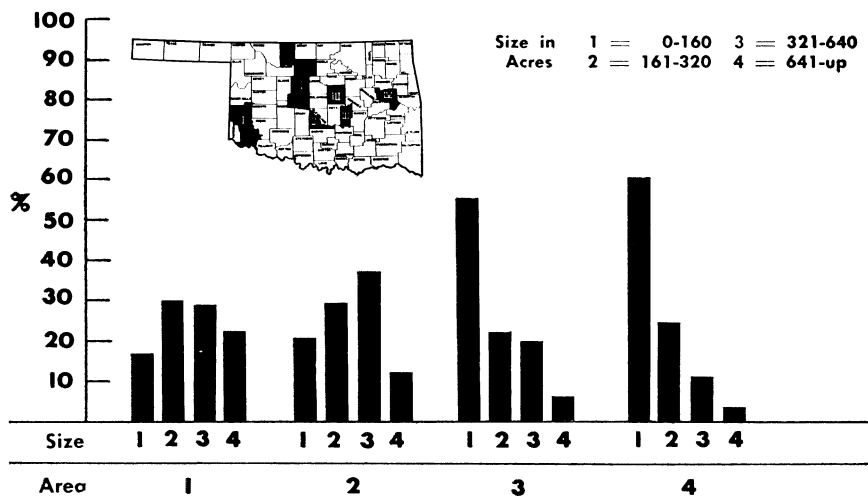


Figure 2. Percentage of farms in each total acreage size group, by area. Distribution of farm size is fairly uniform in Area 1. Areas 3 and 4 show large number of small farms.

Distribution of Pasture Acreages

There is not much difference between areas in pasture acreages per farm, despite the considerable range of farm sizes and types (Figure 3). No attempt was made to determine the quality, kind, or seasonality of pastures. The only distinction made was that all pasture acreage included must be of some permanent type.

Cash Crop Acreage Distribution

There is a noticeable change in distribution of cash crop acreages between the western and eastern area (Figure 4). This is very similar to the change in total farm unit sizes shown in Figure 2.

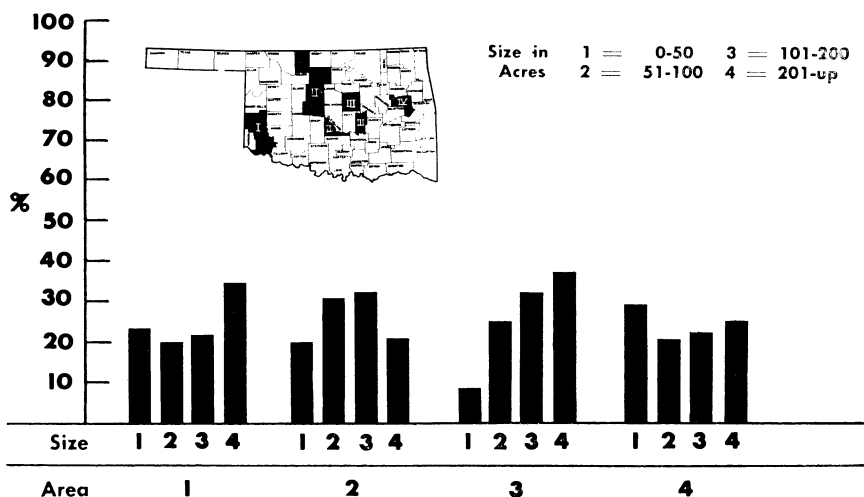


Figure 3. Percentage of farms in each pasture acreage size group, by area. Pasture acreage does not vary greatly from farm to farm regardless of size of farm. No group had as much as 40% of acreage in permanent pasture.

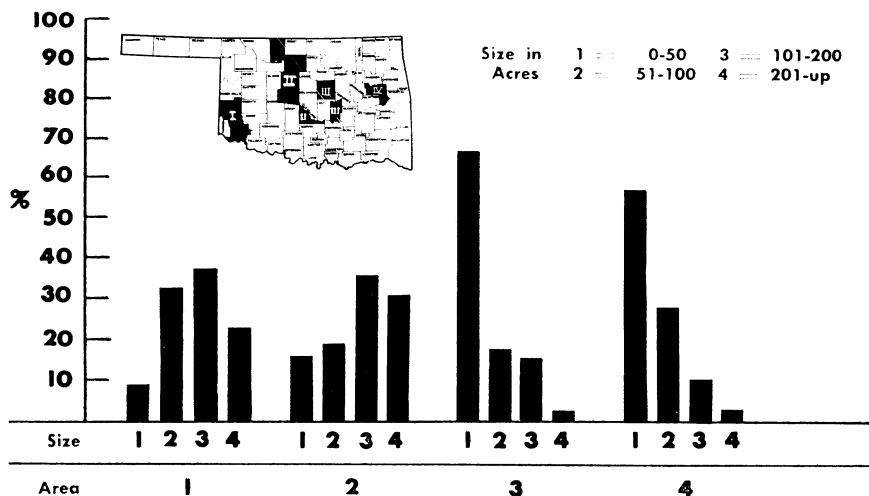


Figure 4. Percentage of farms in each cash crop acreage size group, by area. Distribution of cash crop acreage varied widely between western area (Area 1) and eastern area (Area 4). Small farms in Area 3 had over 60% in cash crops.

Distribution of Cattle Enterprises

Figure 5 shows a comparatively uniform distribution of farms on the size of cattle enterprise basis for each of the four areas. This aids in determining roughly whether certain differences in practices or preferences are attributable to size variations or area variations.

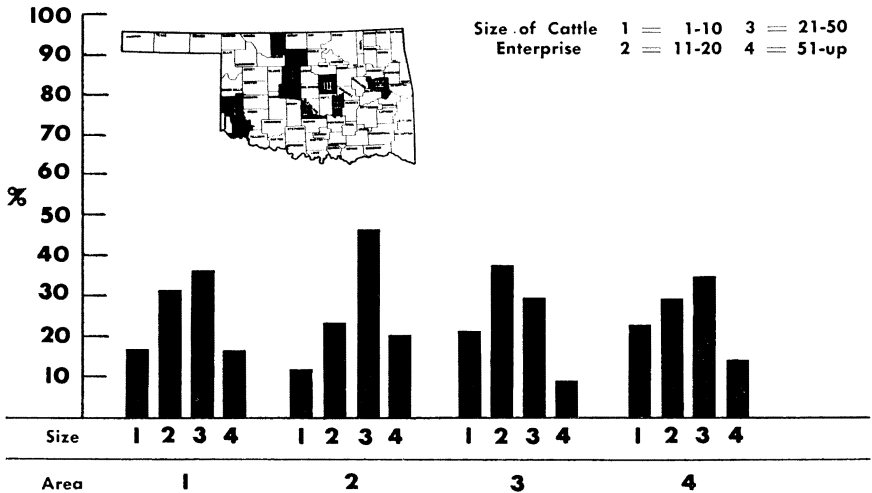


Figure 5. Percentage of farms in each cattle enterprise size group, by area. Distribution of size of cattle enterprises was comparatively uniform in all four areas studied. Most common size was herd of 21-50 head.

The share of total farm income derived from livestock increased, by areas, from west to east (Figure 6) and, by size, from small to large (Figure 7). The proportion of total income resulting from farming decreased in going from west to east (Figure 8) and from large to small size (Figure 9).

Tenure Status

Tenure status was comparatively uniform for all farms on both the size and area bases (Figures 10 and 11). There tended to be a little more fluctuation in the renter group. The total of tenure categories for any given area or size classification, may amount to something over 100 percent, because numerous farms have joint land arrangements including two or more of the tenure categories.

