

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

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**BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**

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

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

VERGIL D. REED, Assistant Director

HOWARD H. McCLURE, Assistant Director



**SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES : 1940**

# **AGRICULTURE**

## **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

Prepared under the supervision of

**ZELLMER R. PETTET**

Chief Statistician for Agriculture

UNITED STATES  
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## 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 Farms and Farm Operators; Livestock and Livestock Products; and Crops.

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.

Volume III.—General Report—Statistics by Subjects for the United States, Geographic Divisions, and States.

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.

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

Drainage of Agricultural Lands.—Statistics by Counties for 36 Drainage States and a Summary for the United States.

### 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.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Washington, D. C., May 7, 1942

SIR:

I transmit herewith the Special Poultry Report, one of the Reports on Agriculture, Sixteenth Decennial Census. This report contains 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. This material was especially requested by the Poultry Commodity Group of the Interdepartmental Conference Committee on National Food Resources and owing to the urgent need of the information was prepared for publication much earlier than it would have been otherwise.

Provision for the 1940 Agriculture Census was made in the Act providing for the Fifteenth Decennial Census which was approved on June 18, 1929. The reports are the results obtained from a tabulation of the information given by farm operators to census enumerators in a personal canvass in connection with the Sixteenth Decennial Census.

The collection and compilation of these statistics and the preparation of this volume were made by the staff of the Division of Agriculture under the supervision of Z. R. Pettet, Chief Statistician for Agriculture with the assistance of Carl R. Nyman, Poultry Statistician.

Acknowledgment is made of the cooperation of representatives of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the Division of Statistical Standards, Bureau of the Budget.

Respectfully,

J. C. CAPT,  
*Director of the Census*

Hon. JESSE H. JONES,  
*Secretary of Commerce*

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County table 2.—Chickens and turkeys raised, with farms reporting by number raised, by counties: 1939	(see State and page below)

STATE	Table 1	Table 2	STATE	Table 1	Table 2	STATE	Table 1	Table 2
	page	page		page	page		page	page
Alabama	56	684	Maine	282	704	Oklahoma	484	721
Arizona	68	685	Maryland	287	705	Oregon	498	723
Arkansas	72	685	Massachusetts	294	705	Pennsylvania	507	725
California	85	687	Michigan	298	705	Rhode Island	525	725
Colorado	101	687	Minnesota	315	707	South Carolina	527	725
Connecticut	113	689	Mississippi	334	708	South Dakota	556	726
Delaware	116	689	Missouri	348	710	Tennessee	548	727
District of Columbia	117	689	Montana	371	712	Texas	564	729
Florida	118	689	Nebraska	381	713	Utah	611	735
Georgia	132	690	Nevada	399	715	Vermont	618	735
Idaho	161	693	New Hampshire	402	715	Virginia	622	734
Illinois	170	694	New Jersey	405	715	Washington	643	735
Indiana	190	695	New Mexico	412	715	West Virginia	653	736
Iowa	210	697	New York	418	716	Wisconsin	663	737
Kansas	231	699	North Carolina	455	717	Wyoming	678	739
Kentucky	250	701	North Dakota	454	719			
Louisiana	271	703	Ohio	464	720			

## SPECIAL POULTRY REPORT

**Introduction.**—This Special Poultry Report includes, for the United States and the individual States, practically all of the published data relating to poultry collected by the Census since the First Census of Agriculture in 1840. Data for the United States appear in text tables 1 and 2; and for each of the 48 States, the District of Columbia, the 9 geographic divisions, and the United States in tables 5 to 17. County table 1, which occupies the greater portion of the report, shows chicken data in groups, classified by numbers of chickens on hand by counties, for the past three censuses; and County table 2 shows for each county the farms reporting chickens and turkeys raised, classified by the numbers raised.

This report was especially requested by the Poultry Commodity Group of the Interdepartmental Conference Committee on National Food Resources and, owing to the urgent need of the material contained, was prepared for early publication.

The 1940 Census of Agriculture exceeded in scope all preceding agricultural censuses by providing means for including in the enumeration of poultry the inventories as of April 1, and the number raised in 1939 of each kind of bird commonly included under the term, "poultry." By providing space for reporting any and all kinds of poultry kept or raised on farms, the 1940 Census included the inventory and numbers raised, of chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, guineas, pigeons, pheasants, quail, etc. Numbers on hand or raised, which the enumerator failed to specify, were tabulated as "unspecified" and are included in the tables combined with scattered reports of peafowls and swans under "Unspecified and other." The named poultry included under "other" are of little economic importance and are in the tables with "unspecified."

