

The geographic distribution of expenditures for petroleum fuel and oil followed, in a general way, the distribution of tractors. There were some exceptions, however, as in the High Plains cotton area of Texas where pumping water for irrigation and intensive farming may have accounted for part of the concentration of expenditures for petroleum products. The Corn Belt had 26 percent of the tractors reported on farms in 1954 and 22 percent of the expenditures for petroleum fuel and oil. The Northern Plains, where many of the tractors are relatively large, had 13 percent of the tractors and 15 percent of the expenditures for petroleum fuel and oil.

Farms in the higher income economic classes use more equipment than do those in the lower income economic classes. Class I farms, for example, had 10 percent of the tractors reported in 1954 and bought 19 percent of all petroleum products used on farms, while Class VI farms had 4 percent of the tractors and 2 percent of the expense for petroleum products. Part-time and residential farms reported 11 percent of all tractors and 4 percent of the total expenditure for petroleum products. The overall United States pattern of costs of petroleum products by economic class of farm is similar to the patterns in the Northern Plains, Corn Belt, and Lake States. In other areas the tendency is for larger proportions of the total cost to be borne by farmers in the higher economic class groups.

In 1954, farmers spent an average of \$418 per farm reporting for gasoline and other petroleum products used in farming operations. This cost ranged from an average of almost \$700 per farm in the Mountain States to only \$220 in the Appalachian area. Many of the farms in the Mountain area are large, are located considerable distances from trading centers and markets, and are well equipped with tractors, trucks, self-propelled combines, and automobiles.

On a per-farm basis, Class I farms spent an average of \$2,000 per farm for petroleum products in 1954. This was more than double the average expenditure by Class II farms and 15 times the average of Class VI farms. Average expenditures of abnormal farms was about \$1,550 per farm but because of their small number they accounted for less than 1 percent of the total farm costs for petroleum products.