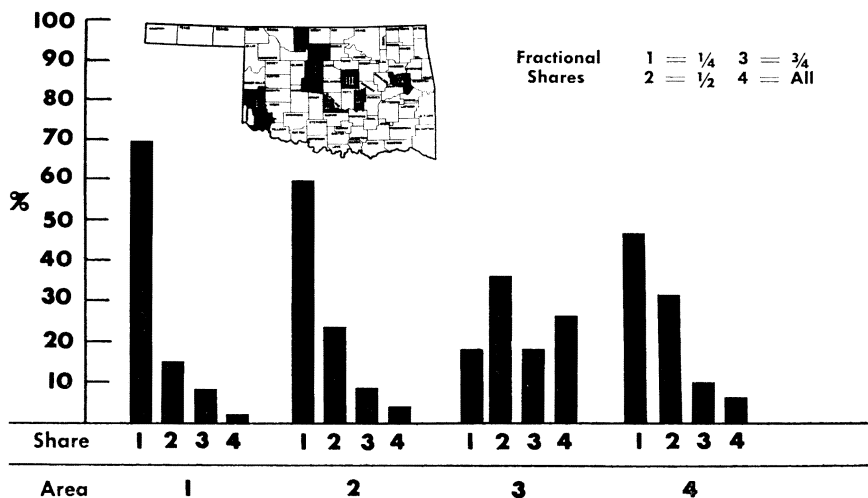


Figure 6. Percentage of producers receiving various shares of total farm income from livestock, by area. Small farms in Areas 1, 2 and 4 showed high dependence on livestock.

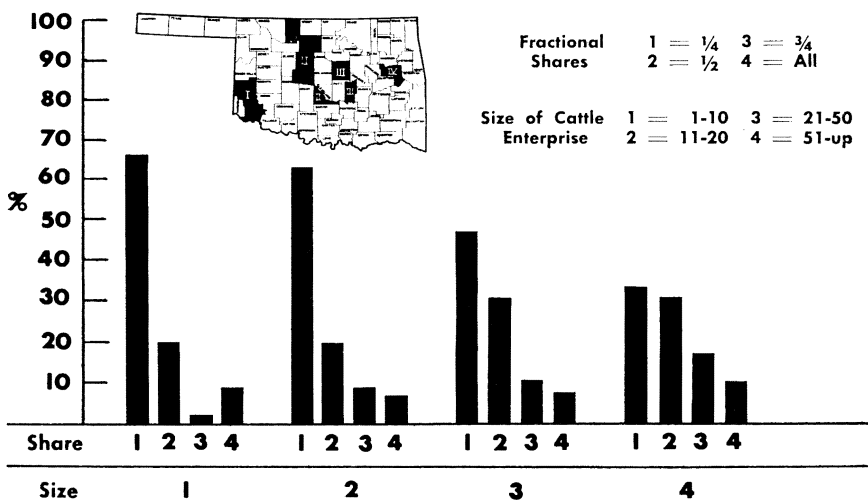


Figure 7. Percentage of farmers showing fractional share of total income returned by each size cattle enterprise for all farms surveyed, regardless of area.

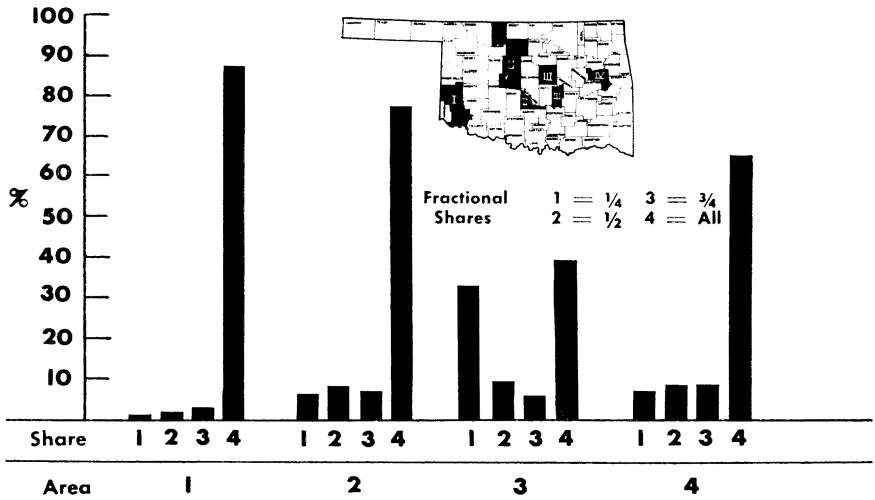


Figure 8. Percentages of producers receiving various shares of total income from farming, by area. The proportion of total income resulting from farming decreased in going from west to east as shown here.

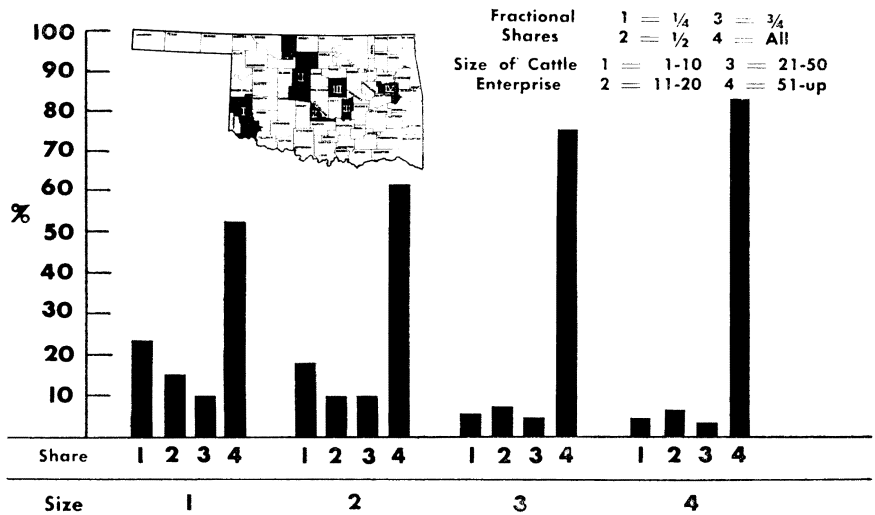


Figure 9. Percentages of producers receiving various shares of total income from farming, by cattle enterprise size group. The proportion of total income resulting from farming increased from small to large size farms.

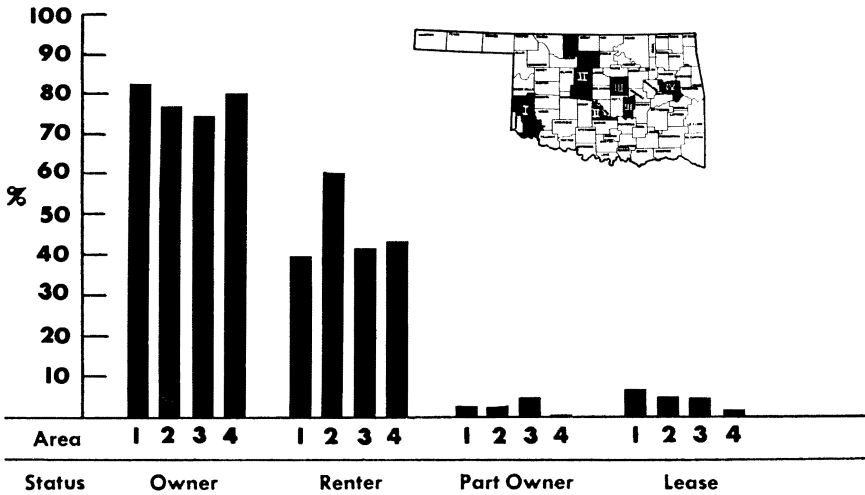


Figure 10. Percentage of producers in each tenure status, by area. Tenure status was relative uniform within each of the four areas. The number of owners was high in all areas.