Following the practice of recent censuses, hatcheries were included as farms on the Farm and Ranch Schedule in 1940. While none of the printed questions provided space for reporting the operations of a hatchery, other than the value of sales, the enumerators were instructed to prepare schedules for such enterprises and to state the nature of the enterprise on the schedule. The volume of sales was reported under "Value of all poultry, eggs, baby chicks, poults, etc., sold or traded in 1939."

No provision was made for obtaining the number of hatcheries. Because of the overlapping of hatchery operations with other poultry operations it was impossible to segregate all tracts on which a hatchery was being operated. The value of sales of baby chicks, poults, etc., was included in the enumeration with the value of sales of poultry and eggs and is included in the figures for income shown in text tables 3 and 4 and United States tables 15 and 16.

**Plan of Presentation.**—The production of poultry and eggs, due largely to increased specialization during recent decades, has developed, not including the development of the hatchery business, along three main lines, i. e., egg production, "broilers," and turkey raising. Tables showing data by States and geographic divisions are presented for practically all of the items of poultry that have ever been included in the census, and all of the information concerning poultry and poultry products has been brought together and presented for the United States in text tables 1 and 2.

Text table 1 is a presentation showing the actual questions and their arrangements as included on the farm schedules used in every census in which poultry and poultry products have been enumerated. It will be noted that no inquiries of any kind were included in the 1850, 1860, and 1870 Censuses. Since the 1880 Census the inquiries have tended to become more specific and greater in scope and in detail.

Following the text are tables presenting data for the States and geographic divisions, arranged by subjects beginning with chickens. Data from the 1940 Census Reports are shown with comparative figures from earlier censuses when available. Earlier figures are not always directly comparable, but are included in the tables and guarded by footnotes which explain the essential differences.

Two county tables follow the State tables. The first of these presents data from the 1940, 1935, and 1930 Censuses for chickens on hand, eggs produced, chickens raised, and chickens

sold; and the second, from the 1940 Census only, for farms reporting chickens and turkeys raised, by numbers raised in 1939.

In other volumes of the 1940 Census, material is presented covering the entire range of subjects included on the Farm and Ranch Schedule. Statistics for poultry included in volume I consist of county totals for all items included in this volume also county totals for ducks, geese, and guineas. However, no detailed data by size of operations as presented in this report are included. This report supplements the regular Census poultry data by presenting the statistics in a form which will be of increased value in determining the relative importance of counties, States, and other areas, in the field of poultry and egg production. Volume II gives the value of inventory and production items carried on the schedule, and also detailed county data on values of products sold, traded, and used by farm households. This volume also shows the totals for each source of farm income and the number of farms classified by major source of income. Text tables 3 and 4, and United States tables 15 and 16 in this report, are based on information carried in greater detail in volume II.

**Comparability of Statistics.**—The comparability of the statistics from the 1940 Census with those of previous censuses is affected by the wording of the specific inquiries on the schedule, the inclusion or exclusion of related items, the number of questions included, their relative positions, the dates of enumeration, and other factors. In text table 1 can be seen the variations from census to census. Careful study of this table and frequent references to footnotes on other tables are advisable when using any historical figures.

A change in the date of enumeration obviously affects the "On hand" figures for all kinds of poultry. Prior to 1910, June 1 had been the enumeration date. In that year the date was April 15; in 1920, 1925, and 1935, January 1; and in 1930 and 1940, the date was April 1. Since the number of poultry of any kind cannot be expected to remain static, during any period, the difference in dates of enumeration in two succeeding censuses must be taken into account in comparing inventories. The period from January 1 to April 1 is, generally speaking, a period of declining inventories of mature poultry. As a consequence, other items being equal, inventories taken as of these two dates for the same age groups would be expected to differ considerably, being higher on the earlier date. As a further consequence, in the case of chicken and egg production, the ratio of production to chickens on hand would also be affected.

