

AMERICAN SAMOA

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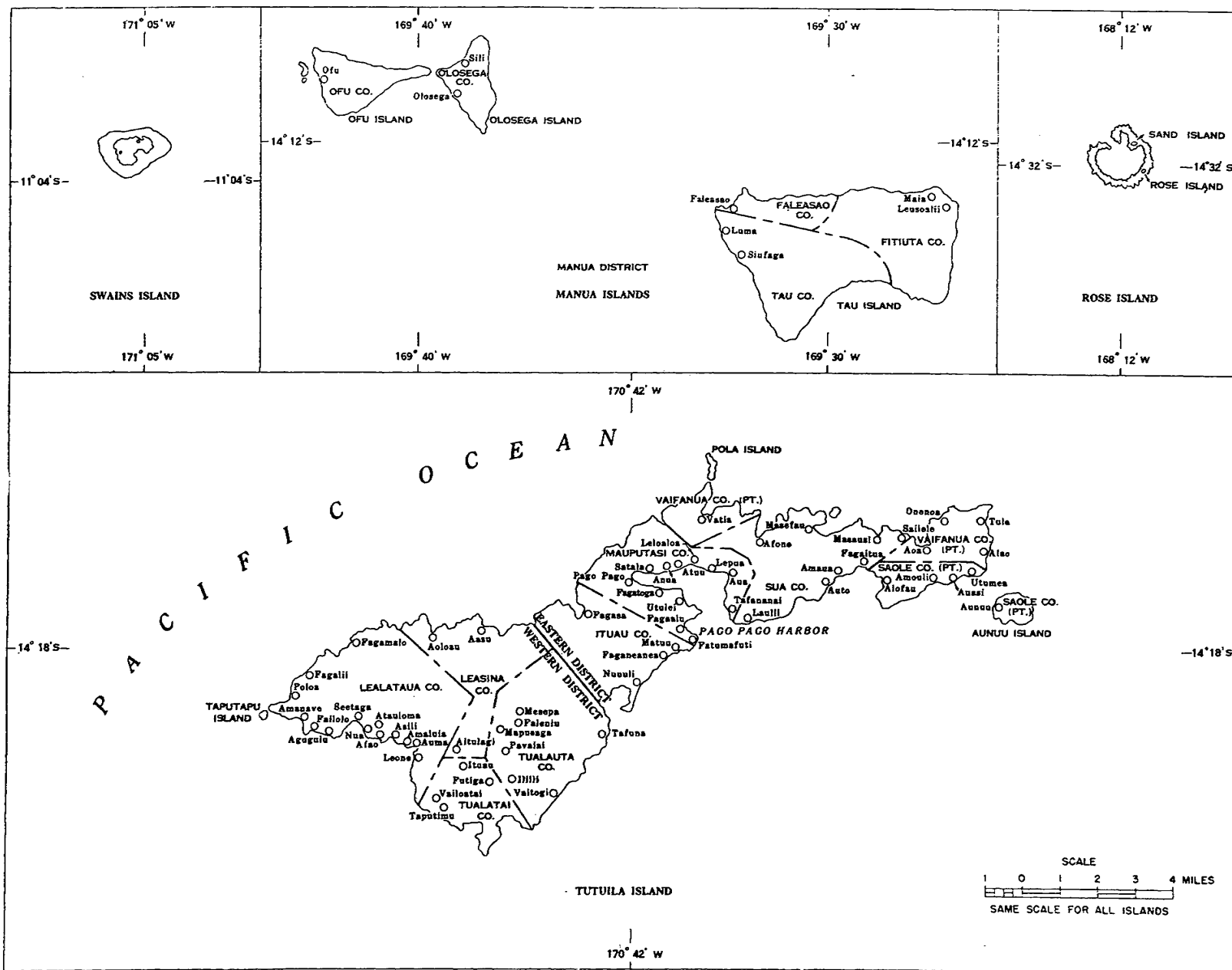
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AMERICAN SAMOA

Islands, Districts, and Counties



AMERICAN SAMOA

Introduction.—American Samoa, since July 1, 1951, has been under the administrative control of the Department of the Interior. In response to the Director's letter of April 22, 1955, requesting agricultural data for 1954, the Governor of American Samoa furnished the available statistics. In making the presentation herein, these data have been supplemented by a few taken from the 1955 and 1954 Annual Reports of the Governor to the Secretary of the Interior.

