

## DORCHESTER COUNTY, MD.

Dorchester County lies in the southeastern part of Maryland with its western boundary being formed by the Chesapeake Bay and some of its estuaries. This county and Somerset County, Md., were selected for study as representing tidewater areas in which there were opportunities for employment in the fishing industry.

Dorchester County has an approximate land area of 368,640 acres, or 576 square miles, of which 55.1 percent in 1935 was represented by land in farms. The 1930 population was 26,813 persons, of which 68.1 percent was classed as rural. Of the rural population, 43.1 percent was ascertained to be rural-farm and the remaining 56.9 percent to be rural-nonfarm. Cambridge, the county seat, had a total population of 8,544 inhabitants. Male persons 10 years old and over engaged in gainful occupations numbered 8,514, of which 5,238 were employed in nonagricultural pursuits distributed as follows:

	Number	Percent
<b>Nonagricultural</b> .....	<b>5,238</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Forestry and fishing (forestry—144).....	852	16.3
Manufacturing and mechanical industries.....	2,143	40.9
Building.....	566	10.8
Food and allied.....	474	9.0
Metal.....	217	4.1
Lumber and furniture.....	325	6.2
Other manufacturing and mechanical.....	561	10.7
Transportation.....	660	12.6
Trade.....	883	16.9
Professional service.....	217	4.1
Domestic and personal service.....	215	4.1
All other and industry not specified.....	268	5.1

The 1935 Farm Census recorded 1,961 farms in the county, of which 1,518 were in the control of white operators and 443 were in the control of colored operators. The median size of farm for all operators was 75 acres, for white operators 85 acres, and for colored operators 30 acres. A smaller percentage of the white operators were engaged in off-farm work than of the colored operators, the percentages being 30.5 and 44 respectively. Disregarding color of operator, the proportion of all full-owner operators engaged in off-farm work was 34.6 percent as compared with 29.9 percent for all tenants, while the median size of farm for the former group was 57 acres and for the latter group was 100 acres. Both color of operator and tenure of operator, then, assume some importance in a study of part-time farming in this county.

Grains and truck crops predominate in this county as 29.6 percent of the harvested acreage was in corn, 27.3 percent in wheat, and 23.1 percent in vegetables for sale. Without regard to color or tenure, operators

of the non-part-time group used a higher proportion of their land for the production of crops than was true for the part-time group, the percentages being 34.9 and 28.9. As between the two groups of farms, the latter had a little higher percentage of its crop land in corn, Irish potatoes, sweetpotatoes, fruit orchards, and vegetables for sale than the former but these were off-set in a large measure by a smaller proportion of crop land in wheat. Ninety-six percent of the farms in the non-part-time group harvested a crop of some kind as compared with 90 percent of the farms in the part-time group. A higher proportion of the farms in the former group produced each crop included in the study, with the exception of sweetpotatoes, than was true of the latter group.

The following percentages represent the proportion of the non-part-time farms which had one or more head of the various classes of livestock included in this study: Horses and/or mules 82, cattle 74, cows milked 69, sheep 10, hogs 50, and chickens 87. The corresponding percentages of 54, 50, 41, 3, 32, and 76 for part-time farms were smaller in each case than those for the above group. As an average for the farms reporting, farms of the former group had 3 horses and/or mules while those of the latter group had only 2; farms of the former group had 7 cattle and those of the latter 4; those of the former had 5 hogs and of the latter 3; and those of the former had 92 chickens and of the latter 59.

In tables 42 to 44, some of the information for the nonagricultural group is classified by suboccupation. Although little comment is given relative thereto, particular attention is invited to this series of tables. Some of the data given in the two preceding tables have been repeated in these to afford a better opportunity for comparison. As shown above, this county was selected to represent an area in which there were opportunities for employment in the fishing industry. Also as just shown, 16 percent of all males gainfully employed in 1930 were engaged in forestry and fishing (practically all of which was fishing). Of the 430 farm reports in 1935 in which the occupation was classified as non-agricultural, 98 operators, or 23 percent, were represented as having fishing as their principal occupation at outside work. As may be noted, an occupation of "laborer" was given for nearly half of the farm operators reporting outside work nonagricultural in character. Caution is given that where the number of reports for a suboccupation or time group is small that the derived data may not warrant definite conclusions.

**DORCHESTER CO., MARYLAND**

