

PUERTO RICO

CONTENTS

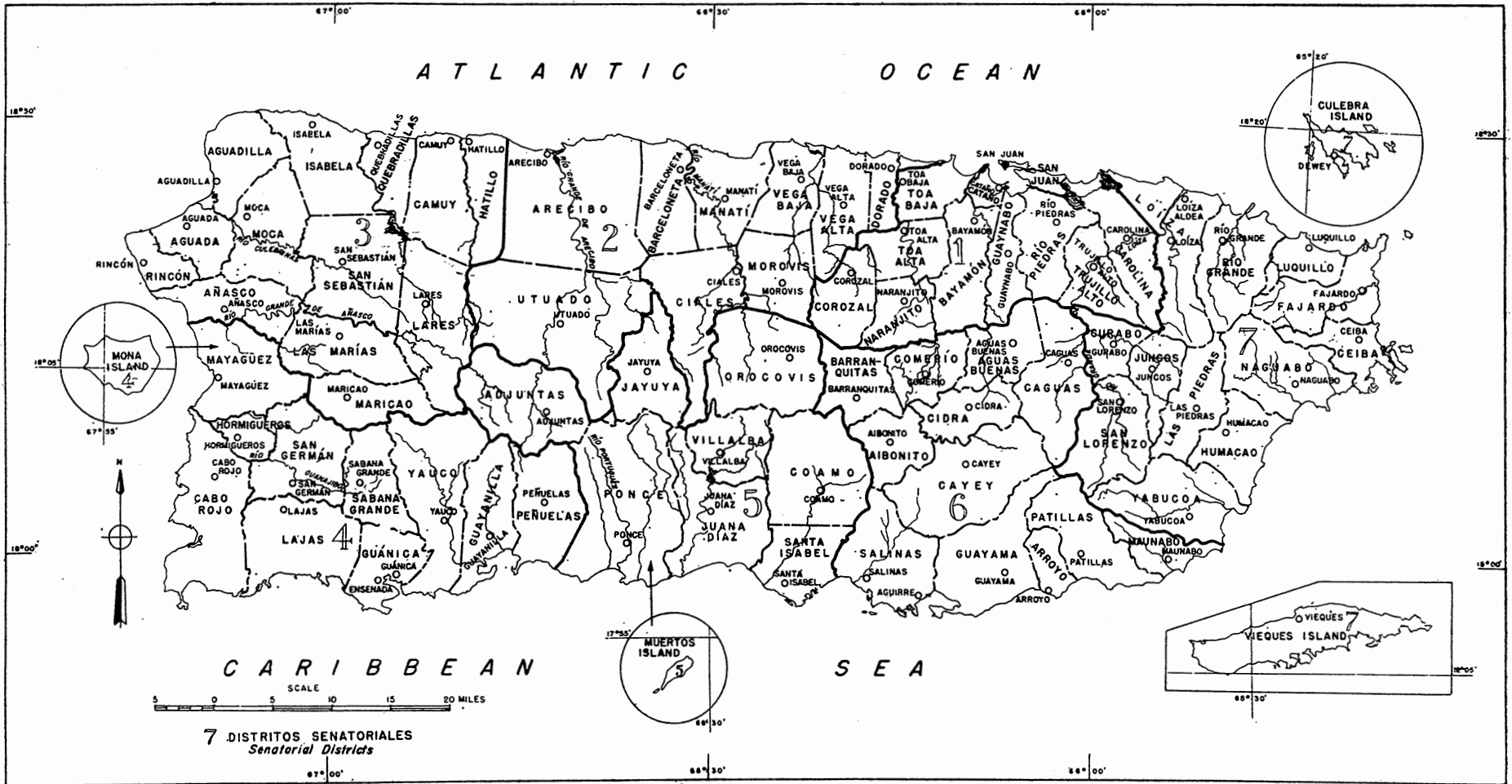
	<i>Page</i>
Introduction.....	41
Censuses of agriculture.....	41
Presentation of statistics.....	41

TABLES

1.—Number and area of farms: 1910 to 1954.....	42
2.—Farms reporting and number of livestock on farms: 1910 to 1954.....	42
3.—Farms reporting, area, and quantity harvested for selected crops: 1909 to 1954.....	42
4.—Farms reporting, number of trees or plants, and quantity harvested, for the principal fruits and coconuts: 1910 to 1954.....	43
5.—Estimated farm value of production of agricultural commodities: fiscal year 1953-1954.....	43

PUERTO RICO

DISTRITOS SENATORIALES, MUNICIPALIDADES, CIUDADES Y PUEBLOS—SENATORIAL DISTRICTS, MUNICIPALITIES, CITIES, AND TOWNS



PUERTO RICO

Introduction.—The Department of Agriculture and Commerce of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico supplied the 1954 data which are incorporated in this section. The reply to the Bureau's request for information contained this pertinent paragraph:

"* * * we are returning the tables with all the available data for 1954. The data in the tables have been adjusted to make them comparable to the 1950 census figures; that is, we have eliminated from our estimates all the information related to the parcelas or farms of less than 3 cuerdas."

