

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

JESSE H. JONES, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

J. C. CAPT, Director (Appointed May 22, 1941)

WILLIAM LANE AUSTIN, Director (Retired January 31, 1941)

PHILIP M. HAUSER, Assistant Director



SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1940

AGRICULTURE

SPECIAL COTTON REPORT

**Farms reporting, acreage, and production
and value of farm products
by number of bales harvested**

With statistics for counties and a summary for the United States

Prepared under the supervision of
ZELLMER R. PETTET
Chief Statistician for Agriculture

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Washington, D. C., December 14, 1942

SIR:

I transmit herewith for publication a compilation from the Census of Agriculture Returns of the Sixteenth Decennial Census entitled "Special Cotton Report." This report gives information by number of bales harvested, and by counties, for farms reporting cotton harvested, acreage and production of cotton, and value of farm products.

Provision for the Sixteenth Decennial Census was made in the Act providing for the Fifteenth and subsequent Decennial Censuses which was approved June 18, 1929.

The collection and compilation of these statistics and the preparation of this volume were under the supervision of Z. R. Pettet, Chief Statistician for Agriculture, assisted by Sherman S. Slick, Assistant Chief Statistician, Warder B. Jenkins, Chief of Technical Staff, and Hilton E. Robison, Principal Statistician.

Acknowledgment is made of the cooperation of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Farm Security Administration of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Respectfully,

J. C. Capt,
Director of the Census

HON. JESSE H. JONES,
Secretary of Commerce

SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1940

Reports on Agriculture, Irrigation, and Drainage

Volume I.—Statistics by Counties for Farms, and Farm Property, with Related Information for Farm and Farm Operators; Livestock and Livestock Products; and Crops. (six parts)

Part 1.—New England, Middle Atlantic, and East	Part 4.—East South Central States
2.—West North Central States	5.—West South Central States
3.—South Atlantic States	6.—Mountain and Pacific States

Volume II.—Statistics by Counties for Value of Farm Products, Farms Classified by Major Source of Income, and Farms Classified by Total Value of Products (three parts).

Part 1.—Northern States	Part 2.—Southern States	Part 3.—Western States
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Volume III.—General Report—Statistics by Subjects for the United States, Geographic Divisions, and States (one volume)

Chapter I.—Farms and Farm Property	Chapter VI.—Cooperation, Labor, Expenditures, Machinery, Facilities, and Residence
II.—Size of Farms	VII.—Livestock and Livestock Products
III.—Color, Tenure, and Race of Farm Operators	VIII.—Field Crops and Vegetables
IV.—Farm Mortgages and Farm Taxes	IX.—Fruits and Nuts and Horticultural Specialties
V.—Work off Farm, Age, and Years on Farm	X.—Value of Farm Products

United States Summary Bulletins.—Statistics for the United States, Geographic Divisions, and States in condensed form as follows:

First Series Summary—Number of Farms, Uses of Land, Values, Principal Classes of Livestock and Livestock Products; and Specified Crops Harvested.
Second Series Summary—Farm Mortgages, Taxes, Labor, Expenditures, and Miscellaneous Farm Information; Goats and Mohair; and Fruits, Vegetables, and Minor Crops.
Third Series Summary—Value of Farm Products, Farms Classified by Major Source of Income, and Farms Classified by Total Value of Products.

Special Poultry Report.—Statistics by Geographic Divisions and States for Poultry of All Kinds on Hand and Raised; by Counties for Chickens and Chicken Egg Production by Number of Chickens on Hand; and by Counties for Farms Reporting Chickens and Turkeys Raised by Numbers Raised (one volume).

Cows Milked and Dairy Products.—Number of Cows Milked, Milk Produced, Disposition of Dairy Products, and Number of Cows Kept Mainly for Milk Production, Classified by Number of Cows Milked, by Counties; with Related Data for Other Classes of Livestock and Livestock Products for the States and also for the United States. (one volume)

Territories and Possessions.—Farms and Farm Property, Livestock and Livestock Products, and Crops (one volume). (Separate agricultural bulletins are available for Hawaii and Puerto Rico).