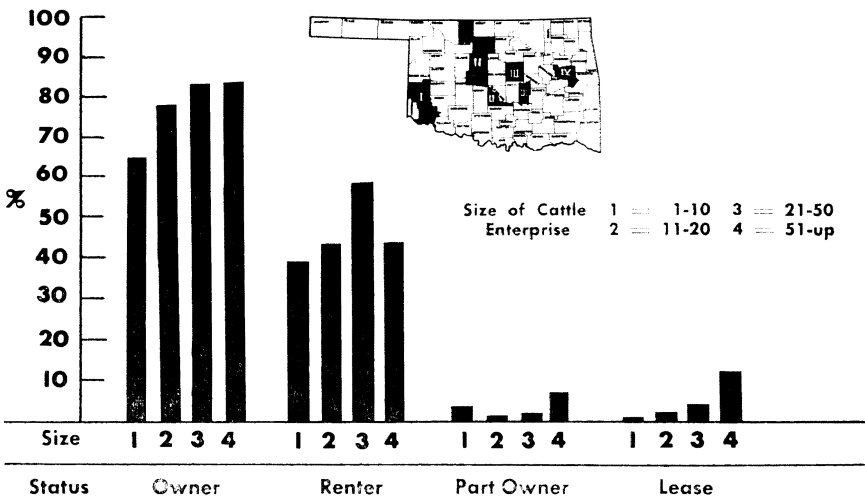


Figure 11. Percentage of producers in each tenure status, by cattle enterprise size group. Tenure status was also comparatively uniform on the basis of the size of cattle enterprise in each of the four areas.

Continued from Page 8

Summary

The size of livestock producing farms in the areas surveyed increases in going from east to west. The acreages in cash crops also increase in this direction, but pasture acreages remain comparatively uniform throughout. The distribution of cattle enterprise sizes is quite uniform among the areas considered. Income from livestock becomes a more important part of total farm income as farm size increases and as the more easterly farms are considered. Farm income comprises a smaller proportion of total income as farm size decreases and again as the more easterly farms are considered. The tenure status of the livestock producers interviewed was relatively uniform on both size and area bases.

Livestock Marketing Practices

Availability of Markets

All four of the market types — terminal, auction, country, and packer — were, with one exception, reported as being available by more than 90 percent of the farmers interviewed in all areas. In Area 2, only 75 percent of the producers had access to a direct-to-packer sales outlet. In the other areas, too, availability of packer sales outlets was slightly less than for other market types.

Livestock Market Use

Information was obtained on market use for both the sale and purchase of livestock for a one-year period. Use data are given in Tables I, II, and III, for beef cattle, dairy cattle, and sheep and swine, respectively.³ The tables also show actual market use by respondents in terms of numbers of lots sold and bought. The lots are "annual lots" in which all of a specified type of livestock bought or sold during a one-year period is counted.

Each livestock grouping was divided into two or three subgroups, and then further divided according to the size of annual marketings. Lot sizes were chosen arbitrarily but are believed to reflect approximately the herd size groupings used in the preceding description of the farms in the survey.

³ Although some farms have dual purpose cattle, they are usually sold as either beef or dairy stock and the distinction made at the time of sale has determined the group in which they are included.

Table I.—Number of Producers Using Specific Markets by Number of Beef Animals Sold During a One Year Period.

Number of Animals Sold During Year	Number of Producers							
	Terminal		Auction		Country		Packer	
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
Calves:								
1-15	2	95	26	133	26	43	0	10
16-30	1	35	5	22	7	3	0	2
31-60	2	16	4	5	2	6	0	2
61-up	3	10	1	2	2	0	0	0
Steers:								
1-25	2	41	10	25	4	7	0	5
26-50	4	9	1	3	1	4	0	0
51-up	4	9	8	6	0	3	0	1
Other:								
1-15	8	100	43	90	86	28	0	3
16-30	2	6	5	2	4	4	0	2
31-up	4	3	2	4	1	2	0	0

Table II.—Number of Producers Using Specific Markets by Number of Dairy Animals Sold During a One Year Period.

Number of Animals Sold During Year	Number of Producers							
	Terminal		Auction		Country		Packer	
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
Calves:								
1-15	0	5	0	27	2	8	0	0
16-30	0	3	2	6	0	4	0	3
31 up	4	1	0	1	4	2	0	1
Other:								
1-15	2	25	13	12	43	8	0	0
16-30	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	4
31 up	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0

Table III.—Number of Producers Using Specific Markets by Number of Sheep and Swine Sold During a One Year Period.

Number of Animals Sold During Year	Number of Producers							
	Terminal		Auction		Country		Packer	
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell
Sheep:								
0-25	2	8	2	6	2	3	0	1
26 up	3	7	4	8	2	4	0	1
Swine:								
0-25	2	24	17	45	24	18	0	11
26 up	0	19	3	5	2	0	0	1

Definition of Market Types Used

TERMINAL OR CENTRAL MARKETS: These are major organized markets whose physical facilities are usually operated by a stockyards company. The livestock transactions occurring here are handled by firms leasing or renting the stockyard facilities and by many independent sellers and buyers. The facility-using firms are generally commission companies and may represent partnerships, corporations, or cooperatives. Persons who sell at the stockyards are usually livestock producers or independent livestock traders. Most buying is done by meat packing firms, livestock feeders, and a few livestock producers who seek herd replacements. Such terminals are usually quite large and have full rail, motortruck, and news wire facilities. They perform a price determining function and influence an area sufficiently large to include most surrounding states.

AUCTION MARKETS: Auctions are organized markets handling all kinds of livestock but are generally much smaller and more localized than terminals. They are intermediate markets for many of the slaughter animals they handle, although some meat packers do buy direct from auctions. Oklahoma auctions vary greatly in size and have annual sales volumes ranging from approximately 4,000 to over 100,000 animal units, the basic unit being one head of cattle weighing over 400 pounds.⁴ All together, there are approximately 100 auction markets operating in Oklahoma.

Practically all the auctions in Oklahoma are operated by single firms which conduct or supervise all transactions taking place between buyers and sellers. Sellers at auctions are usually livestock producers and traders, while the buyers may also include producers and traders in addition to meat packers.

COUNTRY MARKETS: Country markets include almost all of those transactions involving livestock sale and purchase in other than organized markets. Such transactions mostly involve livestock purchase by either regular or itinerant livestock buyers, on-the-farm purchases by other livestock producers, and purchases made at breeders' sales or at auctions held by farmers who are going out of business.

DIRECT-TO-PACKER SALES: Direct selling to meat packers by livestock producers is becoming more important as a livestock marketing means in Oklahoma. Farmers using this method may sell to large commercial packing houses at terminal markets, to smaller independent packers whose business is comparatively local in nature, or to meat re-

⁴ R. C. Lindberg and G. G. Judge. *Estimated Cost Functions for Oklahoma Livestock Auctions*, Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station, Bul. No. B-502, January, 1958, p. 15.

tailers who do their own slaughtering. While it is true that many local livestock traders sell directly to packing plants, only direct sales between producers and packers are included in the packer sales figures in this study.

In this study, the terms packer sales and direct sales, are given the same meaning and are used interchangeably.

Length of Market Use by Farmers

The percentage of livestock producers interviewed who have used each of the four market types for various lengths of time is given in Figure 12.

