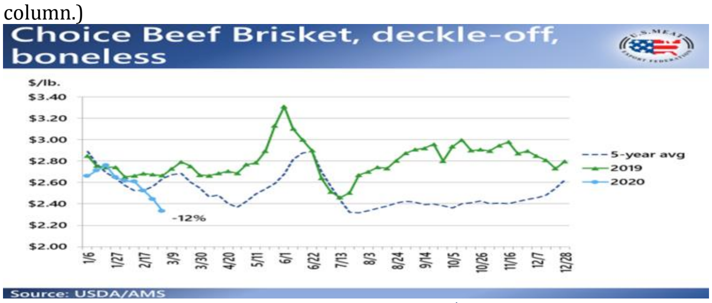
U.S. Meat Bulletin

Mar 10, 2020 Volume XII | Issue 3.2

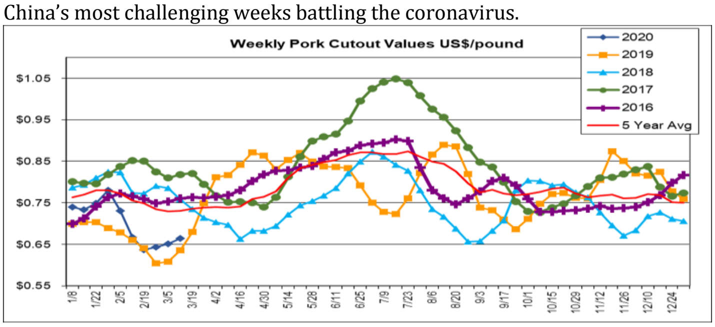
SUPPLY & DEMAND

The beef cutout closed last Friday mostly steady with the previous week's close. The market mood was mixed; retailers are looking to increase inventories due to increased demand for home meals due to the coronavirus, plus seasonal grilling demand as spring approaches. On the negative side, the coronavirus is seen as a negative to foodservice demand. Large event catering would be the first to feel the effects. For example, Boston has announced it will cancel its St Patrick's Day (March 17) parade. Brisket demand usually jumps prior to St Patrick's Day but wholesale brisket primal values have been falling and are substantially below the most recent five-year average (see GRAPH below). On the cattle side, the free fall of broader equity markets has caused both live fed cattle prices and futures to swoon. To be sure, buying and selling has seesawed, with players viewing the market from different perspectives. Low futures prices are enticing for processors, retailers, food service, and exporters who can lock in low cost beef supplies. On the other side are market bears who have been in a panic selling mode for a range of commodities due to growing uncertainty over the coronavirus impact on the U.S. economy. But bears are currently holding sway. As of last Friday, live fed cattle prices had dropped 8.9% in the previous 7 weeks to the lowest early-March level since 2011. Futures have experienced a sharper fall; yesterday's April fed cattle contract of $102.85/cwt was down 17% from the level of Jan 23. If there is a silver lining in the market rout, it is that processing plants are enjoying record high margins for this time of year and are harvesting large volumes of cattle, which is helping to keep the large cattle on feed supply from backing up. And boxed beef prices were steady last week, a positive sign given larger supplies; U.S beef production is up 3.3% from the beginning of the year. Last week saw 647,000 head of cattle processed, up 3.2% from last week and up 6.6% from the same week last year. Live slaughter weights were 1,379 lbs., up 35 pounds from the same time last year, indicating that the cattle and beef industries need aggressive slaughter schedules to keep the market current and supply and demand in reasonable balance. U.S beef exports have been strong, but last week's export and sales report indicated a slight downturn in the pace of Asian beef purchases, though one week of data doesn't make a trend (see TRADE next column.)



Beef Choice Beef Cutout Value:9/3/2020 – US$207.36/cwt. (<+1% from 2/3/2020)

The pork cutout value eked out another gain last week despite bearish coronavirus news, large slaughter levels, and heavy hogs. Hog futures, after rallying for 5 straight sessions last week, were caught in the broader equity and commodity market selloffs to close lower yesterday. The reasons for pork's firmness in the current bear market are difficult to discern, but one bullish piece of news is that a larger volume of U.S. pork is starting to clear Chinese customs at lower duty rates after importers were granted duty exclusions starting early last week. Those exclusions will last for one year according to Chinese customs authorities. Ports are also operating more smoothly in China, and USDA's weekly sales report covering Feb 20-27 activity showed large shipments of U.S. pork to China, and during one of China's most challenging weeks battling the coronavirus.