Territories:	Possessions:	
Alaska	American Samoa	Puerto Rico
Hawaii	Guam	Virgin Islands of the United States

Irrigation of Agricultural Lands.—Statistics by Drainage Basins and by Counties for 20 Irrigation States and a Summary for the United States (one volume).

Twenty Separate State Maps Showing Irrigation by Drainage Basins.
A Separate Composite Map Showing Irrigation by Drainage Basins.

Drainage of Agricultural Lands.—Statistics for 38 Drainage States with County Data for 36 States and a Summary for the United States (one volume).

A Separate Map of the United States Showing Location of Land in Drainage Enterprises for 38 States.

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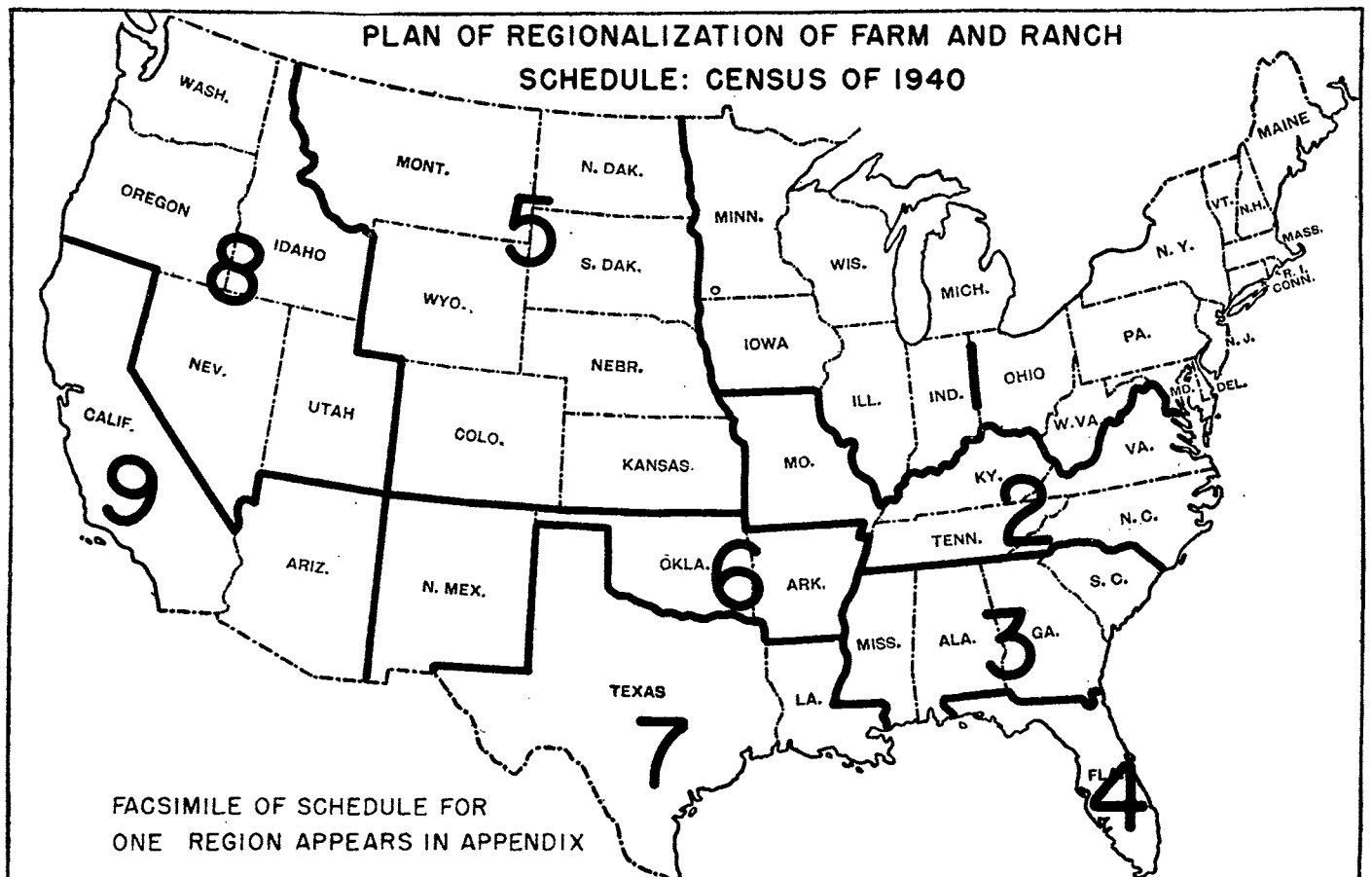
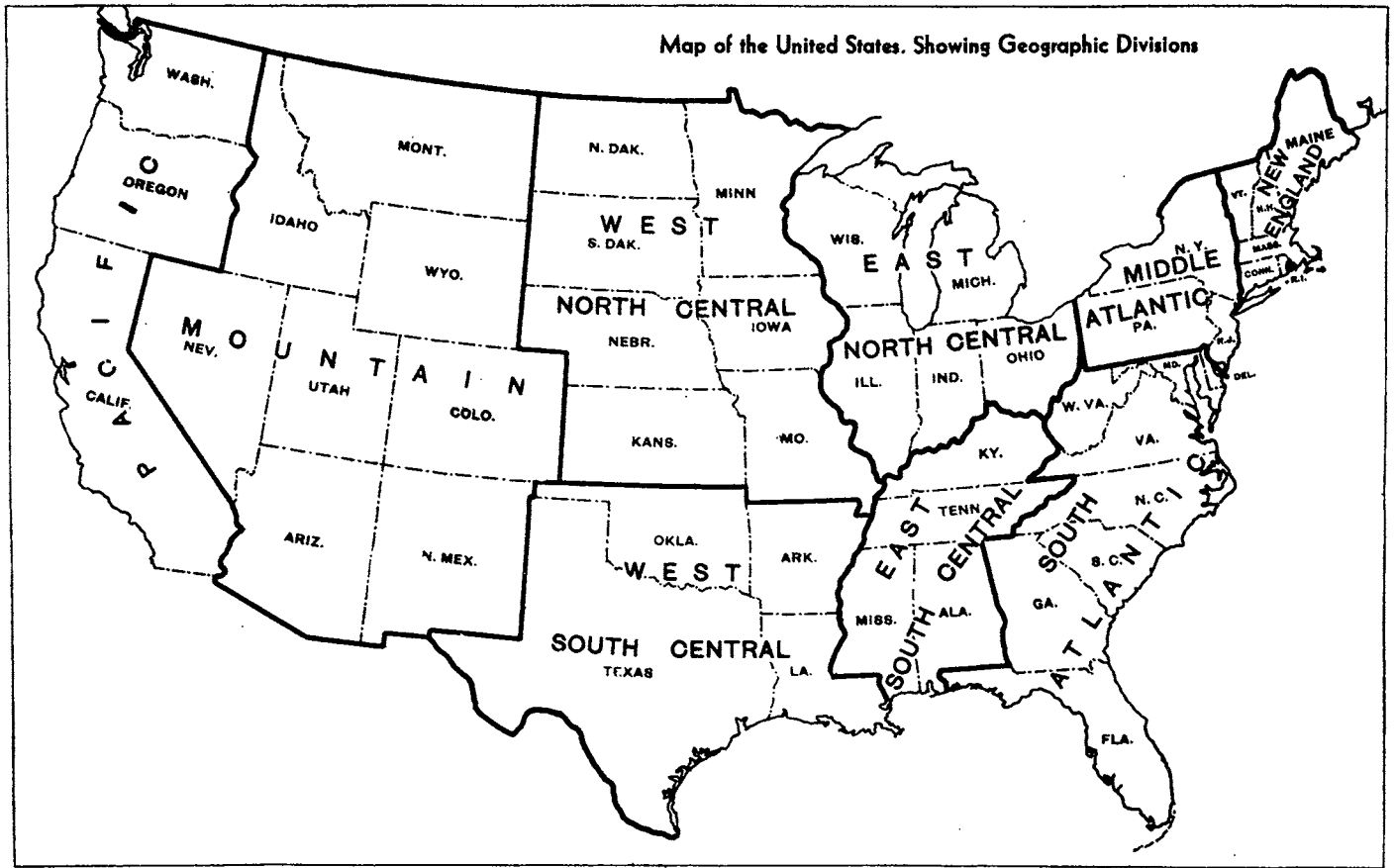
