8-10-1961

Montana's beef industry

University of Montana–Missoula. Office of University Relations

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What does the beef industry mean to Montana's economy?

Measured by the gross income it creates, it is one of the most stalwart supports of the state economy, according to a study published by the Montana State University Bureau of Business and Economic Research. The MSU report was written by Maxine C. Johnson, assistant director of the bureau, in cooperation with the Montana Stockgrowers Association.

In 1957, the estimated total gross income from the production, processing and marketing of beef in Montana was $162.1 million, the MSU economist writes. By far the largest part of this amount - $152.9 million - came from beef cattle production on Montana farms and ranches. The value added by packing houses and retailers' margins accounted for the remaining $9.2 million.

Nearly all this money was re-spent in Montana, thus creating additional income and employment, Mrs. Johnson says.

The thousands of cattle operations throughout the state represent an investment at current prices of approximately a billion dollars, according to the report. They employ some 15,000 persons, including owner-operators, family labor and hired workers.

Copies of "Beef Cattle in the Montana Economy" are available at the MSU Bureau of Business and Economic Research. The 30-page booklet reports in detail on the contributions of beef to "beefing up" the economy and includes sections on current conditions and historical development of the industry.

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