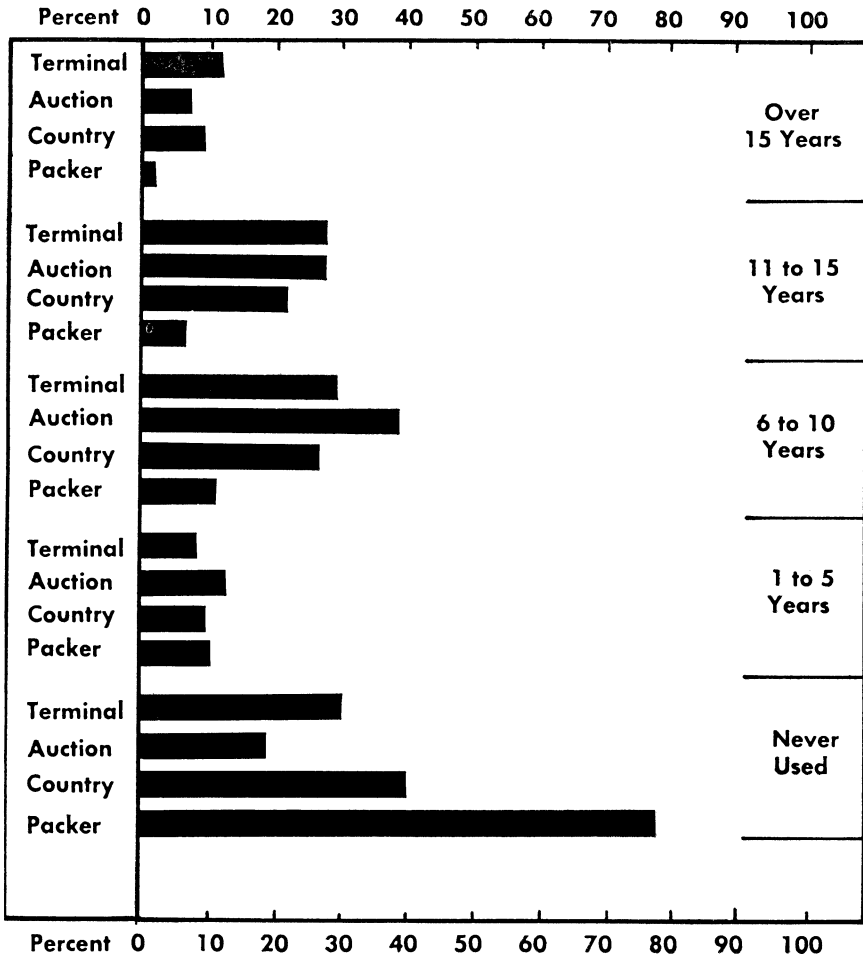


Figure 12. Percentage of livestock producers interviewed who have used each of the four market types for various lengths of time.

A change is occurring in the type of market places being used by stockmen. Most of this change has taken place during the five-year period preceding 1956, therefore the one- to five-year period in Figure 12 represents the new patrons of the various markets. New patrons may be either new producers or producers who have switched from use of another market type.

Packer markets have the second largest share of new customers, and a rate of growth much higher than that of other markets. The popularity of auctions has increased considerably also, but over a rather long period of time.

If direct sales continue their present rate of growth, they may soon become a major means of marketing livestock. This may significantly affect organized markets, especially those which presently have a price determining function.

Stability of Market Use Over Time

On a size-of-cattle-enterprise basis, there was little difference among farmers with regard to the stability of their selling pattern over the five years preceding the survey. About 65 to 68 percent of the producers in each area reported no change, 11 to 15 percent reported a changing selling pattern, and approximately 20 percent of each group had no opinion.

By area, the response was somewhat different. In Area 1, only 59 percent of the producers had an opinion concerning their selling pattern; but in Area 4, 95 percent of the producers gave answers. Farmers in western areas reported very little change in selling pattern; but as the more easterly areas were considered, the number reporting change more than tripled.

Use of Market Information Media

The frequency of use of the various sources of livestock market news is shown in Table IV.

The medium most frequently reported as being always used was the newspaper, including both daily and weekly publications. The second most popular source of market information appears to be the local auction.

In reality, the local auction is an aggregate of several other sources. There a producer may observe actual sales, converse with buyers and

Table IV.—Frequency* of Use of Market Information Media By Livestock Producers.

Medium	Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
Radio	6.3	0	.7	0
Television	4.5	10.8	.7	0
Magazines	.4	3.1	4.3	.2
Newspapers	21.3	8.5	2.7	0
Commission Firms	.7	2.5	1.3	0
Government Reports	.2	2.5	2.7	1.1
Private Reports	.2	1.3	.7	29.1
Local Auctions	4.3	24.7	7.9	5.2
Local Buyers	0	6.1	8.8	32.6
Other Producers	.2	13.7	60.2	19.3

*In percentages of total number of producers interviewed. For a given method of hauling the percentages owned and hired may total more than 100 because many producers use both types of transportation, depending upon the time of year, availability of their own vehicles, and the size lot to be marketed.

other producers, and contact meat packing representatives. The third most popular source of information was television and radio. Radio apparently, is being rivaled very strongly as a market news source by television. The 6.3 percent reporting that they always used the radio may to a certain extent represent producers who do not have television sets. Television market news programs were generally described as being more complete, since they frequently included charts and pictures of livestock being sold in addition to commentary.

Determination of Value of Livestock

Table V lists the various means used by farmers in each cattle enterprise size group and area to get market reports. The category listed as "unspecified market reports" includes answers given by producers who considered market news reports but weren't specific in their answers. This category probably could be divided among all the others proportionally to their importance.

Answers given by producers were closely related to the market news media they used. There was a difference in the ranking of radio and television and the newspaper reports. Table IV shows that newspapers were the source most often consulted. However, in determining

Table V.—Percentages of Producers Using Various Means to Determine Livestock Value When Contemplating Sale.

Means Used to Determine Value	Area				Size Group			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Radio and television	49.5	54.9	71.4	66.7	56.9	64.6	57.1	58.0
Watching auction sales	37.9	35.4	34.7	47.4	45.8	35.4	39.9	29.0
Unspecified market reports	31.6	31.8	17.3	22.8	26.4	25.4	30.4	27.5
Newspaper and magazine reports	17.9	15.4	22.4	22.8	12.5	16.9	20.2	24.6
Neighbors' sales	0	9.2	11.2	8.8	4.2	6.9	8.9	7.2
Quality, condition, kind of stock	2.1	2.1	8.2	5.3	2.8	3.8	4.2	4.3
Cattle buyer	3.2	3.6	2.0	3.5	5.6	0	5.4	1.4
Commission company	1.1	0	4.1	7.0	5.6	4.6	0	0
Go to stockyards	0	0	4.1	1.8	0	3.8	0	0
Total costs plus a return	1.1	1.0	0	0	0	0	1.0	2.9

the value of livestock, the order of importance was reversed (Table V). This difference may be due to the time lag between published and electronic reports. Since the time of day as well as the time of week needs careful consideration in selling, producers apparently make many of their last minute decisions on the basis of radio and television reports, even though they may have referred to newspapers a great deal prior to the time of sale.

Auctions are very important as sources of local market information. For a given auction, which usually sells only once a week, information obtained on one sale day would be outdated for the following sale. However, most producers have access to several auctions; and, since the auctions usually sell on different days each week, a fairly continuous stream of local market information is available to producers.

Consultation of Marketing Agencies When Selling

The practice of consulting a marketing agency before buying or selling livestock is not widespread. In selling, it was found that the number of western Oklahoma stockmen consulting a marketing agency was about three times that in the eastern area. The percentages of producers consulting were 15.8 in Area 1, 13.3 in Area 2, 13.3 in Area 3, and 5.3 in Area 4 in the eastern part of the state. By size grouping there was proportionally even more difference between farms with large cattle enterprises and those with smaller ones. The percentages of producers consulting by size group (from small to large) were 6.9 in Group 1, 10.0 in Group 2, 11.3 in Group 3, and 27.5 in Group 4 (over 640 acres).

The information wanted by sellers was an estimate of the market volume and price in the immediate future. Also important in the consultations taking place were requests for a buyer to either purchase livestock on hand or to inspect and evaluate it.

Consultation of Marketing Agencies When Buying

Buyers who contacted agencies usually wanted to know the classes of livestock available and their current prices. For some, consultation consisted of advising an order buyer of the number and kind of animals wanted and the maximum price the buyer was willing to pay. The percentages of producer-buyers in each area who consulted agencies were: 1.1 in Area 1, 8.2 in Area 2, 4.1 in Area 3, and 1.8 in Area 4. Percentages consulting by size groups were 2.8 in Group 1, 2.3 in Group 2, 3.6 in Group 3, and 13.0 in Group 4, the largest farms.

The percentages given above are more significant than at first appears. They represent percentages of all farms interviewed in an area or size group, and would be much higher if expressed as percentages of only the number of farmers who bought livestock.

Time of Week Chosen for Marketing

Producers' comments as to the best day of the week for marketing were mostly related to their choice of market. Some comments were general, others were specific with reference to one of the two major market types.

