

FARM ORGANIZATION IN THE CORN BELT

TYPE OF FARM

In the classification of farms by type, farms that have a high degree of uniformity as to kinds and combinations of crops and livestock produced were grouped together. This grouping, or classifying, was done on the basis of value of farm products sold. Type of farm was determined on the basis of the proportion of total sales of farm products accounted for by a particular product or closely related group of products, such as dairy products, livestock other than dairy and poultry products, or grain crops.

In order for a farm to be classified as a particular type, the sales or expected sales of the particular product or group of products had to represent 50 percent or more of the total value of products sold. For example, farms on which the sale of grain (corn, soybeans, small grains, sorghums, field beans, field peas, and cowpeas) accounted for 50 percent or more of the total value of farm products sold were classified as cash-grain farms.

The distribution of commercial farms and of cash-grain farms, livestock farms, and general farms in the United States is shown in figures 7, 8, 9, and 10.

The number of farms in each of the principal types found in the Corn Belt and in the United States as a whole in 1954 are shown in table 4. Of the 3,327,617 commercial farms, a total of 797,259, or 24 percent, were in the Corn Belt. The percentage of commercial farms accounted for by the Corn Belt is higher than the percentage of all farms included in this region because the number of farms other than commercial is relatively greater in parts of the United States outside of the Corn Belt. Of all the cash-grain farms in the United States, 49.2 percent were in the Corn Belt. Outside of this belt the principal regions of cash-grain farms were the

Great Plains and other wheat-producing regions. The Corn Belt had 47 percent of all livestock farms (other than dairy and poultry) in the Nation. The Corn Belt is by far the leading region in frequency of occurrence of livestock farms. Outside of it other regions where livestock farms are a dominant type are the Great Plains and the general region between the Corn Belt and the Cotton Belt. Although dairying is not a principal enterprise except on a relatively few farms in this region, the Corn Belt accounted for 11.8 percent of all the dairy farms in the United States. Dairy farms predominate in the region to the north of the belt. Spreading out from the region of the Lake States, dairying is also of importance in border areas extending into the Eastern Corn Belt and along its northern edge. Farms that could not be classified into a more definite type because no product or group of products accounted for as much as 50 percent of the total value of farm products sold were classified as general farms.

The general farms here are mainly characterized by a combination of cash-grain and livestock production with both of these enterprises of primary importance. A number of general farms may be considered as a transitional type, that is, a group falling between the cash-grain farms and the livestock farms. Many of them might be counted as cash-grain farms in a particular year and as livestock farms in another year, depending on crop conditions or on relative prices of grains and of livestock. Between 1950 and 1954 cash-grain farms increased in number while livestock farms decreased rather generally throughout the region. In 1950, the number of livestock farms exceeded the number of cash-grain farms in Ohio, Indiana, and Minnesota, but in 1954 the cash-grain farms were considerably more numerous than the livestock farms in these States.

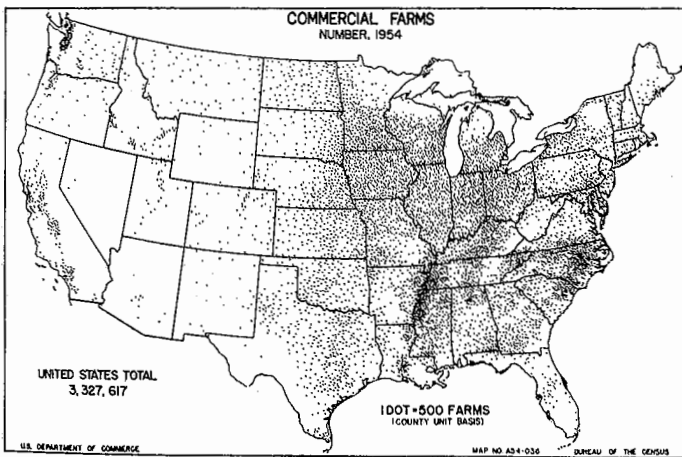


FIGURE 7.

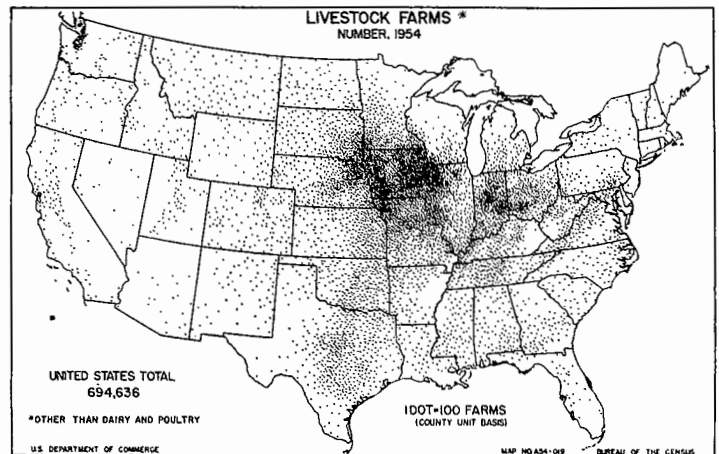


FIGURE 9.

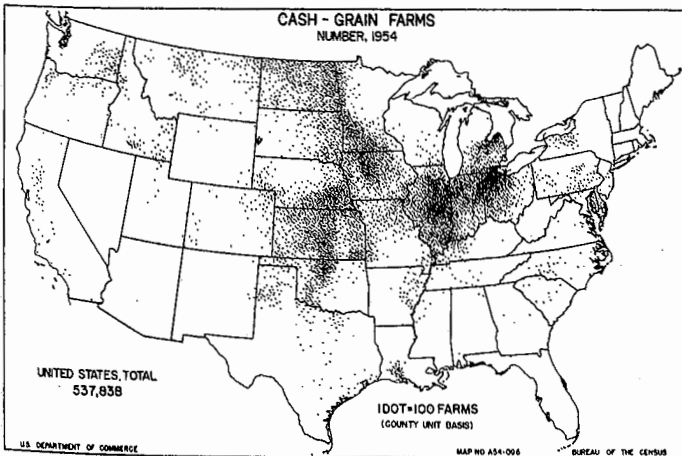


FIGURE 8.

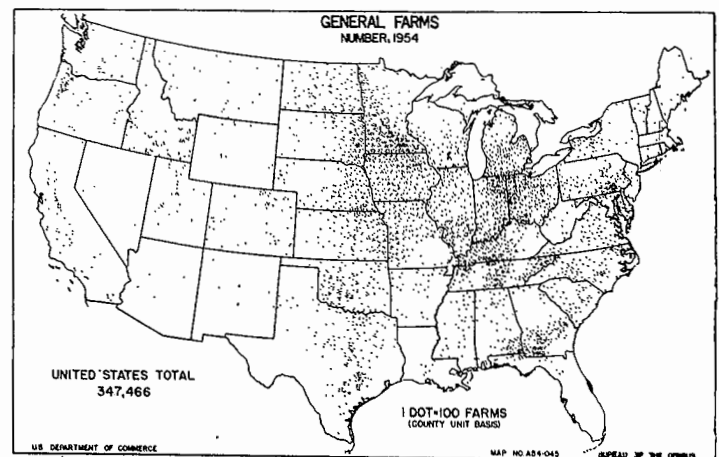


FIGURE 10.