

on most farms within the limits of the broiler house. Very little land is required; chicks, feed, and other production items are nearly always purchased.

Broiler production is concentrated mostly on a relatively few farms. Only 50,000 farms reported broilers sold, in 1954. More than 98 percent of the broilers sold were from the 28,000 farms each of which sold 8,000 or more in 1954.

Table 12 shows the broiler production by geographic divisions. The South Atlantic produced 462 million; the South Central, 293 million; and the North Atlantic, 139 million, in 1955. These three divisions produced 83 percent of the United States total of slightly over a billion birds.

Trend of production.—Probably no farm enterprise has increased so rapidly during the last two decades. From a small beginning of some 34 million broilers in 1934 the production has expanded to about 1.3 billion birds in 1956—a 35-fold increase. The development has been especially rapid since World War II.

A combination of full employment at favorable wages for consumers and heavy food purchases by the Armed Services during and after the war, created a powerful overall demand for food, resulting in a pronounced advance in food prices, especially for meat, including broiler meat.

Broiler prices were high before 1950, not only compared with prewar years, but in relation to the price of feed as well. But favorable prices for broilers, in relation to the price of feed, began to change about 1950. Notwithstanding the decline in returns to the producers, the trend of production continued upward although at a somewhat reduced rate until 1955. Between 1955 and 1956, however, the increase was at a more rapid rate—an increase of more than a fifth for the country as a whole.

The volume of broiler production was greatest in the South Atlantic, South Central, and North Atlantic geographic divisions. The rate of increase in production from 1934 to 1955 by geographic divisions is shown in figure 8. (The data in figure 8 are in millions of broilers. This type of chart is commonly referred to as a "ratio chart" with three "decks" or levels. The bottom level shows the figures in units. Thus, the figures on that level are from 1 to 10 million. On the second level the figures are from 10 to 100 million, and on the top level from 100 to 1,000 million. Hence, the line showing the United States production for 1954 and 1955 is slightly over 1,000 million. The amount of slope of any line in figure 8 indicates the rate of increase.)

The South Atlantic, South Central, and North Atlantic divisions have had a more rapid rate of increase during the last 10 years than have the East North Central or the West North Central divisions.

Table 11.—FARMS REPORTING BROILERS, BY NUMBER SOLD: 1954

Farms reporting number of broilers sold as—	Number of farms	
	Total	Percent distribution
Under 8,000.....	22,003	43.9
8,000 to 15,999.....	12,483	24.9
16,000 to 31,999.....	9,747	19.5
32,000 to 39,999.....	1,822	3.6
40,000 to 49,999.....	1,562	3.1
50,000 to 59,999.....	790	1.6
60,000 to 69,999.....	655	1.3
70,000 to 79,999.....	337	0.7
80,000 and over.....	695	1.4

COMMERCIAL BROILERS: NUMBER PRODUCED FOR THE UNITED STATES AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS: 1934-1955

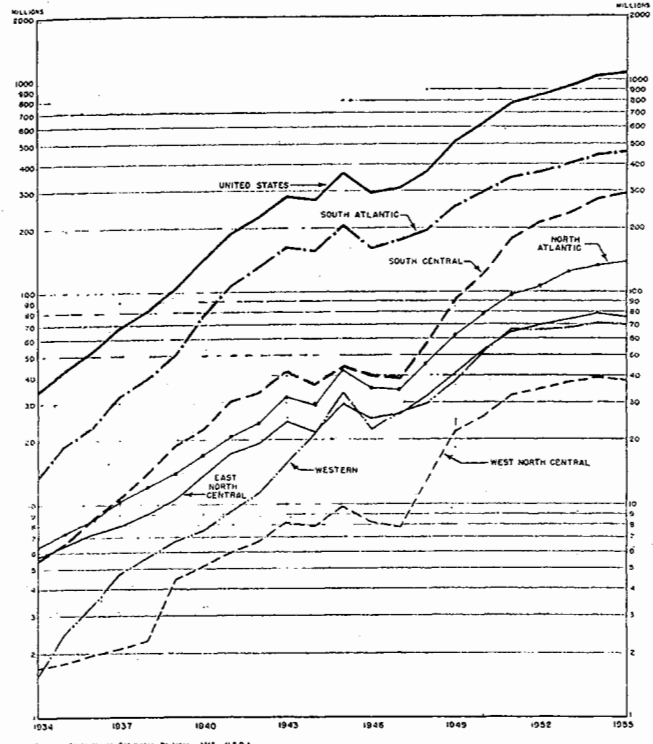


Figure 8

Table 12.—COMMERCIAL BROILERS—NUMBER PRODUCED FOR THE UNITED STATES AND GEOGRAPHIC DIVISIONS: 1934 TO 1955

Geographic division	Number (thousands)										
	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
United States.....	34,030	42,890	53,155	67,915	82,420	105,630	142,762	191,502	228,187	285,293	274,149
North Atlantic.....	6,360	7,345	8,660	10,360	12,110	14,050	17,000	20,300	24,600	32,210	29,164
East North Central.....	5,700	6,415	7,365	7,970	9,030	10,650	13,600	17,350	19,310	24,405	21,656
West North Central.....	1,700	1,800	1,930	2,070	2,280	4,425	5,125	6,975	8,725	8,237	7,906
South Atlantic.....	13,200	18,200	23,150	32,100	39,200	50,600	76,900	107,660	132,550	162,800	157,148
South Central.....	5,500	6,650	8,750	10,700	14,150	19,150	22,516	30,985	33,835	42,068	36,741
Western.....	1,570	2,480	3,300	4,715	5,650	6,755	7,621	9,232	11,107	15,573	21,534

Geographic division	Number (thousands)										
	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
United States.....	365,572	292,527	310,168	370,515	513,206	631,458	788,601	860,801	946,533	1,047,798	1,078,264
North Atlantic.....	42,903	35,686	34,648	46,813	62,509	79,119	97,186	106,205	123,787	133,096	139,083
East North Central.....	29,739	25,245	26,388	31,984	41,386	52,637	64,942	69,854	73,916	78,973	76,297
West North Central.....	9,827	8,242	7,801	13,014	21,959	25,649	32,413	34,863	37,178	39,974	38,281
South Atlantic.....	204,769	160,647	175,228	192,194	255,229	298,129	348,724	368,278	405,917	448,556	461,830
South Central.....	44,690	40,365	39,320	56,804	93,611	123,337	178,569	215,136	237,526	275,958	292,758
Western.....	33,044	22,343	26,783	29,706	38,702	52,587	66,767	66,556	68,209	71,241	70,006