There is an indication that livestock farmers prefer auctions which sell during the first half of the week. However, evidence to support this is not strong. For terminal markets, there was a definite tendency to want to market livestock during the first half of the week (Table VI). It may also be noted in Table VI that time of sale at auctions was more important to farmers with smaller cattle enterprises and to farmers in the easternmost area.

Time of Year Chosen for Marketing

The effect of the time of year upon livestock marketing practices is summarized in Table VII. Approximately 20 percent of all producers interviewed preferred to sell in the spring, and over 25 percent preferred selling in summer or early summer. Answers fell into two categories. Most specified a particular season of the year. A smaller group stated that the season of marketing was dependent on factors such as weather, crops, and market, and the livestock being considered. It seems that the latter answers are much more representative of farmers' marketing decisions, and that the former group may reflect seasonal choices that would be made if the other factors did not vary.

Types of Transportation Used

Nearly half of the transportation that farmers used in marketing their livestock was hired. The remainder was farm owned. Of the transportation hired, most was done by people who regularly hauled livestock on either a full-time or part-time basis. Some producers hired their neighbors to do hauling. Table VIII shows the frequency of use of the various means of transports and the proportional usage of hired and owned vehicles.

Table VI.—Percentage of Producers Reporting Various Effects of Day of the Week on Marketing Practices.

Time of Week During Which Livestock is Usually Sold	Area				Size Group			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Sale day at auction	26.3	20.0	26.5	54.4	41.7	28.5	27.4	11.6
First part of week at terminal	14.7	30.8	35.7	10.5	16.7	23.1	29.8	31.9
No effect	33.7	8.7	8.2	14.0	22.2	23.1	8.9	5.9
Middle of week at terminal	5.3	19.5	13.4	0	11.1	10.8	15.5	13.8
Monday or Tuesday	9.5	12.8	12.2	12.3	6.9	12.3	13.1	13.0
Tuesday after the Monday run	7.4	8.7	5.1	1.8	1.4	3.8	8.9	13.0
Monday	2.1	2.1	1.0	1.8	2.8	1.5	0	4.3
Days other than Monday	1.1	1.5	2.0	0	1.4	0	1.8	2.9
End of week	1.1	1.5	1.0	0	2.8	0	1.2	1.4
Middle of week	2.1	0	1.0	0	0	0	1.2	2.9

Table VII.—Percentages of Producers Reporting Various Effects of Time of Year on Marketing Practices.

Time of Year During Which Livestock is Usually Sold	Area				Size Group			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Early summer and summer	18.9	22.6	41.8	33.3	22.2	30.0	26.2	33.3
No effect	31.6	23.6	22.4	29.8	36.1	29.2	23.2	17.4
Spring	20.0	23.6	17.3	19.3	19.4	16.9	23.8	23.2
Fall	20.0	17.4	15.3	14.0	16.7	13.8	17.9	23.2
Depends on livestock	4.2	6.7	11.2	5.3	5.6	7.7	7.7	4.3
Depends on forage and crops	6.3	9.7	1.0	3.5	8.3	4.6	5.4	10.1
Winter	2.1	6.7	1.0	3.5	2.8	4.6	3.6	5.8
Depends on weather	4.2	5.1	1.0	0	2.8	3.1	3.0	5.8
Depends on market	0	1.5	1.0	0	0	.8	.6	2.9

Table VIII.—Types of Transportation and Frequency of Use by Livestock Producers.

Method of Transport	Producers Using	Percentage Using Owned	Percentage Using Hired
Farm truck	288	68	67
Pickup truck	193	88	52
Tractor trailer	30	66	93
Car trailer	14	93	57
Pickup trailer	7	57	43
Railway	1	0	100

Market Use by Area and Size of Cattle Enterprise

Table IX illustrates the relationship between size of cattle enterprise and market type in each of the four survey areas.

For a given area, larger market types are preferred by the producers with the larger cattle enterprises.

For individual market types, an increase in the size of cattle enterprise being considered had varying effects on market use. In all areas but one, packer sales varied noticeably. Country sales generally increased in Areas 1 and 2 and decreased in Areas 3 and 4. Auction sales varied considerably in Areas 1, 2, and 4 but decreased in Area 3. Terminal sales definitely increased in all areas, although Area 4 showed some variation in its increase. Terminal use by all producers in Size Group 1 averaged 18.8 percent, while for all producers in Size Group 4 the average was 62.9 percent.

Summary

Livestock producers in Oklahoma are mostly sellers with respect to livestock market use. Their sales pattern in the use of markets is changing rather significantly. In selling and buying livestock, producers reported use of a variety of sources of market information. Market information sources and the frequency with which they were used were related closely to the means farmers used to determine the value of their livestock. There was a rather definite indication that some market news sources provided "background" information and others were relied upon for "action" information.

Consultation of marketing agencies, such as buyers and commission companies, was limited but was definitely related to the size of the producer's cattle enterprise. Those with larger cattle enterprises or with

Table IX.—Market Use by Area and Size of Cattle Enterprise.*

Survey Area: Type Market:** T	I				II				III				IV			
	A	C	P	T	A	C	P	T	A	C	P	T	A	C	P	
Size 1	6.7	53.3	26.7	0	30.4	39.1	8.7	0	33.1	57.1	19.0	4.8	0	84.6	15.4	0
Size 2	13.3	66.7	26.7	3.3	48.9	31.1	2.2	0	47.4	42.1	42.1	7.9	23.5	52.9	17.6	17.6
Size 3	33.3	60.6	30.3	15.2	64.4	41.4	8.0	1.1	75.9	20.7	10.3	6.9	15.3	94.7	5.3	10.5
Size 4	43.8	43.8	43.8	12.5	73.0	27.0	27.0	0	77.8	22.2	11.1	0	57.1	57.1	0	14.3

* Each figure listed is the percentage of producers in the indicated size group and area who sold livestock on a particular type of market during the survey period.

** The market designations T, A, C, and P represent in order Terminal, Auction, Country, and Packer markets.

cattle enterprises which represented the farm's major effort relied most on consultation both in buying and selling. The time of marketing during the week was most critical for those who sold on terminal markets. The time of year preferred for marketing was varied and appeared much less critical. Generally, the size of market producers preferred varied directly with size of cattle enterprise. This relationship held true for all four areas included in the survey.

Livestock Marketing Preferences

Market Features Liked and Disliked by Producers

All producers were asked to state their particular likes and dislikes for all four market types. The results by size of cattle enterprise and area are shown in Tables X, XI, XII, and XIII. For all four market types there was a considerable number of producers who had never used the particular market in question. In some cases these respondents were put in the "no opinion" category.

Table X.—Percentages of Producers in Each Size Group Listing Features Liked, Disliked About Terminal Selling.

Likes and Dislikes	Size Group			
	1	2	3	4
(Likes)				
Large market and a good market	13.9	14.6	18.5	15.9
Better prices	15.3	10.8	17.9	23.2
Always get market prices	9.7	10.0	10.7	11.6
Numerous buyers, plenty of competition	2.3	7.7	10.1	13.8
Better grading and service	4.2	3.1	7.1	7.2
Accepts all stock	6.9	4.6	3.6	2.9
No opinion	44.4	42.3	26.2	11.6
(Dislikes)				
Too distant	23.6	18.5	23.8	10.0
More expense	1.4	10.0	8.9	7.2
Sales too slow	1.4	5.4	7.7	10.1
More shrinkage	4.2	3.1	9.5	2.9
Dishonesty, unfairness	4.2	2.3	4.3	11.6
No dislikes	23.6	16.2	20.3	11.6
No opinion	31.9	19.2	9.5	10.1

To maintain brevity, only the most frequently given reasons were included in the tables. Some of the reasons listed represent combinations of one or more similar answers. For example, several answers such as

Table XI.—Percentages of Producers in Each Size Group Listing Features Liked, Disliked About Direct Selling.