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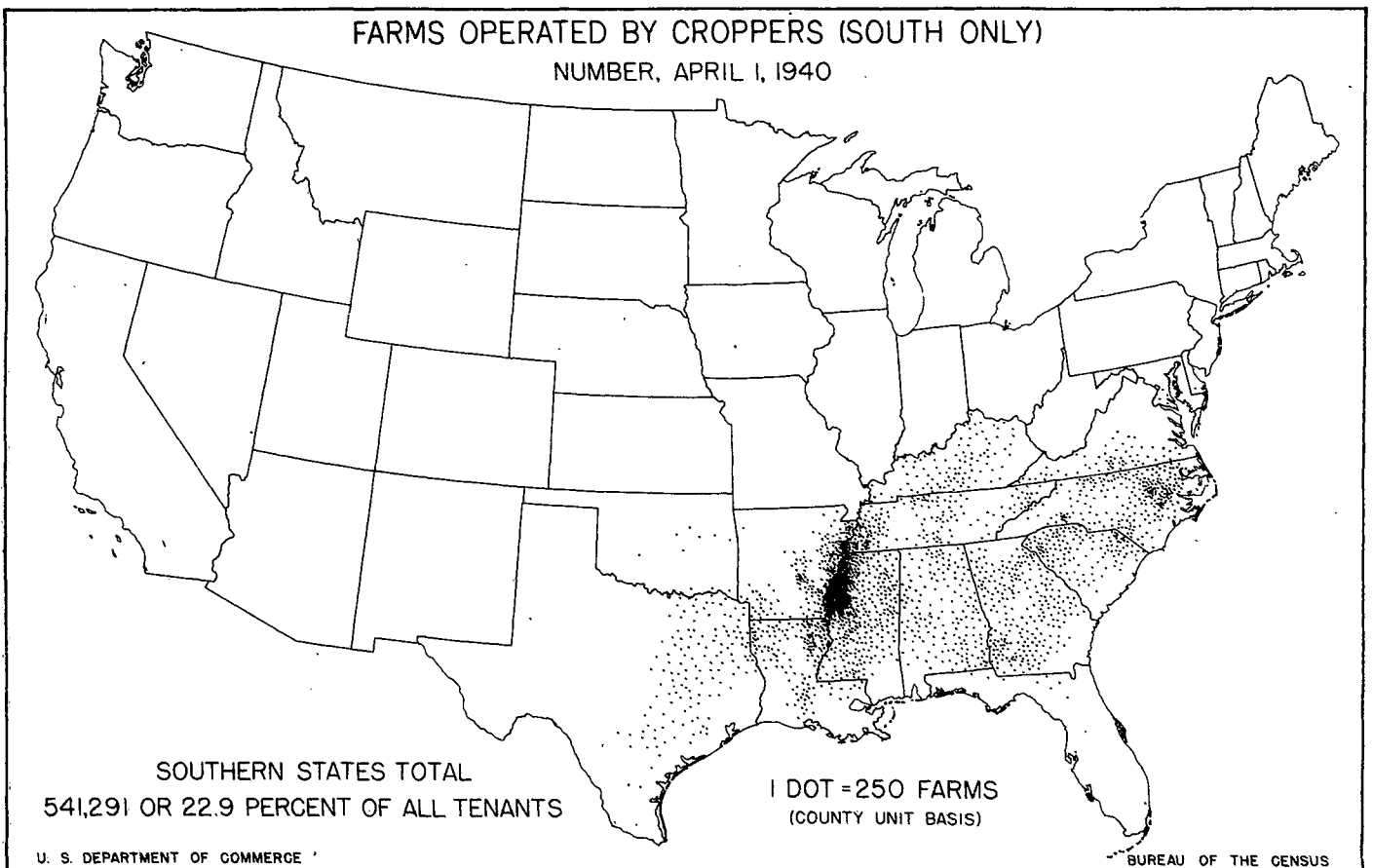
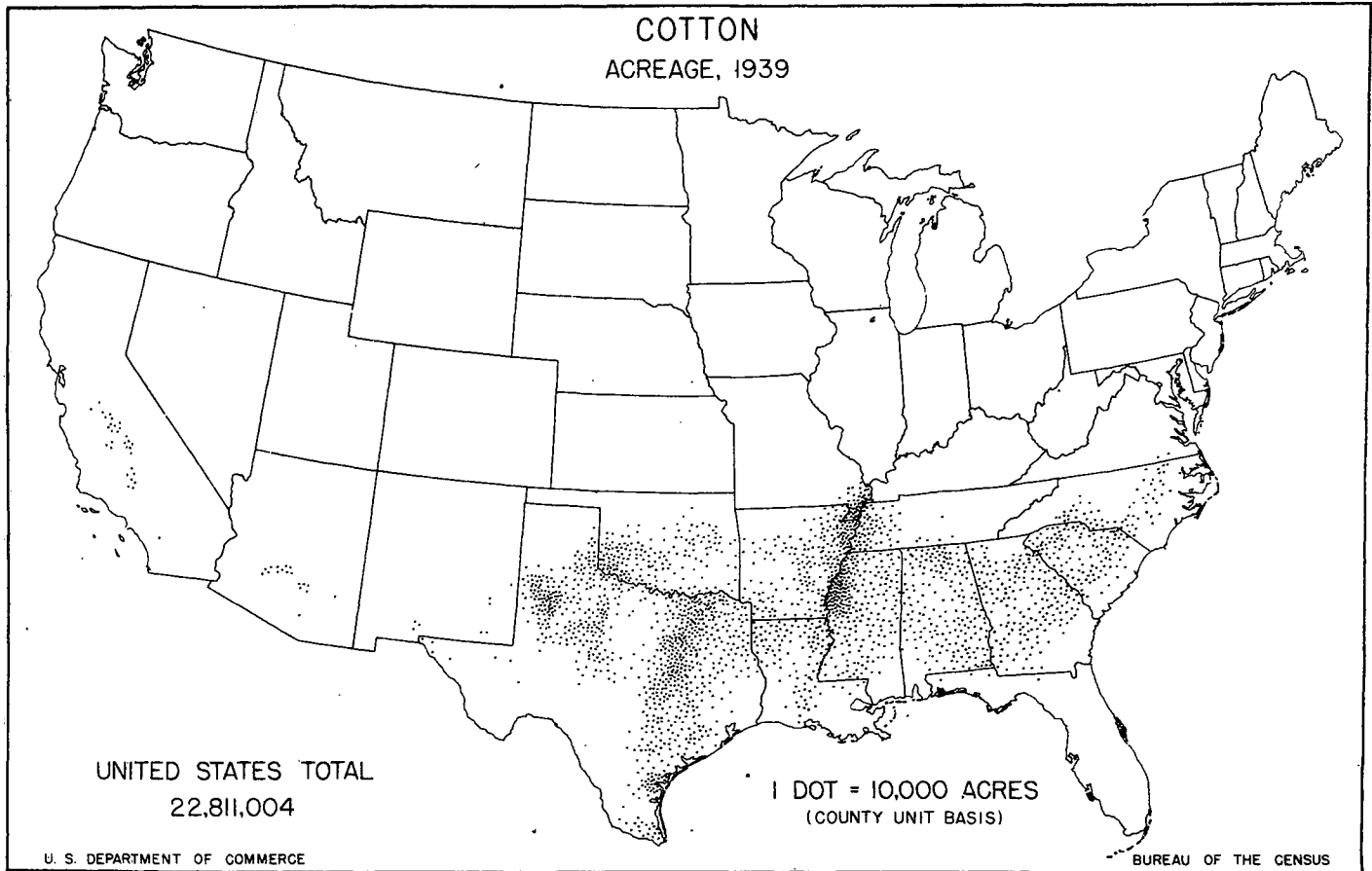
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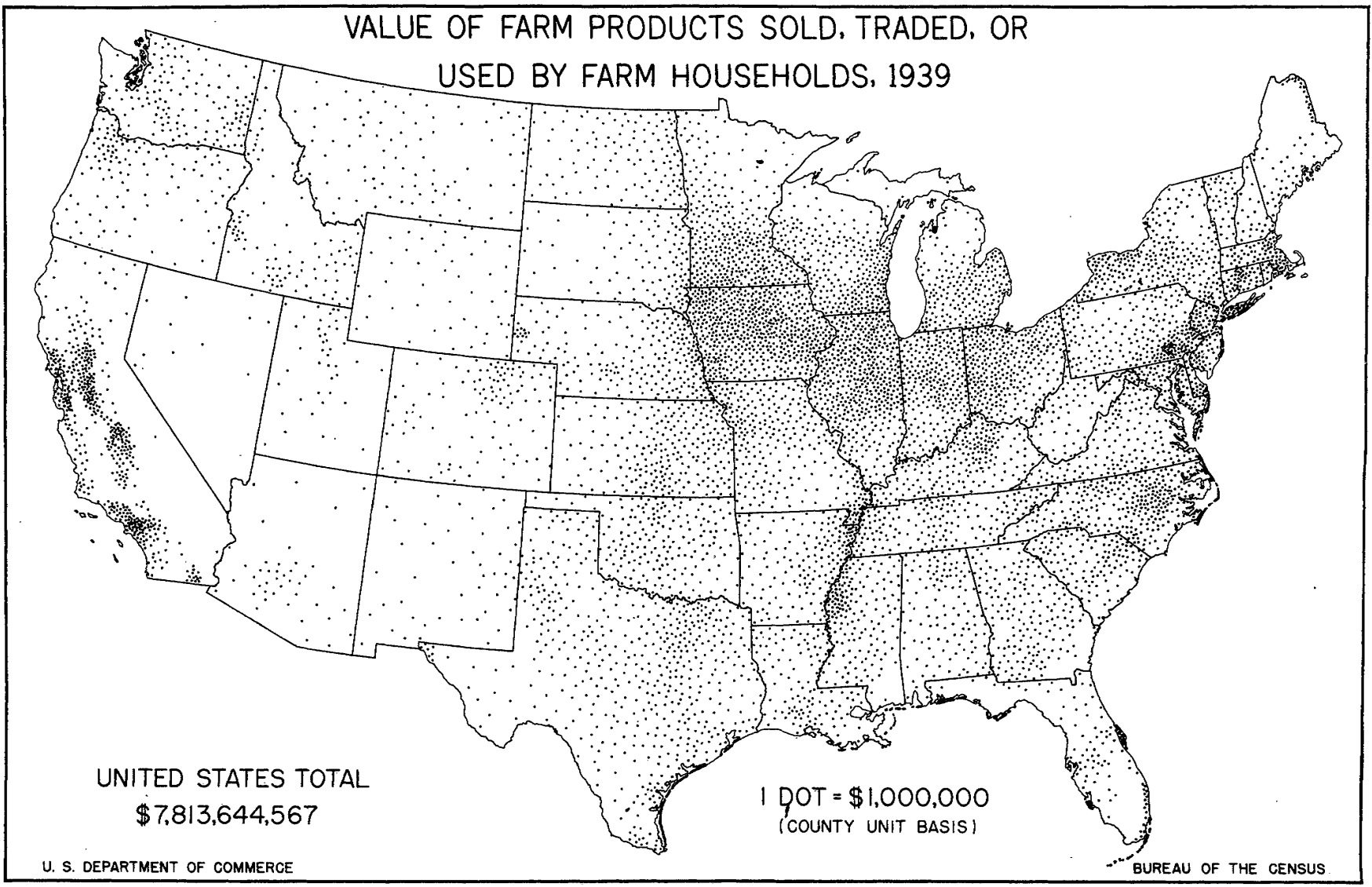