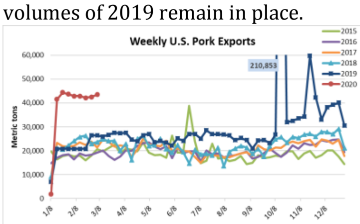
Hog Carcass Cutout Value:9/3/2020 – US$67.95/cwt. (+2% from 2/3/2020)

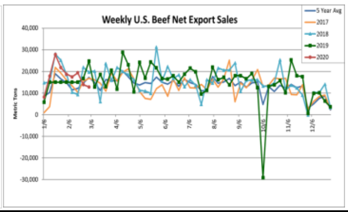
MOVING AHEAD

U.S. meat industry leaders are calling for a more aggressive messaging approach in the face of growing competition from plant-based meat alternatives (PBMA). The recent annual Power of Meat study found that 50% of U.S consumers that regularly consume PBMAs do so for their perceived healthiness while 36% believe they are a good source of protein. In a past issue, we mentioned that on a cost-per-serving basis, most raw meat and poultry is priced lower that PBMAs with an equivalent protein content. Last fall, the Washington Post concluded that on a pound-for-pound basis, an Impossible Burger (IB) was priced 4X that of ground beef. Moreover, a four-ounce IB contains 19 grams of protein while 3.5 ounces of lean ground beef has 26 grams. But it is not just the protein quantity that is important. Nutritionists and meat scientists point out that the quality of protein in meat and PBMAs differs significantly. Comparatively evaluating the nutritional benefits of meat vs PBMAs requires an analysis of amino acid content and bioavailability or digestibility. When eaten, protein is broken down into amino acids, which are essential for almost every metabolic process in the body. There are 9 so-called 'essential' amino acids that must come from food. However, while animal proteins tend to contain a good balance of all the amino acids that we need, some plant proteins are low in certain amino acids, such as methionine, tryptophan, lycine and isoleucine. Another, leucine, is believed to be a key driver of muscle protein synthesis. In general, animal proteins have a higher proportion (9-13%) of leucine than most plant proteins (6-8%). Meat also contains the key amino acids of collagen, the most abundant protein in the human body, and one that maintains the healthiness of hair, nail and skin tissue. Numerous studies have concluded that high-quality and complete protein consumption optimizes protein metabolism at both the whole-body and skeletal-muscle level, and that consuming high-quality protein is of high importance in elderly people, where protein synthesis is lower. Science has also established that the digestibility of animal vs plant proteins is higher and faster. The challenge for the industry moving forward is to convey these scientific messages to a broad consumer audience and in a way that can be easily comprehended.

TRADE

Red meat and poultry traders around the globe continue to focus intently on potential business disruptions due to the spreading coronavirus. In China, the epicenter of the outbreak, the number of new infections continues to fall daily, with new cases outside of Hubei province dropping into single digits. But although some restaurants have reopened their doors to dine-in customers, traffic remains weak as many in the population continue to practice social distancing. This has led to pile-ups of proteins in major regional wholesale markets & cold storages and slowed the flow of containers from ports to inland freezers. Foodservice traffic has also plunged in **Korea** and **Japan** as the virus has spread. Unfortunately, the release of monthly trade data is lagged 4-6 weeks depending on the market, but analysts in the U.S. are closely watching USDA's Export Sales figures for clues of changes in shipment and foreign sales activity. Last Thursday's report covering exports for the week ending February 27 provided a mixed picture. While both pork and beef export shipments (data is only for muscle cuts) for the 1st 8 weeks of the year have been strong (up 87% and 38% respectively year-on-year), new U.S. beef sales during the week ending 2/27 were -8% from the previous week and -26% from the prior 4-week average. New reported sales to **Japan, Korea** and **HK** all noticeably dropped from previous weeks, but were up to **Taiwan**, an area where local foodservice was also sharply affected by coronavirus fears in early February. Both pork exports and sales continued strong during the final week of February, with shipments to China of 17,530 tons being one of the largest weekly volumes ever. Outstanding sales to China for this year (product sold but not yet shipped) exceeds 195 thousand tons. Despite CoVID-19, China remains short of pork due to ASF, and analysts' forecasts that 2020 will see Chinese imports significantly exceed the record volumes of 2019 remain in place.