Likes and Dislikes	Size Group			
	1	2	3	4
(Likes)				
Convenient	47.2	43.8	36.9	30.4
Competitive buying, good market	12.5	7.7	8.9	7.2
Economical outlet for odd lots	2.8	6.2	7.7	11.6
Better price	5.6	3.1	7.1	2.9
No opinion	16.7	25.4	20.8	37.7
(Dislikes)				
Don't receive top price, especially for fat stock	15.3	19.2	20.8	17.4
Traders' influencing sales	13.9	15.4	13.1	17.4
Not competitive enough, unsteady	2.8	6.9	8.9	18.8
Too many diseased animals	4.2	6.9	7.7	8.7
Dishonest, unfair	2.8	4.6	3.0	2.9
Don't provide adequate service	1.4	1.5	2.4	4.3
No dislikes	40.3	33.1	31.0	15.9

Table XII.—Percentages of Producers in Each Size Group Listing Features Liked, Disliked About Auction Selling.

Likes and Dislikes	Size Group			
	1	2	3	4
(Likes)				
Convenient	22.2	14.6	19.0	14.5
Better prices, a good market	8.3	9.2	10.1	17.4
No commission	8.3	6.2	6.5	11.6
No hauling cost or shrinkage	4.2	9.2	4.8	5.8
Never utilize	23.6	27.7	34.5	30.4
No opinion	25.0	17.7	13.7	4.3
(Dislikes)				
Buyers' prices too low	19.4	14.6	13.1	8.7
Likely to lose money	13.9	13.8	13.7	13.0
Stock not properly classed and graded	12.5	12.3	12.5	4.3
Not enough buyers, unsteady market	2.8	6.2	8.3	5.8
No dislikes	20.8	18.5	20.2	39.1
No opinion	22.2	29.2	26.2	20.3

good price, best price, fair price, and high price may be included in the category "better prices".

TERMINAL MARKET LIKES: A characteristic of terminal markets that many farmers considered favorably was size. Price factors were valued highly at terminals and were mentioned as likes by over 25 per cent of all producers. Such comments were to the effect that either good or better prices existed there, or that producers could always be sure of receiving the market price for their livestock.

Table XIII.—Percentages of Producers in Each Size Group Listing Features Liked, Disliked About Direct Selling.

Likes and Dislikes	Size Group			
	1	2	3	4
(Likes)				
Convenient	2.8	7.7	6.0	4.3
Make more money	5.6	6.9	4.2	5.8
No handling charges	4.2	5.4	6.5	2.9
Never use	23.6	15.4	25.6	15.9
No opinion	56.9	56.2	47.6	53.0
(Dislikes)				
Packers don't pay enough	9.7	12.3	8.3	11.6
No competition	4.2	2.3	7.7	1.4
Mostly a fat stock outlet	2.8	4.6	2.4	0.0
No dislikes	5.6	5.4	3.6	5.8
Never use	6.9	1.5	3.6	4.3
No opinion	66.7	65.4	65.5	66.7

The presence of numerous buyers and healthy competition was also a feature of terminal markets which appealed to many producers. Grading was another feature of terminal markets that was liked by livestock producers. They particularly appreciated grading service as rendered by commission men, especially in selling.

Most producers generally preferred to utilize terminal markets only for the larger lots of livestock because of the additional time and expense involved. However, they also recognized the worth of terminals as a market for selling odd head and cull livestock when the expense of doing so was not prohibitive. This was reflected in the number of producers who liked terminals because of their willingness to accept all livestock.

Producers who operated the larger size cattle enterprises were generally more appreciative of the degree of competition and grading services offered by terminal markets. Those who had smaller size cattle operations more frequently mentioned "accepts all livestock" as one of their terminal market likes. Though seldom stated explicitly as a like, many producers implied that they welcomed a trip to the terminal market because of the opportunity it afforded to shop in a metropolitan area.

TERMINAL MARKET DISLIKES: The largest single dislike producers had for terminal markets was distance from the farm. This of course is not a dislike for the market as such. Associated with the dislike for distances involved were those concerning more shrinkage and more expense, including additional feed and yard fees, if cattle are not sold right away.

A fourth dislike, slowness of sales, was most often reported by operators of the larger cattle enterprises, who like to be present when their livestock is sold. A delayed sale necessitates additional loss of time if the producer chooses to wait, or a certain amount of doubt if he decides to return to the farm. The latter may be of little consequence to some producers, particularly those who frequently send livestock to market by a hired hauler rather than accompany their product.

Livestock producers who disliked terminals because of a dishonesty element were predominantly those with large size cattle enterprises. There were indications that such dislikes arose from actions of individuals employed or operating at the market rather than from poor management of the stockyards and commission companies. Approximately five percent of all producers interviewed believed that dishonesty or unfairness existed at terminal markets. In general, a much greater proportion of the producers in the smaller size group had no opinion regarding terminal markets either as to likes or dislikes.

AUCTION MARKET LIKES: Approximately 40 percent of all farmers interviewed liked the auction for its closeness and convenience to their farm. This particular characteristic of auctions was most often mentioned by producers in the smaller size groups, who are less likely to have suitable transportation or large enough sales to warrant a trip to a more distant market. The second most popular like had to do with competition. In some instances producers implied that it was the appearance of competition that attracted them to auctions as much as the actual existence of competition among buyers. That is, they liked the idea of the auction method of selling by competitive bidding, even though the auctions with which they dealt may have been lacking in competition or had competition in an undesirable form.

Producers with the larger cattle enterprises referred most frequently to auctions as an outlet for odd head and cull livestock. For the smaller producers, auctions were more important as primary rather than alternate outlets. Another facet of auction use is the convenience it lends with respect to non-livestock types of farm business.

AUCTION MARKET DISLIKES: The greatest dislike for auctions was that fat stock prices were too low. This was mentioned by 20 percent of all producers. Apparently some producers feel that the margin between "market price" and the bids of auction buyers is excessive when selling finished livestock, yet no mention was made that this occurred when selling lower grade animals. The reason for the inconsistency was not revealed by this study.

Nearly 15 percent of all respondents disliked the adverse influence certain traders had on auction sales and bidding. An additional 3 to 4 percent disliked auctions because of unfairness and dishonesty. Such dislikes referred mostly to selling outside the sales ring, making sales too rapidly, failure to sell livestock in the order received, and influencing of sales by the auction management.

Lack of competition and stability was a frequent criticism of auctions. Most of the producers who stated this dislike were from the larger cattle enterprise size groups. Inadequate services and facilities mentioned included lack of water and shade for livestock and the absence of grading and weighing facilities.

COUNTRY MARKET LIKES: Convenience was the major like farmers had for country selling. It was mentioned over 18 percent of the time. Convenience—that is, less cost in terms of time loss and transportation expense—had considerable appeal to livestock producers in all size groups. Related likes for country selling were no commission fees and no hauling or shrinkage cost.

Many sellers reported either good or better prices when making country sales of livestock. Most of those reporting better prices as a reason for liking country markets were from the larger cattle enterprise size groups. These producers were probably good traders and had extensive selling experience and current knowledge of livestock market conditions. Producers from the smaller size groups liked the convenience of country selling more than the prices they received by this method.

COUNTRY MARKET DISLIKES: Two country market dislikes which were given with equal frequency were that buyers' prices were too low and the seller was likely to lose money. The first of these two dislikes was given much more often by producers with small size cattle enterprises. This probably occurs because livestock farmers with very small herds are less likely to have the knowledge and experience necessary to extract a good price from buyers. The second dislike occurred almost equally in all four size groups. Apparently, most livestock producers realized that they were taking a certain risk in country selling regardless of experience.

Another dislike more frequently mentioned by small producers was that livestock were not properly classed and graded when sold on the farm. This dislike, too, is related to the relative bargaining ability of the producer. Some respondents felt that the method of country selling was too unsteady.

PACKER MARKET LIKES: The likes presented here represented rather small percentages of all producers interviewed because of the relatively small number of producers using this method of selling. When given as a like for packer marketing, convenience had a slightly different meaning. Convenience here referred to the speed with which sales were made as well as the packer's proximity to the farm. When selling at local packing plants, no time is lost in waiting for a buyer or for entrance to the sale ring. Loading and weighing facilities are usually adequate, and payment for animals sold may be received immediately.