The development of poultry and egg production along the three major lines has been accompanied by, and probably preceded by, highly specialized practices in management and marketing and has resulted in expanding areas of high egg production, chicken raising, and turkey raising. To a lesser degree this is also true of duck raising, but the areas of intensive practice in this respect are comparatively limited. The fact that poultry keeping is no longer a relatively unimportant sideline but has become a specialized operation is strikingly shown in text tables 3 and 4 and United States table 16. In Delaware, for example, 87 percent of the income on poultry farms in 1939 was derived from the sale of poultry and poultry products, with no other single source of income representing more than 4 percent. It is apparent, however, that certain definite combinations of other enterprises with poultry are practiced in some States, as illustrated by the relatively large importance of dairy products as a source of income on poultry farms in Wisconsin and Michigan.

Table 15 shows the relationship in each State between the income on poultry farms and the income on all farms. Income from poultry is relatively largest in northeastern United States but some individual States, such as California and Utah, also show high relationships.

**Values.**—In the earlier censuses, values of inventories and production items were obtained by including value questions on the schedules. Beginning with the 1925 Census and in succeeding censuses these questions were discontinued and values calculated by applying a unit price, obtained in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture, to the various items

## CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE: 1940

TABLE 1.—HISTORY OF ENUMERATION OF POULTRY AND POULTRY PRODUCTS—FACSIMILE COPIES OF PORTIONS OF SCHEDULES DEVOTED TO THESE ITEMS IN CENSUSES OF 1840 TO 1940

(Figures in italics are United States totals)

1940 CENSUS

Note.—If this farm has chickens on hand but raised none or produced no eggs in 1939, <b>EXPLAIN</b> .		Number on hand over 4 months old on April 1, 1940	Number raised in 1939
Chickens .....		337,949,145	660,565,663
Turkeys .....		4,361,752	27,933,756
Ducks .....		2,460,087	12,198,820
Other (specify) .....	For kinds and totals see table 2		
Report separately geese, guineas, pigeons, quail, pheasants, etc.			
Total chickens sold (including broilers and fryers) alive or dressed in 1939 .....		Number	300,492,016
Omit any sold as baby chicks.			
Chicken eggs produced in 1939 .....		Dozens	2,391,091,510
Value of all poultry, eggs, baby chicks, poults, etc., sold or traded in 1939. (Omit cents) .....		\$	555,411,698

1935 CENSUS	
Chickens over 5 months old on this farm, Jan. 1, 1935 .....	Number 371,603,136
Chicken eggs produced in 1934, whether sold, used, incubated, or otherwise disposed of .....	Dozens 2,160,906,310
Chickens raised on this farm in 1934, whether sold, consumed, or on hand (include baby chicks bought and raised, but none that were sold as baby chicks) .....	Number 598,867,134
Turkeys over 5 months old on this farm, Jan. 1, 1935 .....	Number 5,381,912

1930 CENSUS	
Chickens and chicken eggs on this farm:	
Chickens over 5 months old, April 1, 1930 .....	Number 378,878,281
Chicken eggs produced in 1929 whether sold, used, incubated, or otherwise disposed of .....	Dozens 2,689,719,158
Chicken eggs sold in 1929 .....	Dozens 1,955,459,439
Daily production of chicken eggs on this farm at present time .....	Number 182,315,129 (Not dozens)
Chickens raised in 1929, whether sold, consumed, or on hand (include baby chicks bought and raised, but none that were sold as baby chicks) .....	Number 673,092,052
Chickens sold alive or dressed in 1929 (omit any sold as baby chicks) .....	Number 284,625,901
Baby chicks bought in 1929 .....	Number 272,403,962
Other poultry raised on this farm in 1929:	
Geese raised .....	Number 3,989,831
Ducks raised .....	Number 11,337,487
Turkeys raised .....	Number 16,794,485

1925 CENSUS	
Poultry on this farm Jan. 1, 1925:	
Chickens .....	Number 409,290,849
Turkeys .....	Number Not available
Poultry products in 1924:	
Chicken eggs produced in 1924 .....	Dozens 1,913,245,129
Include all chicken eggs produced, whether sold, used, incubated, or otherwise disposed of.	
Chickens raised in 1924 .....	Number 545,848,035
Include all chickens raised, whether sold, consumed, or on hand; except "baby chicks" hatched and sold. Include baby chicks purchased and raised.	