In order to better understand the present situation of agriculture and its future possibilities, parts of a few paragraphs are quoted from the Governor's 1955 Annual Report, as follows:

"American Samoa is composed of 7 islands divided into 3 groups. Tutuila, and adjacent island, Aunuu, are the center of all governmental activities. The Manua group, some 80 miles to the east, is the source of the greater part of copra for export * * *. Rose and Swains Islands are both coral atolls, Rose being uninhabited and Swains being the home of some 75 persons * * *.

"The population of American Samoa is estimated at 21,500 as of June 30, 1955.

"The islands of Tutuila and Manua are volcanic in origin, extremely mountainous, covered with dense tropical vegetation, and surrounded by fringing coral reefs. Steep-sided valleys and narrow coastal plains provide the only area suitable for agriculture. Through their practice of shifting cultivation, the Samoans have been able to utilize the precipitous slopes of the hills for garden plots containing taro, bananas, and tapioca.

"The Samoan economy is essentially agrarian. With the rapidly increasing population, emphasis is being put on increasing subsistence crops, as well as money crops. Cocoa has been introduced during the last year as a source of income, and several small shipments have been made recently for export. Coffee is also being planted, and information on the care and production is being relayed to coffee growers via radio broadcasts and informational booklets. Copra still continues to be the largest export of the indigenous people. (Exports of copra, sun dried, amounted to 1,485 tons for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1955.)

"Most of the agricultural land is very steep and is used for plantations due to the pressure of the population. One church organization uses an area for pasture, and the Government-operated dairy utilizes an area for pasture. These are the only two pastures in American Samoa.

"Land tenure is mainly the matai or family group * * *. Since the bulk of the land is under the matai system, the chief or the matai rents land with the advice of his village council and the proceeds are divided among the members of the clan."

The data received from the Governor of Samoa were compiled from the reports of Extension Agents working for the Samoan Department of Agriculture. The duties of the Extension Agents involve the making of crop reports; conducting special crop surveys, for crops such as banana and cocoa; and the giving of advice in general to planters.

There was no mention made of the exact period to which the data relate, the definition of a farm, or the method by which the basic data were obtained. However, since the reporting forms sent to the Governor requested information for 1954, it is presumed that the data furnished relate to some point of time

between July 1, 1954, and June 30, 1955. This latter assumption is strengthened by the fact that several of the quoted data are in agreement with those given in the 1955 Annual Report for the year ended June 30 of that year.

Censuses of agriculture.—The first United States Census of Agriculture of American Samoa was taken in 1920 in conjunction with the Census of Population. Since that date a Census of Agriculture has been taken every 10 years up to and including the 1950 Census. There was no Census taken in 1954. Instead, an act of Congress directed that statistics from various Government sources be used.

In the 1950 Census of Agriculture, any place that had any livestock or 5 or more poultry on April 1, 1950, or on which any crops were harvested in 1949, was considered a farm. The enumerator was instructed to obtain a questionnaire for every place that grew crops in 1949 or kept livestock or poultry on April 1, 1950. The determination as to which reports constituted a farm was made during the office processing of the questionnaires in Washington.

The 1950 Agriculture Questionnaire contained 31 questions calling for the name of the operator, the name of the owner of the property if other than operator, acres in the property, the area and quantity of the individual crops harvested in 1949, the number of trees or plants on April 1, 1950, and the quantity harvested in 1949 for individual fruits and nuts, and the number of the several classes of livestock on hand on April 1, 1950.