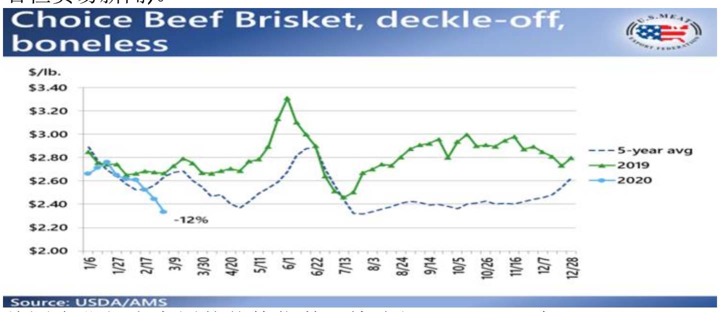
ACTIVITIES:
SIAL, Shanghai: May 13-15, 2020
Food Taipei, Taiwan: June 17-20, 2020

美 国 肉 品 新 知

2020 年 3 月 10 日　第十二卷 3.2 期

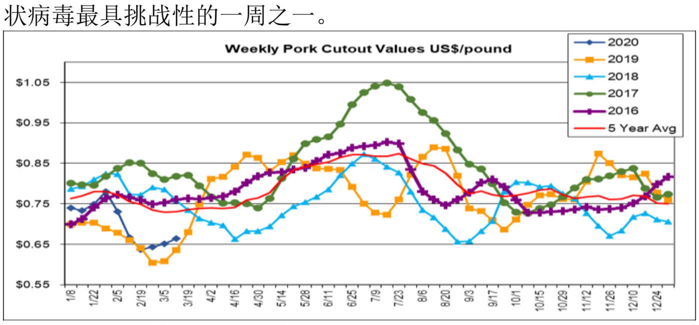
供应与需求

上周五牛肉分切价格与上上周收盘价格大致持平。市场气氛喜忧参半；零售业者正寻求增加其库存，这是因为新型冠状病毒导致消费者在家进餐的需求增加，以及临近的春季季节性烧烤需求。而从负面的角度来看，冠状病毒对餐饮业需求带来不好的影响。大型活动酒席会最先受到影响，举例来说，波士顿将取消圣派翠克节(3 月 17 日)游行。消费者对牛前胸肉的需求通常在圣派翠克节之前走强，但该部位肉的批发原始价格持续下跌，且大大低於最近 5 年的平均水平(见下图)。牛群方面，交易热络的股票市场大跌导致已肥育活牛价格和期货价格走跌。可以肯定的是，市场买卖波动大，参与者以不同角度去观察市场。期货价格走低吸引锁定低成本牛肉供应的加工商、零售业者、餐饮业者和出口商。另一方面，随着新型冠状病毒对美国经济所带来的影响的不确定性越来越大，市场投资者已经对一系列商品采取恐慌性抛售模式。熊市目前仍摇摆不定。截至上周五，已肥育活牛价格在过去 7 周中下跌 8.9%，跌至 2011 年 3 月初以来的最低水平。期货价格下跌幅度更大；昨天 4 月已肥育活牛期货价格为每英担 102.85 元，较 1 月 23 日时的价格下跌 17%。若说崩溃的市场还存有一丝希望，那会是屠宰业者在今年这个时候享受着创纪录的高利润，并正屠宰大量的牛只，这将有助於避免大量的牛只在养头数库存。上周箱装牛肉价格稳定，鉴於供应量增加，这是一正面的迹象；美国牛肉产量比年初增长 3.3%。上周屠宰量为 647,000 头牛只，与上上周相比增长 3.2%，与去年同期相比增长 6.6%。牛只屠体重量为 1,379 磅，比去年同期增加 35 磅，这表明牛只和牛肉业者需要积极的屠宰计画以维持市场当前的状况和供需平衡。美国牛肉出口表现强劲，但上周出口销售报告显示亚洲采购牛肉的速度略有减缓，尽管每周数据并没有显示趋势(见右栏贸易新闻)。



美国农业部牛肉屠体价格指数 (特选级)：2020 年 3 月 9 日 - $207.36 美元/百磅 (较 2020 年 3 月 2 日增加小於 1%)

尽管在有关新型冠状病毒的悲观消息、高屠宰量和猪只较重的情况下，上周猪肉分切价格再次走强。在上周连续 5 个交易日上涨後，昨日活猪期货价格因股市和商品市场下跌而陷入困境。目前熊市中猪肉价格仍坚挺的原因难以辨明，但其中一看涨的消息是：自从上周初中国予以进口商品免税後，大量美国猪肉开始以较低的关税清关。根据中国海关当局，这些免税令将持续 1 年。中国的港口运营也将会更加顺畅；美国农业部每周销售报告显示，在 2 月 20 日至 27 日期间，有大量的美国猪肉出口至中国，当周是中国对抗新型冠状病毒最具挑战性的一周之一。



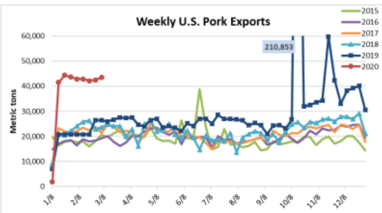
猪屠体分切价格：2020 年 3 月 9 日— $67.95 美元/ 百磅 (较 2020 年 3 月 2 日增加 2%)

