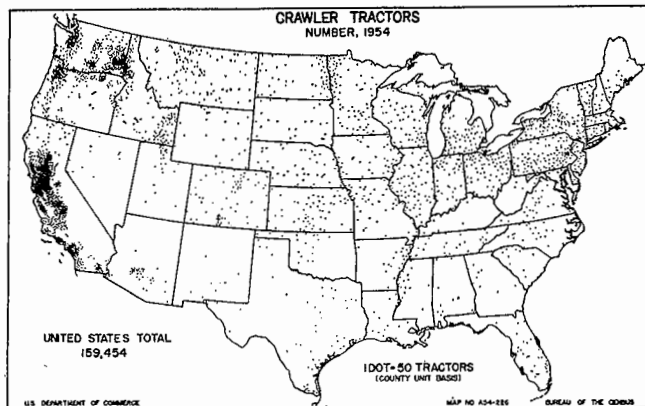
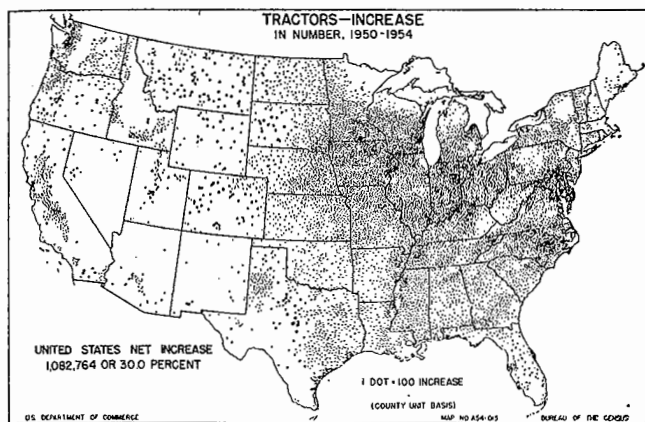


Although the number of farms in the United States decreased from April 1950 to November 1954 by about 600,000, numbers of tractors of all types actually increased by more than a million.



TYPES OF TRACTORS

Of the 4.7 million tractors on farms in November 1954, about 89 percent were field wheel type tractors, 3.5 percent were field crawler type tractors, and 7.5 percent were garden type tractors. The field wheel type of tractor so completely dominates the situation so far as numbers are concerned, that the distribution chart for all types gives an equally accurate general view of the distribution of field wheel tractors.

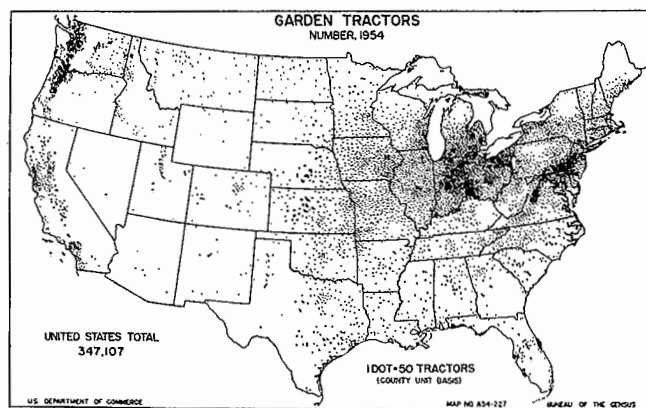
The earliest gas tractors were of the wheel type. They were used almost exclusively for land preparation and belt work. Their use was confined largely to the larger farms, primarily in the Great Plains and Western States. Gradually, newer models were developed which were suitable for farms which were smaller than the large sizes, located in most areas of the United States.

With the development of the general purpose wheel tractor in the 1920's, use of wheel tractors spread rapidly in all areas, especially in those areas where row crops are grown. The general purpose tractor, as the name implies, is used for many kinds of farmwork, including crop cultivation and other row crop work. Introduction of rubber tires in the 1930's, and development of wheel tractors suitable for the smaller family sized farms as well as for the larger farms speeded up the change from animal to mechanical power.

The crawler type of tractor has an endless beltlike type of track on which it operates as it moves over the terrain. This type of tractor probably was first used for farmwork along about 1910. Although the number of crawler tractors on farms is small, compared with the number of wheel tractors, it has a distinct place under some farming conditions. It is well suited for pulling heavy loads, especially where the ground is soft or steep. Because of construction some models can be operated under overhanging limbs of trees and close to tree trunks. This feature makes it well suited for cultural operations and other work in commercial orchards.

Although crawler tractors are used to some extent in all areas, their number is greatest in the Pacific Coast States and in Idaho. About 55 percent of all crawler tractors on farms in 1954 were in the Mountain and Pacific States. They are used extensively in the principal fruit and truck areas of Washington, Oregon, and California, and in the wheat area of eastern Washington, northern Idaho, and central Oregon.

Garden tractors, as the name implies, generally are used to cultivate small acreages of vegetables and other garden crops. They were first reported by the Census of Agriculture in 1945, although some garden tractors were used on farms as early as 1940 or 1941. Their use has expanded rapidly. The number on farms has increased from 68,000 in 1945 to 347,000 in November 1954. Concentration of garden tractors is particularly heavy in the Corn Belt and Eastern States, and in the western part of the Pacific Coast States. More than half of those reported



in 1954 were in the Corn Belt and Northeastern States, 10 percent were in the Appalachian States and 11 percent were in the Pacific Coast States. Many commercial farms have garden tractors for cultivating the home garden and truck patch.

NUMBERS OF FIELD WHEEL, CRAWLER, AND GARDEN TRACTORS ON FARMS BY FARM-PRODUCTION AREAS, NOVEMBER 1954

Area	Field wheel		Crawler		Garden	
	Number (000)	Percent distribution	Number (000)	Percent distribution	Number (000)	Percent distribution
Northeast.....	382.3	9.1	16.5	10.3	59.3	17.1
Corn Belt.....	1,091.6	26.1	14.0	8.7	118.7	34.2
Lake States.....	619.2	14.8	10.8	6.8	37.4	10.8
Northern Plains.....	640.8	13.0	9.3	5.8	15.4	4.4
Appalachian.....	365.5	8.8	6.4	4.0	34.6	10.0
Southeast.....	219.1	5.2	5.0	3.1	10.3	3.0
Delta States.....	205.8	4.9	3.7	2.3	7.3	2.0
Southern Plains.....	365.1	8.7	5.5	3.4	12.9	3.7
Mountain.....	214.4	5.1	22.1	13.9	11.9	3.4
Pacific.....	181.5	4.3	66.6	41.7	39.1	11.3
United States....	4,185.0	100.0	159.9	100.0	346.9	100.0