The reply also made reference to a report entitled "Gathering of Agricultural Basic Data in Puerto Rico" for a detailed description of the methods used in the collection of agricultural data in Puerto Rico. This descriptive report refers to initiation of a sample survey in 1950. During that year, four surveys were conducted in which 1,000 to 3,000 farmers were interviewed in a sample of areas (generally "barrios") scientifically selected to represent the entire island. There is no clear indication whether or not this seasonal sampling plan has been continued.

There are certain check data which can be used advantageously in making estimates for the Commonwealth. A few paragraphs from that Report are quoted to bring out the nature of the problem of making estimates and what was covered in the initial survey.

"This small island is predominantly agricultural, with a large percentage of the population dependent, either directly or indirectly, upon agriculture as a means of livelihood. There are on the Island about 55,000 farms ranging in size from 3 acres up to 15,000 acres or more and a similar number of parcelas of 0.25 to 2.99 acres. The average size of farms is about 35 acres (median value of 9 acres) and of parcelas, about 1 acre. Approximately one-half of the 2,000,000 acres of land in farms is cultivated. However, because of the year-round growing season, land may produce 2, 3 or even 4 crops during a year.

"On the basis of findings thus far it would appear desirable and feasible to inaugurate at once a regular and continuing program of reports on acreage, condition and progress, yield per acre, production, price, and value for 6 crops; namely, sugarcane, tobacco, cotton, pineapples, coconuts, and coffee. A high percentage—85 to 100 percent—of each of these crops is sold by the growers, either for export or for consumption on the Island. Furthermore, each tends to follow a regular seasonal pattern rather than being harvested in small quantities throughout the year. Independent check data are available through cane mills, cooperative associations, processors, coffee roaster, etc. These data can be used to check on the reliability of the information obtained from respondents by whatever method that might be used. * * * Livestock inventories, milk and egg production, plantains, flumes, dry beans, avocados, bananas, oranges, and sweetpotatoes appear to be the items that should be given next priority, since 40 to 75 percent of these crops are estimated as being sold. Also, most of these crops are grown on a sufficiently large number of farms to permit the use of sampling techniques already known. Other crops, of which less than one-third are sold, should be tackled only after the regular program is established and working smoothly for the items appearing in the first 2 categories.

"There remain many problems still to be solved in relation to the formulation of questions and the obtaining of accurate answers from farmers. To this end, we are continuing our analysis in conjunction with the Census and utilizing other data in our files. We are on the lookout for new check data and for new methods of checking the reliability of the estimates derived from our surveys."

The definition of a farm, of a farmer, and of a parcela, as used in the early surveys, are as follows:

"A farm consists of land of not less than 3 'cuerdas' on which agricultural operations are performed or directed by a person, partnership, or corporation (condensation of Census definition).

"A farmer is the operator of a farm. The farmer may own the land that he farms, he may have control of the land under a rental agreement, or he may have been employed as a manager. In this paper the term 'farmer' is used also in a general sense in reference to anyone who has an agricultural operation, no matter how small the amount of land that he farms.

"A 'parcela' consists of land of from $\frac{1}{4}$ to 3 'cuerdas' which comprises an entire agricultural operation."

Censuses of agriculture.—The first Census of Agriculture taken in Puerto Rico by the United States was made as of April 15, 1910. Since that time, a Census of Agriculture has been taken in conjunction with the Census of Population in each decennial enumeration. In 1935, a special Census of Puerto Rico was taken by the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration.

The 1950 Census of Agriculture was taken as of April 1, 1950. Inventory items relate approximately to that date. Data relating to areas and quantity of crops (except sugarcane) harvested and to sales of agricultural products are for the crop year extending from April 1, 1949, to March 31, 1950. Data on the area and quantity of sugarcane harvested are for the crop year extending from December 1, 1948, to November 30, 1949.

For previous Censuses, the inventory items relate to the date of the Census and the production items, with the exception of 1935, to the preceding calendar year. For 1935, the production items relate to the calendar year 1935.

For the 1950 Census of Agriculture, places of 3 or more cuerdas were counted as farms if any agricultural products other than vegetables for home use were produced in 1949 or if any livestock or 15 or more chickens or other poultry were kept on the place.

All the land under the control of one person or partnership was included as one farm. Control may have been through ownership, or through lease or rental arrangement.

In the 1950 enumeration, the Census enumerator was not given the definition of a farm. He was instructed to obtain an agriculture questionnaire for every place of 3 or more cuerdas, whether or not it was considered a farm. Thus, agriculture questionnaires were filled for more places than those that qualified as farms. The determination as to which reports were to be included in the tabulations as representing farms was made during the processing of the questionnaires in Washington.

The number of questionnaires which were retained in 1950 as representing farms was 53,515. Tracts of less than 3 cuerdas, with agricultural production, were not counted as farms in 1950. These places were enumerated as parcelas. They totaled 51,157 for that enumeration year. Most of these small tracts kept poultry and produced a variety of crops.

Presentation of statistics.—Data are presented only for the Commonwealth, as a whole. Comparative data are usually given for all Census enumerations. In a few instances, Census data are presented even though no recent data are available.