Similar and related likes also given were receipt of more money and the absence of commission and yard fees. Most producers using packer markets felt that having stock weighed and graded by the packer and receiving a price near that available on organized markets were enough to offset the convenience and cost factors in country sales and the competitive factor in auction and terminal sales. Also, packer markets are usually situated so that livestock selling trips may be combined with other farm business.

PACKER MARKET DISLIKES: The major dislike producers had for packer markets was that packers did not pay well enough. This dislike was comparatively uniform among all four size groups.

Another dislike by producers was their feeling of a lack of competition at the packer's receiving station.

Some livestock farmers disliked packer markets because they were primarily outlets for finished animals.

Suggestions for Improving Livestock Markets

Though many farmers readily discussed the various market dislikes they had and inefficiencies they observed, they were not often able to suggest a means of improving the situation. Three of the suggestions given for terminal market improvement were:

- Better management of stockyards;
- Improved livestock handling facilities; and
- Faster handling, selling, and weighing service.

These three represented as much as 5 percent of all producers in only two to three of the eight size and area groupings.

Auction market improvement suggestions, representing only four to seven percent of producers in the area and size groups where given, dif-

ferred considerably from those suggested for terminal markets. They were:

- Better management;
- Stronger regulations covering diseased animals;
- Attract more buyers to increase competition; and
- Prohibit buying livestock outside of the sale ring.

There were no practical suggestions regarding country and direct selling. In fact, little could be expected in the way of recommending improvement, since these two methods represent individual and private transactions.

Producers' Market Ratings

To obtain market ratings that would reflect producers' evaluations of the market characteristics they consider most important, five criteria or bases of rating were selected: Convenience, competition, net return, management, and grading. These criteria were chosen because it was felt that each of them suggested market factors which are commonly considered by livestock farmers in their buying and selling activities. No attempt was made to attach a given definition to these criteria. Although the terms convenience, competition, net return, management, and grading may have a slightly different meaning for each farmer, it is believed that the general meaning of each is very much the same for livestock producers throughout Oklahoma.

The livestock producers interviewed rated the four principal market types on each of the five bases. Ratings were obtained for both buying and selling situations, and no differentiation was made with respect to the type of livestock being bought or sold. The ratings are believed to reflect the cumulative marketing experience of the producers concerned rather than impressions gained during the year covered by this study.

Market ratings given by livestock producers, when divided according to size of cattle enterprise on the farm, are shown in Tables XIV and XV. The market types are indicated by T, A, and C and denote Terminal, Auction, and Country markets in that order. The numbers represent the percentages of producers in each size group who rated the indicated market best on a given basis. For example, in the 1 to 10 head size group 36 percent of the 72 producers included rated the country market best on the basis of convenience when buying livestock, while 22 percent rated the auction market best.

Table XIV.—Percentage of Livestock Producers in Each Cattle Enterprise Size Group Who Rated Various Market Types* Best on the Basis Indicated When Buying.

Size Group and Producers Included	Convenience Market		Competition Market		Net Return Market		Management Market		Grading Market	
		%		%		%		%		%
1-10 Head (72)	C	36	C	49	C	36	C	13	C	17
	A	22	A	7	A	10	A	7	T	10
11-20 Head (130)	C	29	C	33	C	31	C	13	C	12
	A	23	A	15	A	13	A	9	T	8
21-50 Head (163)	A	37	C	42	C	30	C	17	C	14
	C	30	A	19	A	20	A	13	T	10
Over 50 Head (69)	A	32	C	30	A	22	A	25	T	16
	C	28	A	25	C	17	T	19	C	15

* The market types Terminal, Auction, and Country are designated in order as T, A, and C.

Table XV.—Percentage of Livestock Producers in Each Cattle Enterprise Size Group Who Rated Various Market Types* Best on the Basis Indicated When Selling.

Size Group and Producers Included	Convenience Market		Competition Market		Net Return Market		Management Market		Grading Market	
		%		%		%		%		%
1-10 Head (72)	A	57	T	43	A	39	T	49	T	57
	C	21	A	39	T	26	A	26	A	21
11-20 Head (130)	A	45	T	48	T	45	T	51	T	56
	C	25	A	43	A	29	A	17	A	16
21-50 Head (163)	A	46	T	64	T	47	T	53	T	65
	T	27	A	28	A	24	A	20	A	16
Over 50 Head (69)	A	33	A	16	C	25	T	62	T	75
	T	35	T	77	T	55	A	7	A	4

* The market types Terminal, Auction, and Country are designated in order as T, A, and C.

The percentages of producers in each size group who rated various market types best according to several criteria are shown for both buying and selling situations (Tables XIV and XV).

Table XVI illustrates the ratings given each of three market types by the producers using each type for any kind of livestock sale. Ratings given each market type of patrons who sold beef cattle are shown in Table XVII.

Table XVI.—Analysis of Whether Each of Three Market Types was Rated Best on Various Criteria by Producers Using it for Livestock Selling.

Market and Number Using	Convenience		Competition		Net Return		Management		Grading	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Terminal (231)	103	123	194	37	169	62	185	46	198	33
Auction (244)	159	85	125	119	109	135	76	163	61	183
Country (110)	54	56	12	98	31	79	13	97	10	100

Table XVII.—Analysis of Whether Each Market Type was Rated Best on Various Criteria by Producers Using It for Beef Cattle Sales.

Market and Number Using	Convenience		Competition		Net Return		Management		Grading	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Terminal (202)	98	104	171	31	152	50	165	37	172	30
Auction (202)	141	61	114	88	105	97	70	132	57	145
Country (79)	44	35	11	68	25	54	11	68	10	69

Discussion of Ratings

Some generalizations can be made about producers' market ratings. When selling, producers who have the larger livestock enterprises not only choose the larger type markets first but do so by a conspicuously larger majority. Producers are quick to recognize the importance of using markets which are competently managed and offer essential services such as grading. They are also very conscious of price, competition, and convenience, the latter representing a desire for both cost and time loss reduction.

In buying, livestock farmers in all size categories seem to prefer smaller, less organized markets. This is because they realize that some of the factors contributing to a good seller's market may be a handicap in a buyer's market. Additionally, there is less desire for some of the services organized markets offer because the producer prefers to take over some of the management and grading functions. One quite different relationship in buying as compared to selling is that market choices become more evenly divided as the size of cattle enterprise considered is increased. The opposite was found to be true in a selling situation.

Market Selection by Livestock Type

In answer to the question "Do you use different outlets when sell-

ing different kinds of livestock?" producers were almost equally divided in their replies of yes and no. Eighty-three percent of those answering "yes" gave the reason for doing so as either "always hunt for the best market" or "the market used depends on the type of stock being sold". Producers giving "no" answers indicated in almost every case that they were partial to a particular kind of market and preferred to use it regardless of the type of stock being sold.

In buying livestock, 80 percent of the respondents did not select a market on the basis of the type of livestock sought. Again they either preferred to use a particular outlet all the time or stated that they never bought livestock. The 20 percent who used different outlets made their livestock market choices according to type desired, availability, and price.

Market Selection by Lot Size

The size lot of livestock sold was not as important a factor in market selection as was type of livestock. In selling, only 38 percent of the producers contacted said the size of lot would affect their choice of market. Of these, most gave the reason that they preferred the terminal market for large lots and the auction or other local markets for odd head and small lots. Most of those who felt size of lot was not a factor in their marketing decisions preferred to use one market all the time for any size lot of livestock they might sell.

The effect of lot size in market selection for buying purposes was negligible. Fourteen percent did consider lot size in that they would "buy where available," but the remaining 86 percent preferred to use a given market type without shopping around.

The preceding indicates something of the importance of good producer-dealer relations in marketing. It appears that producers' loyalty to particular market places that have won their confidence may account for much of the reluctance on the part of farmers to "shop around" in their buying and selling activities. This may point out one area of improvement in which real contributions to the stability of livestock marketing could be made.