Presentation of statistics.—Data are presented herein for all Census years and for 1954 when figures are available. In several instances, an assumption has been made that the data relate to 1954 when they could be applicable to 1955 or perhaps to both years. Information is shown for several items, for earlier Census years, even though no data seem to exist for recent years. Since the most recent data can be presented for the entire area only, no attempt has been made to show island or county totals.

TABLE 1.—NUMBER OF FARMS AND NUMBER OF SPECIFIED LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY ON HAND: 1920 TO 1954

Item	1954	1950 (Apr. 1)	1940 (Apr. 1)	1930 (Apr. 1)	1920 (Jan. 1)
Farms.....number..	2,000	1,490	1,038	815	(NA)
Horses, mules, and colts.....number..	50	170	121	215	207
Cattle ²number..	250	233	272	608	438
Hogs and pigs.....number..	2,000	9,080	8,641	5,170	4,243
Sheep and lambs.....number..	(¹)	15	34	(NA)	(NA)
Chickens.....number..	11,950	28,011	22,908	16,108	13,338
Ducks.....number..	(¹)	189	332	667	367
Other poultry.....number..	(²)	18	159	(NA)	(NA)

NA—Not available.

¹ Probably for some period between July 1, 1954, and June 30, 1955. See text.

² Milk production for the Department of Agriculture dairy, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1954, was 142,428 pounds, according to the 1954 fiscal year report.

³ Not reported.

SPECIAL REPORTS

TABLE 2.—ACRES OF SPECIFIED CROPS: 1919 TO 1954

Item	1954	1949	1939	1929	1919
Arrowroot.....acres..	(1)	20	(NA)	4	(NA)
Bananas.....acres..	2,500	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Cacao (cocoa).....acres..	² 2,250	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Sugarcane for thatching...acres..	115	118	(NA)	³ 13	(NA)
Sweet potatoes.....acres..	(1)	4	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Taro.....acres..	600	1,576	(NA)	714	(NA)
Tobacco.....acres..	50	13	(NA)	168	(NA)
Yams.....acres..	100	59	(NA)	67	(NA)
Other field crops.....acres..	(1)	8	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

NA—Not available.

¹ Not reported.² Approximately 2,000 acres planted in new cocoa between July 1954, and July 1955, according to 1955 fiscal year report.³ Sugarcane.

TABLE 3.—NUMBER OF TREES OR PLANTS: 1920 TO 1954

Item	1954	1950	1940	1930	1920
Alligator pears (avocados)....number..	(1)	924	1,275	918	(NA)
Bananas.....number..	(3)	(NA)	459,000	262,590	(NA)
Breadfruit.....number..	34,000	637,408	³ 46,000	25,230	(NA)
Cacao (cocoa)....number..	⁴ 360,000	3,172	1,515	(NA)	(NA)
Coconuts.....number..	(1)	(NA)	245,000	275,000	(NA)
Copra.....tons..	1,680	(NA)	⁵ 858	1,889	868
Coffee.....number..	(1)	55	211	(NA)	(NA)
Lemons.....number..	6,500	2,336	709	259	(NA)
Limes.....number..	8,000	2,304	2,383	279	(NA)
Mangoes.....number..	(1)	2,152	3,203	1,615	(NA)
Oranges.....number..	(1)	5,173	4,699	2,080	(NA)
Papayas.....number..	(1)	47,843	37,488	18,494	(NA)
Pineapples.....number..	46,900	53,601	48,273	18,006	(NA)
Citrons.....number..	(1)	(NA)	560	72	(NA)
Grapefruit.....number..	(1)	75	203	(NA)	(NA)
Other fruits and nuts.....number..	(1)	48	324	(NA)	(NA)

NA—Not available.

¹ Not reported.² Plants not reported; 2,500 acres (see Table 2); 2,500 tons as shown in 1955 fiscal year report.³ Estimated, data incomplete.⁴ Approximately 2,000 acres planted in new cocoa between July 1954, and July 1955, according to 1955 fiscal year report.⁵ Exports from American Samoa to the United States in 1939.