1920 CENSUS		
Poultry, January 1, 1920:	Number.	Total Value.
Chickens .....	359,537,127	\$ 349,508,867
Turkeys .....	3,627,028	12,804,989
Ducks .....	2,817,624	3,273,866
Geese .....	2,939,203	5,428,806
Guinea fowls .....	2,410,421	1,582,313
Pigeons .....	1,493,630	527,576
Eggs and chickens:	Quantity.	Total Value.
Eggs produced in 1919 (include only chicken eggs produced, whether sold, used, incubated, or otherwise disposed of) .....	Doz. 1,654,044,932	x x x
Eggs sold in 1919 produced on this farm .....	Doz. 1,010,813,258	\$ 404,562,912
Chickens raised in 1919 (include all chickens raised, whether sold, consumed, or on hand) .....	No. 473,200,699	x x x
Chickens sold in 1919 (include those raised on this farm sold alive or dressed) .....	No. 140,811,045	\$ 119,722,603

1910 CENSUS					
Fowls over three months old on farm April 15, 1910:					
KIND.	Number.	Value.	KIND.	Number.	Value.
Chickens	280,340,959	\$ 140,193,129	Geese	4,431,980	\$ 3,194,507
Turkeys	3,688,708	6,605,818	Guinea fowls	1,765,031	613,282
Ducks	2,906,525	1,567,164	Pigeons	2,730,994	762,374
Fowls and eggs produced in 1909:					
Fowls of all kinds raised in 1909, whether sold, consumed, or on hand. Number 482,468,354 Value \$ 202,506,272					
Fowls sold in 1909. Number 153,600,169 Amount received 75,273,524					
Eggs produced in 1909. Number of dozens 1,591,311,371 Value 306,688,960					
Eggs sold in 1909. Number of dozens 926,465,787 Amount received 180,768,249					

1900 CENSUS			
Poultry and eggs: Number of fowls over 3 months old on the farm June 1, 1900. (Report guinea fowl with chickens.)			
Chickens	Turkeys	Geese	Ducks
233,566,021	6,594,695	5,676,788	4,785,850
Value of poultry of all kinds and of all ages on hand June 1, 1900. \$ 85,807,818			
Value of the poultry of all kinds and all ages raised in 1899, whether sold, consumed, or on hand June 1, 1900 \$ 136,830,152			
Dozens of eggs produced in 1899 1,293,862,433			
Total value of all eggs produced in 1899 \$ 144,240,541			

TABLE 1.—HISTORY OF ENUMERATION OF POULTRY AND POULTRY PRODUCTS—FACSIMILE COPIES OF PORTIONS OF SCHEDULES DEVOTED TO THESE ITEMS IN CENSUSES OF 1840 TO 1940.—Continued

(Figures in italics are United States totals)

1890 CENSUS								1880 CENSUS			1870 CENSUS	
POULTRY.								POULTRY ON HAND JUNE 1, 1880, EXCLUSIVE OF SPRING HATCHING.			No inquiries.	
On hand June 1, 1890.				Value of all poultry sold in 1889.	Eggs produced in 1889.	Eggs sold in 1889.	Value of eggs sold in 1889.	Barnyard.	Other.	Eggs produced in 1879.	1860 CENSUS	
Chickens.	Turkeys.	Geese.	Ducks.								No inquiries.	
No.	No.	No.	No.	Dolls.	No.	No.	Dolls.	No.	No.	Doz.	1850 CENSUS	
258,871,125	10,754,060	8,440,175	7,544,080	Not available	819,722,916	Not available	Not available	102,272,125	23,235,187	456,910,916	No inquiries.	
											1840 CENSUS	
											Value of poultry of all kinds.	
											\$ 9,344,410	

included in the enumeration. In most cases the unit value is shown in the tables with the total value in order that the reader may take into consideration the fluctuations in price levels when comparing values.

On the 1940 Farm and Ranch Schedule, for the first time, individual questions were used to obtain the value of sales of each of nine separate classes of farm production, with nine questions used for the value of farm products sold or traded, and one for the value of farm products used by farm households. By means of these questions the information was obtained directly from the farm operator and the replies were used to classify the farms according to the largest or major source of income.

Tables 3, 4, 15, and 16 present data on income from farm products sold, traded, and used by farm households. In these tables income figures have been analyzed to show the relative importance of poultry in comparison with other farm enterprises and also, for poultry farms, the principal sources of income other than from poultry. Table 15 gives a comparison of the income on poultry farms with the income on all farms, presented by States, and table 16 shows for each State the relative importance of additional sources of income on poultry farms.