SPECIAL COTTON REPORT



X

VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, TRADED, OR
USED BY FARM HOUSEHOLDS, 1939



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE: 1940

SPECIAL COTTON REPORT

This special report contains data from the 1940 Census of Agriculture for cotton harvested, by bale groups, for cotton counties, States, and geographic divisions. The lowest production group is one bale or less and the highest group is 500 or more bales. For each of these groups pertinent additional information is shown for farms reporting acreage and the income of the farms from eight principal sources.

This tabulation was made at the urgent request of various agencies including the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and Farm Security Administration, and the major costs were borne by them. The information was necessary to meet Congressional inquiries and to help solve many social, economic, and administrative problems.

Method of Canvass.—In the 1940 Census of Agriculture, as for each census of agriculture beginning with 1900, a separate schedule was required for every farm in the United States. The data, therefore, are the results obtained from the tabulation of the information given by farm operators to census enumerators in a personal canvass of the individual farms.

Definition of a Farm.—"A farm, for Census purposes, is all the land on which some agricultural operations are performed by one person, either by his own labor alone or with the assistance of members of his household, or hired employees. The land operated by a partnership is likewise considered a farm. A 'farm' may consist of a single tract of land, or a number of separate tracts, and the several tracts may be held under different tenures, as when one tract is owned by the farmer and another tract is rented by him. When a landowner has one or more tenants, renters, croppers, or managers, the land operated by each is considered a farm. Thus, on a plantation the land operated by each cropper, renter, or tenant should be reported as a separate farm, and the land operated by the owner or manager by means of wage hands should likewise be reported as a separate farm."

Included are dry-lot or barn dairies, nurseries, greenhouses, hatcheries, fur farms, mushroom cellars, apiaries, cranberry bogs, etc. Excluded are "fish farms," fish hatcheries, "oyster farms," and "frog farms."

Any tract of land of less than 3 acres should not be reported as a farm, unless its agricultural products in 1939 were valued at \$250 or more.

The term "ranch" is used to apply to certain types of agricultural operations, principally livestock, and operations of this kind are counted as "farms" by the Census Bureau.

Method of Determining Source of Income.—The 1940 Farm Schedule provided 10 separate questions to obtain the value of farm products sold,

traded, or used by farm households. These questions were distributed among the crop and livestock questions, each value question following the crop or livestock item upon which the value was based. This schedule plan and the mechanical summarization permitted, for the first time, convenient cross tabulations, by machine, of various items based on the value of farm sales and the value of products used by farm households. The value information obtained directly from the farmer was used to classify the farms by major source of income.

In general the statistics on total value of farm products sold, traded, or used by farm households represent an approximate measure of gross farm income. If the value of farm products used by farm households is excluded from the totals, the resulting figures on value of farm products sold or traded represent an approximation of cash farm income. The user of these value statistics should keep in mind, however, that this income is for the farm and not for the farmer. Thus, in the case of a cropper working for half of the crop, the farmer would get only one-half of the amount indicated as the gross income of the farm. It is not possible to compute net income from Census figures as a complete list of expenditures was not obtained. Neither do the income figures mentioned include Government benefit payments or income from non-agricultural sources.

