World red meat supplies are expected to expand by about 6.5% in 1982, following small declines in both 1981 and 1980, says the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Higher beef production in countries, such as the United States and Mexico, may offset a significant decline in beef production in Argentina, and smaller pork production in the United States and other countries. Generally weaker economies in many of the developed countries and relatively higher consumption of poultry meat are discouraging demand for red meats, resulting in weaker prices and less international trade. Imports of red meat by the countries are seen falling 0.5% in 1982, while exports will gain almost 1% as certain countries, such as several in the Middle East, increase imports.

Cattle numbers are forecast at 947 million head for the start of 1982, a growth of approximately 0.4% during 1981. Growth during 1980 was roughly 0.5%.

The United States is expected to show the largest increase in numbers at the start of 1982.