## EXPLANATION OF COUNTY TABLES

**County Table 1.**—In this table are shown, by counties, data from the last three censuses for chickens on hand, eggs produced, chickens raised, and chickens sold. In order that the information may be more valuable, the tabulations were made in such manner as to show the information for each county in several groups based roughly on size of enterprise. Farms were classified according to the number of chickens on hand on the date of enumeration, and the information for all farms falling within the limits of each group was included in one group of totals. Thus, all farms having less than 25 chickens on hand were included in one group, those with 25 to 49 chickens on hand in the next group, and so on to the largest, which included farms reporting 3,200 or more on hand. By this means of presentation the degree of specialization in different areas becomes more apparent. It is recognized, however, that as of any particular date, the number of chickens on hand that are over 4 months old is not necessarily an accurate measure, in individual cases, of the size or extent of the poultry enterprise, particularly in the case of a farm following the practice of raising chickens for market as meat. On such farms the number of chickens on hand that were over the age specified in each census year usually would be small, and on many of the larger and more highly specialized establishments would be none. As a consequence in many counties, especially in the broiler areas, the average number of chickens raised per farm is larger in the groups of farms having few or no chickens on hand than in the higher groups.

A similar situation exists, although to a lesser degree, in the relation of egg production to the number of chickens on hand. While on most farms in the United States the number of chickens on hand over 4 months old is highest in the fall and declines through the winter and spring, reaching the lowest point in the succeeding summer, the specialized egg producer is varying this cycle usually in one of two ways. He may reduce to a minimum the number of birds in his laying flock in the period of low egg prices in early spring or late winter,

or he may follow the practice of keeping his laying houses as full as possible throughout the year by starting chicks at two or more periods. Since these two procedures tend to offset each other the net effect depends on the practices most common in any given area. Examination of many county figures, particularly where relatively large flocks are found, will show a higher ratio of egg production to chickens on hand in small-sized groups than in medium-sized groups, indicating that some relatively large operations had been included with small operations because of the low inventory of chickens on the date of enumeration.

The increasing concentration of large egg-producing flocks in the northeast States is indicated in these tables. The large egg-producing States in this section had well over twice as many large flocks in 1940 as they had in 1930. A similar tendency to large chicken-raising establishments may be seen in some States in the increased number of birds raised per farm.

**County Table 2.**—In this table is presented, for the first time in any census, a classification of the farms in each county that reported chickens raised and turkeys raised based on the number raised. In this table under "Chickens raised" the total number of farms is divided into groups. The first group includes farms that raised less than 25 chickens in 1939; the second group, those that raised from 25 to 49 chickens; the succeeding groups, 50 to 99; 100 to 199; 200 to 399; 400 to 799; 800 to 1,599; 1,600 to 3,199; and the last group, those that raised 3,200 or more. In some counties where the number of farms reporting in the highest group were so few as to reveal data concerning individual operations, the reports were combined with those of the next highest group.

While a census taken as of the date of this publication would show considerable change in numbers of chickens raised, certain significant items are shown in County table 2 and United States table 9 which in all probability still hold true. Most of the chickens raised in the United States are in comparatively small groups as indicated by the fact that the largest number of farms reporting in any one group was 1,137,442, raising from 50 to 99 chickens each. The number reporting in the next higher group was 1,020,956 farms. Beyond this group the number of farms rapidly decreased. Only 8,879 farms, or 0.2 percent of the total farms reporting, raised more than 3,200 chickens. United States table 10 shows the percent distribution by States of the farms reporting chickens raised and turkeys raised by number raised.

California has the largest number of farms raising 3,200 or more chickens, but Delaware leads in the proportion of farms in this group, with 13 percent. Sussex County, Delaware, is the outstanding county in the United States in this respect, with 24 percent of its farms reporting raising 3,200 or more.

Farms reporting turkeys raised were distributed in much the same groups as the farms reporting chickens raised. In all tables the smallest groups included farms raising less than 50 turkeys in 1939; in the county table the highest group is that for 200 and over. United States table 10 shows the percent distribution by States of these farms in groups up to "1,600 and over" turkeys raised. Utah has the largest proportion of farms raising 1,600 turkeys or more with 13.6 percent; followed by Oregon, California, and Iowa in the order named ranging from 5.8 to 5.0 percent.