Cross Line Acreage.—The location of the farm recorded by the enumerator is that of the farmstead or working headquarters. This will explain varying county figures for cotton production and ginning. Additional information for operations which extend beyond the boundaries of the minor civil division or county is given in a special study entitled "Cross Line Acreage."

Those interested in further details of the method of enumeration, tabulation, and the recording of value of farm products, sales and home use of farm products should refer to Volumes of the Census of Agriculture, particularly Volume II, General Reports on Value of Farm Products, Sixteenth Census.

The growing of cotton presents many problems which are different in numerous respects from other agriculture. The basic definitions and classifications, however, are the same.

Farms Growing Cotton Distinguished From "Cotton Farms."—While the definition of a farm has not changed materially in several decades, the meaning of the words "cotton farms" has altered greatly. The term "cotton farms" was once almost synonymous with the term "farms growing cotton," because of the "one crop" nature of cotton growing in most of the South. With the advent of the boll weevil diversification set in

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and, in connection with various programs, campaigns for food crops, crop rotation, and soil improvement, the acreage of cotton per unit, or per tenant, decreased and the acreage of food and feed crops increased. Other types of farming became profitable and numerous, so that by 1940 the number of farms deriving their principal income from cotton had greatly decreased. This will explain why sixty-two percent of the farms growing cotton in the United States produced less than five bales.

In 1930 there were 1,986,726 farms growing cotton, with the number of farms technically described as "cotton farms" numbering 1,640,025. By 1940 the number of farms reporting the growing of cotton was 1,589,723, while the number of farms in the cotton area deriving their principal income from any field crop was 1,429,063; that is, farms deriving their income from cotton or from any other field crop such as tobacco, wheat, grain sorghum, etc.

The Tenure System, the Plantation, the Farm, and the Cropper.—In any cotton tabulation designed to show the significant characteristics, the size of the operating unit is of prime importance. Two possible units are offered: that which accords the cropper and small tenant the place as a farm operator, and the plantation unit which includes operations of owners, croppers, and other tenants combined in one farm enterprise, and which closely resembles the old antebellum organization. After the Civil War the planters were forced to provide for labor under the cropper system. Under this arrangement the landlord furnished the land, the work animals, made advances of food for the worker's family and supervised the cultivation and usually retained legal title to the crop. The cropper furnished the labor of himself and family. Both the landlord and cropper shared the risk.

A wide difference of opinion exists as to whether this arrangement is really a form of tenure

or whether the "croppers" are merely laborers. Different States have varied laws on this subject—one, Alabama, making the cropper an independent operator with certain legal rights, etc., others making him akin to a laborer.

The Census of 1940 followed the conventional plan and reported the croppers as farm operators, not only in order to retain comparability of statistics but for a number of other important reasons. Among these are: The necessity to consider the legal status, the fact that the cropper shared the risk, that in reality, from an economic viewpoint, he was a small-scale "entrepreneur," and that his entire family worked the crop; also there were varying degrees of title to the cotton and the cottonseed; that croppers merge in an almost indistinguishable manner with some types of "other" tenants who have many of the croppers' characteristics; that a change would entirely upset sociological, labor, and agricultural statistics because the other characteristics of croppers—age, marital status, number of children, farm practices, etc.—usually differ greatly from those of wage hands and of most tenants on the plantation. In the so-called agricultural ladder croppers occupy a position midway between wage hands and share tenants.

With the coming of the boll weevil, Negro migration, hard times, low cotton prices, tractors and power machinery, and mechanical cotton pickers, the tendency has been away from the simple cropper system to wage hands or a complicated share system, and this has made it more difficult to define a farm so that it could be satisfactorily enumerated and tabulated.

The statistics presented in this study are in harmony with the definitions and classifications used in the Agricultural Census Volumes. Various *group* totals include fractional acreages and bales, but the fractions are not shown in the respective groups.