Producer Evaluation of Attitudes of Market Personnel

Livestock farmers were questioned as to how welcome they felt when trading with or visiting auction and terminal markets. Their responses varied considerably with size of livestock enterprise and area in which

Table XVIII.—Producer Ratings of Attitudes of Market Personnel.*

Market Type and Attitude	Area				Size Group			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
(Auction Markets)								
Unwelcome	0.0	0.0	3.1	1.3	2.3	2.3	0.0	0.0
Indifferent	0.0	2.1	2.0	3.5	1.4	3.1	1.2	1.4
Welcome	12.1	17.9	43.9	31.6	16.7	42.3	22.6	17.4
Very welcome	45.3	32.3	96.9	56.1	98.6	66.9	21.4	56.5
(Terminal Markets)								
Unwelcome	0.0	1.0	3.1	1.8	0.0	3.8	0.0	0.0
Indifferent	2.1	1.5	2.0	7.0	4.2	5.4	0.0	0.0
Welcome	23.2	13.8	30.6	34.6	12.5	30.0	22.6	10.1
Very Welcome	15.8	22.1	94.9	77.2	51.4	81.5	23.8	18.8

* In percentages of total number of producers in each area and size group. For a given group or area and market type, the percentages listed may total more than 100. This occurs because some respondents desired to give more than one answer.

the farm was located. Details of the attitude analysis may be seen in Table XVIII.

Effect of Size Group and Area on Attitudes

Producers in the western areas expressed fewer opinions regarding how welcome they felt at various markets. The breakdown by size group in the righthand side of Table XVIII reveals that producers who have the larger livestock operations also appear to be less concerned with the treatment they receive. One implication of this is that the markets in the western areas are operated in such a manner that good will is either less important in the conduct of business or it is prevalent to the extent that it is taken for granted and little thought is given to it. Another implication is that the producers of smaller lots of livestock are more sensitive about the treatment they receive, and a larger proportion of them have formulated opinions on this aspect of marketing.

It is likely that the particular frequency distributions in Table XVIII result from a combination of both the situations just suggested. Therefore, since more of the smaller livestock producers are grouped towards the eastern areas surveyed, it appears that producers in these areas are much more conscious of the treatment they receive from market operators.

Market News Source Likes and Dislikes

Farmers using the various sources of livestock market information quite readily stated their likes for particular sources and news services

in general. Less than 10 percent of all farmers interviewed declined to mention a like for at least one market news source. Some comments such as "fast, convenient, and up-to-date" were quite general, but the implication was that they referred to radio, television, and newspaper sources.

Another like was that news sources "allow farmers to evaluate their own stock." For farmers with little grading ability, the reference may have pertained more to visual reports obtained from television and visits to auctions. Those who have greater ability or more experience may be able to evaluate their livestock by using non-visual reports. All other news likes were specific in their reference to one or more news media. The comparative importance of these likes is illustrated in Table XIX.

Table XIX.—Producers' Likes and Dislikes of Market News Sources in Percentages of Total Number Interviewed.

Likes	Percent of Producers Listing		Dislikes
Radio is best source -----	18.9	5.3	----- Quote only top prices
Fast, convenient, up to date -----	17.8	4.6	----- Miscellaneous dislikes
Television shows actual grading -----	16.4	3.0	----- Reports not accurate
Newspaper reports more complete -----	6.2	2.8	----- Radio prices exaggerated
Allow farmer to evaluate own stock -----	6.2	2.3	----- Grades not well defined
Radio and Television reports at best time of day -----	7.2	1.9	----- Published reports are too late
Can evaluate stock at auction -----	8.8	.9	----- Reports too brief
Most reports give adequate information -----	4.8	.2	----- Too much advertising
Magazine reports more complete -----	3.7	.2	----- Radio and Television at wrong time of day
No opinion -----	9.9	78.7	----- No opinion

Dislikes for market news services were not very numerous. Most of them were in the form of constructive criticism and there appeared to be a real interest on the part of producers in giving helpful suggestions.

Comparison of Market News Sources

The most important news sources were newspapers, radio, tele-

vision, and auctions (Table IV). The first three reflect conditions of price and supply on the terminal market, the latter on local markets. Thus, the first three means are the ones that may lend themselves to improvement. Other sources are mostly the result of personal observation.

Continuation of the increase in popularity of television should result in its becoming a first or second ranking news source. Compared to radio, television offers the additional advantage of visual observation of selected lots of livestock that are being sold. However, both have the potential of giving newscasts that can be carried throughout the day, depending on the changing listening habits of radio and television set owners.

Transportation Method Likes and Dislikes

There was very little dissatisfaction with the transportation arrangements available to producers. Nearly 60 percent of all producers interviewed liked their present method most for its convenience. Other likes were that their present method was less expensive, they could do their own hauling, or commercial haulers were available and provided good service. Eighty-six percent explicitly stated they had no transportation dislikes. Dislikes mentioned were very scattered, and none represented as much as three percent of all respondents. While this finding does not mean the transportation phase of livestock marketing has no ills, it does indicate that there is a high level of satisfaction with the present system.

Government Market Regulations

Almost half of all livestock producers included in the survey indicated a need for additional or revised government regulation of livestock markets. Auction markets were by far the greatest source of concern with respect to inadequacy of regulation. Comparatively few producers wanted more regulation of terminal markets, and almost none felt that country and packer sales should be regulated. The latter two market types, by virtue of their highly individual and unorganized nature, have few characteristics that could practically be regulated. Table XX provides more detailed information on this aspect of producer preferences.

Relation of Area and Regulation Desired

Sentiment against further government regulation increases toward

Table XX.—Percentages of Producers by Area and Cattle Enterprise Size Group Who Prefer Additional Market Regulation by Government.

Market Needing Additional Government Regulation	Area				Size Group			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Auction	37.9	45.1	40.8	19.3	29.1	35.4	47.0	39.1
Terminal	6.3	6.2	16.3	1.8	4.2	7.7	10.1	5.8
Country	0	1.5	2.0	1.8	0	2.3	1.8	0
Packer	1.1	1.0	1.0	0	0	1.5	1.2	0
All Markets	7.4	3.1	3.1	10.5	4.2	4.6	4.2	8.7
No Markets	34.7	39.5	35.8	52.6	54.1	41.6	30.9	39.2
No Opinion	12.6	3.6	1.0	14.0	8.3	6.9	4.8	7.2

is increased, the preference for additional regulation grows stronger (Table XX). Thus, it may be seen that the operator of livestock producing farms in the western areas are much more desirous of an improved marketing situation with respect to government regulation.

Specific Regulations Desired

While many producers expressed an opinion that additional regulation was needed, few chose to suggest specific problems at which it might be aimed. The most important suggestions received and the percentages of farmers giving them were: Price regulation, 12.3 percent; disease control, 5.6 percent; and enforcement of existing laws, 3.1 percent.

Summary

Livestock producers' preferences for various markets and market services are generally related to size of cattle enterprise. In stating the likes and dislikes they had for various market types, three aspects of livestock markets were very frequently mentioned. These were convenience, price factors, and management. Whether listed as likes or dislikes, these three market characteristics appeared to be most critical and of paramount importance to producers. Suggestions for market improvement usually concerned auction or terminal markets and dealt with management factors. Though many producers were willing to discuss the good and bad points of markets, only a small percentage of those interviewed actually offered suggestions.

Livestock farmers' market ratings were made on the basis of five criteria for both buying and selling situations. In selling, terminal and auction markets were the first and second choices of livestock producers. In buying, country and auction markets were the most popular first and second choices. Selection of markets was more dependent on the type of livestock being sold than on the size lot of livestock.

The smaller livestock producers appeared to be more sensitive to the attitudes of market personnel. Also, smaller producers and producers in the eastern areas credited auction and terminal personnel with having better attitudes. Market news services and market transportation methods as they now exist were found to be satisfactory to most producers. On the matter of additional government market regulation, a very large share of producers felt that auctions needed more regulation but few suggestions were given as to the type of regulation needed.