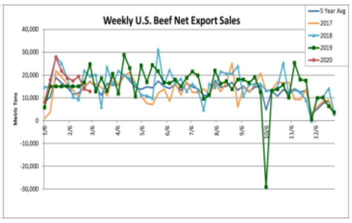
产业新知

面对来自植物性肉类替代品(PBMA)日益激烈的竞争，美国肉类行业领导者呼吁采用更积极的消息传递方法。最近年度 Power of Meat 研究发现，在美国经常食用 PBMA 的消费者中有 50%表示他们这麽做是因为考量到自身的健康状况，而 36%认为 PBMA 是良好的蛋白质来源。在先前的美国肉品新知中，我们提到按每一份量成本计算，大多数原料肉和禽肉的价格要低於具有相同蛋白质含量的 PBMA。於去年秋天，Washington Post 总结按磅计算，Impossible Burger(IB) 的价格是牛绞肉的 4 倍；此外，四盎司 IB 含 19 克蛋白质，而 3.5 盎司瘦牛绞肉则含有 26 克。重要的不只在於蛋白质含量；营养学家和肉类科学家也指出，肉类和 PBMA 中的蛋白质质量差异很大。比较评估肉类和 PBMA 的营养益处需要分析氨基酸含量和生物利用度或消化率。进食时，蛋白质会分解为氨基酸，这对於体内几乎所有代谢过程都是必不可少的。食物中必须含有 9 种所谓的「必要」氨基酸。通常动物性蛋白包含了我们所需且均衡的所有氨基酸，但某些植物性蛋白的氨基酸含量较低，例如蛋氨酸(methionine)、色氨酸(tryptophan)、赖氨酸(lycine)和异亮氨酸(isoleucine)。亮氨酸(leucine)被认为是驱动肌肉蛋白质合成的关键。一般而言，动物性蛋白中的亮氨酸比例(9-13%)比大多数植物性蛋白(6-8%)要高。肉类也包含重要的胺基酸-胶原蛋白：胶原蛋白是人体中最丰富的蛋白质，也是维持头发，指甲和皮肤组织健康的关键。大量研究指出：摄取高质量和全面的蛋白质可优化全身和骨骼肌的蛋白质代谢，且摄入高质量蛋白质对於蛋白质合成率较低的老年人是非常重要的。科学研究也证实了动物性蛋白质的消化率比植物性蛋白质更高和更快。业界进一步的挑战将是如何以易於理解的方式将这些科学信息传达给广大消费者。

贸易新闻

全球红肉和禽肉贸易商持续密切地关注因冠状病毒传播所可能导致潜在的贸易中断。中国是病毒爆发的原点，该国每天新感染的人数持续减少；湖北省以外地区新增病例已下降至个位数。尽管一些餐厅已经恢复营业，许多人依然维持社交疏离使得交通量仍疲软；这导致蛋白质在主要地区的批发市场和冷藏柜囤积，并且减缓货柜从港口至国内冷藏柜的运输速度。随着疫情爆发，**韩国**和**日本**的餐饮服务流量也暴跌。不幸的是，根据市场每个月贸易数据发布会滞後 4 至 6 周，但美国分析师正密切关注美国农业部出口销售数据以找到运输和国外销售活动变化的线索。上周四的报告包括了截至 2 月 27 日当周的出口数据，情况好坏参半。虽然今年前 8 周猪肉和牛肉出口量(仅肌肉)均表现强劲(与去年同期相比分别增长 87%和 38%)，但在 2 月 27 日当周，美国牛肉销量比 1 周前减少 8%，与 4 周前的平均水平相比减少 26%。新的数据显示美国至**日本**、**韩国**和**香港**的销量均较前几周明显减少，但至**台湾**的销量增加；2 月初台湾当地餐饮业也因市民对新型冠状病毒的恐惧而受到严重影响。在 2 月最後一周，猪肉出口和销量均维持强劲：至中国的出口量为 17,530 吨，是有史以来最大的每周出口量之一。今年至中国的杰出销售量(已售出但尚未出口的产品)超过 195,000 吨。尽管新型冠状病毒(CoVID-19)爆发，中国仍因非洲猪瘟使得国内猪肉供应短缺；分析人士预测，至 2020 年中国进口量将远超 2019 年时的创纪录水平。





美国肉类出口协会活动预告:
中国国际食品及饮料展 — 上海：2020 年 5 月 13-15 日
台北国际食品展 — 台湾：2020 年 6 月 17-20 日