

operators in this age group, has only 4 dots, and Wyoming, with 225 operators under 25 years of age, has no dots.

**Age of farm operator.**—The number of white and nonwhite farm operators, respectively, in each of the four major tenure groups has been classified according to age, figures being shown for each of six age groups. The tables also include the average age of farm operators in each color-tenure group. This average age represents the sum of the individual ages divided by the number of farm operators who reported their age. For the United States, for each region, and for each of the States comprising the South, age data are shown by tenure within each color group. For the Northern and Western States, age data are shown only by tenure since nonwhite operators are relatively unimportant in these regions. In volume I, in which data are presented by counties, the number of all farm operators is shown for four age groups only, those under 55 years of age being grouped into two classes instead of four as in this report, and tenure figures are restricted to the average age of owners and tenants, respectively. No age data by color of operator are shown by counties. Volume I, however, shows in State table 5 for each State, including those in the North and the West, both the number of operators in each of the six age groups and the average age for each tenure within each color group.

Following are brief descriptions of the color and tenure classifications for which age distributions and averages are shown. For a more complete discussion of these terms, see chapter III, Color and tenure of farm operator.

**Color classification:**

White farm operators include Mexicans.

Nonwhite farm operators include Negroes, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and all other nonwhite races.

**Tenure classification:**

Owners own all, or a portion, of the land they operate.

Full owners own all the land they operate.

Part owners own a part and rent from others the remainder of the land they operate.

Managers operate farms for others and receive wages or salaries for their services.

Tenants operate hired or rented land only.

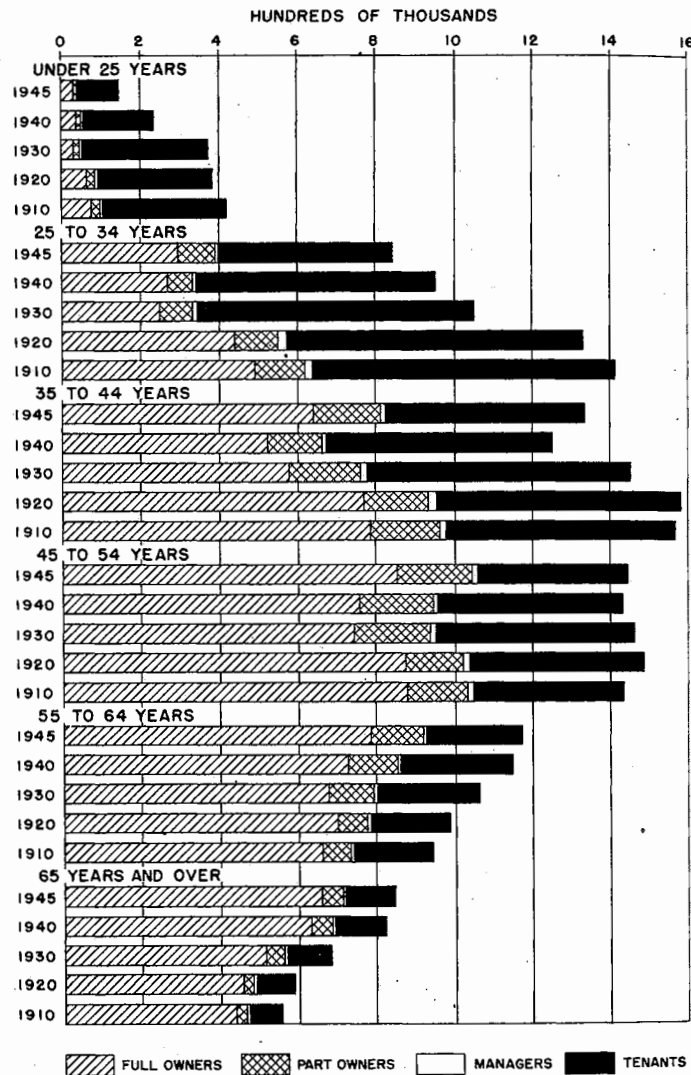
The age distribution of farm operators classified by color and tenure has been obtained for each decennial census, beginning with 1910. No information on age of operator was obtained at the mid-decennial censuses of 1925 and 1935. The censuses of population for 1890 and 1900 included a classification of occupants of farm homes by age groups. Although these data are on a slightly different basis, the relative age distribution in each tenure class is approximately comparable with the age distribution of farm operators for the 1910 and subsequent decennial censuses. These data, therefore, are presented for historical comparisons.

The average age of operators is shown in the tables for 1945 and 1940, the only years for which a true average is available. In the 1930 and 1920 reports, figures on the average age of operators for 1920 and 1910 are given in the text discussion, but these represent only approximations based on the age distributions.

In 1945, farm operators for the United States as a whole averaged only 0.7 of a year older than in 1940. Although this increase in the average age was attributable primarily to the loss of the younger men to the armed services and to war industries, it also continues a trend noticeable in several previous censuses. Between 1940 and 1945, there was a decrease of 16.0 percent in the number of farm operators under 35 years of age, with those under 25 decreasing by 36.4 percent. With this loss of younger men, many of the older operators continued farming and some landlords took over the operation of farms left by tenants. The most striking change was the increase of 81,790, or 6.5 percent, in the number of operators in the 35-to-44-age group which exceeded the combined increase of 64,924 for all groups of 45 years and older. The number of farm operators 45 to 64 years of age increased by 17,201; those operators 55 to 64 years of age, by 25,819; and those 65 years old and over, by 21,904. These increases are more significant when it is considered that the number of all farms decreased by 237,630 during this period.

Increases in the age of farm operators have been noticeable at each census since 1910. The proportion of operators 45 years old and over in 1945 was 59.9 percent; in 1940, it was 58.3

AGE OF FARM OPERATORS - NUMBER OF OPERATORS REPORTING, BY TENURE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1910 TO 1945



percent; in 1930, it was 52.7 percent; in 1920, it was 49.1 percent; and in 1910, it was 43.3 percent. Generally, the operators of farms in 1945 were several years older when they began operating farms than was true for several previous censuses. Also, they are continuing to operate their farms until an older age. Each census since 1910 has shown a decrease in each of the two age groups under 35 years of age and an increase in the number of operators in the two age groups above 55. The 45-to-54-age group has remained fairly constant.

The largest number of operators, at each census beginning with 1930, was in the 45-to-54-age group. This indicates that up to this age more persons begin operating farms on their own account than quit farming and that after this age the number ceasing to farm exceeds those who are beginning. Prior to 1930 the largest number of operators was in the 35-to-44-age group.

Farm operators in the South averaged slightly younger than the operators in the North and the West. However, the average age of operators in the South was materially higher in 1945 than in 1940, while in the North and the West the average was slightly lower. The average varied a great deal from one State to another, ranging from 45.3 years for North Dakota to 53.2 for New Hampshire.

Ownership of farms is associated with operators in the higher age groups. In the 1945 Census, owners averaged 8.7 years older than tenant operators. The average age for full owners was 52.3 years and for part owners 47.4 years, as compared with 42.8 for tenants. More than two-thirds of the owners reporting age were in the three groups 45 years and older and more than one-half of all tenants were in the three groups under 45 years of age. The proportion of tenancy decreased with the increase in the age