

**CENTRAL MICHIGAN-WESTERN NEW YORK LAKE SHORE  
DAIRY AREA**

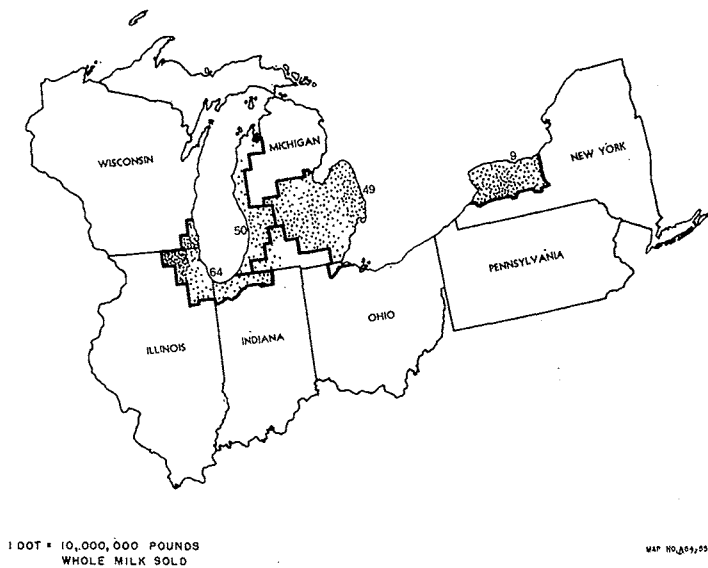


Figure 15.

**CENTRAL MICHIGAN-WESTERN NEW YORK LAKE  
SHORE REGION**  
(Economic Subregions 9, 49, 50, 64)

In this region the soils have a wide range of texture and structure as well as a mixed topography. The part that borders on Lake Huron has soils that were developed under poor natural drainage conditions from heavily timbered, swampy, loam or clay-loam parent material. They are fairly high in organic matter, lime, and nitrogen. These with their moisture-retaining capacities make for productive and durable soils. Some of the more nearly level stretches are also productive when provided with adequate drainage. Small grains and hay do well here and the heaviest concentration of corn in the State is in the counties just north of the Ohio border. The few sugarbeets grown in the State are in this area as is the heaviest concentration of potatoes. Michigan leads in growing field beans and virtually the whole acreage is grown on the dark colored, well-drained, heavy loam soils at the north side of the "Thumb."

The soils of the central part are derived mainly from glacial till and are usually high in fertility. They stand cultivation where the land is not on the steeper slopes. Such staple crops as corn, oats, and hay do well. Mint, onions, and other truck crops are grown on the more nearly level muck soils.

The western part of the Michigan country has a diverse soil and topographic pattern. The most commonly found soils are excessively drained sands, strongly acid, and low in organic matter. Islands of less porous soil dot this part. They may be classed as loamy sands and sandy loams and occupy level to rolling locations. When well handled these soils produce fair yields of oats and hay, and potato crops are good. Cherry orchards have been developed on the hillier and sandier soils of the Lake Michigan shore where, because of the proximity of that large body of water, the climate is moderated.

Although there are more dairy farms than any other single type in the four economic subregions there is a mixture with other livestock and cash crops and some limited localities within the area are dominated by types other than dairy. The southwestern

corner of Michigan is known for its fruit and truck growing. Berries, tomatoes, asparagus, and muskmelons are predominant specialty crops. Apples, peaches, and pears do well. A little farther east away from the lake shore, sales of hogs and cattle supplement the sale of dairy products, and a little farther north along the lake shore, poultry and truck crops are valued sources of income. Fruit trees and grape vines extend north of the poultry-truck-crop section in Economic Subregion 50. The three northern counties of this subregion have very few milk cows.

The metropolitan area in the southeastern part of Economic Subregion 49 offers the best market in the State for dairy and truck crops and furnishes the most part-time employment. Fluid milk, poultry, eggs, vegetables, and small fruits are produced for local market. The Chicagoland market for farm products raised in Economic Subregion 64 is as good or better than that afforded the products of Economic Subregion 49. The important sources of farm income for this lake shore subregion are field crops, fresh vegetables, and poultry, as well as dairying.

This economic subregion, and Michigan Economic Area 3, are ordinarily not considered a part of the central Michigan dairy country because of a possibly closer relationship to the Northern Lake Dairy Area and because of a dearth of milk cows. Because only the dairy farms of the area, and not all types of farms, are being considered in this connection and because the basic organization of dairy farms changes little from area to area, it was thought desirable to include these two sections with the rest of this region.

Economic Subregion 9 on the lake shore of western New York was placed in this general area because of the similarity of types of production. This shore is devoted essentially to fruit and vegetable growing. It is the largest fruit and vegetable locality within the State of New York. Both the dairy and the fruit enterprises have been increasing in this subregion during the last 25 years, whereas vegetable and cereal growing have been decreasing. Fruit growing is concentrated on the fertile deep soils which are near enough to Lake Erie to be benefited by the moderating influence of its water. Grapes are grown on the fringes of the locality. The whole subregion grows a wide range of crops and livestock products. Some localities are so specialized as to justify special consideration in any presentation covering these commodities.

The dairy farms of the Central Michigan-Western New York Lake Shore Region have an average total income of \$7,000 per farm which is only \$200 less than that of the Northeastern Dairy Region but nearly \$2,000 more than that of the Eastern Ohio-Western Pennsylvania Region. The farms are more diversified, have a greater acreage of harvested crops, and have higher land values than either of these other regions. Total income for the subregions within the area is lowest for the dairy farms along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, Economic Subregion 50, and highest for the Western New York Lake Shore, and Economic Subregion 9. The range is practically 100 percent—from \$4,592 to \$9,135.

The degree of specialization varies inversely with average income. Economic Subregions 9 and 64 have the largest average income and least diversification, while Economic Subregions 49 and 50 with smaller incomes have the greatest diversification. The two areas with the largest incomes not only are less diversified but they have an average of 94 and 104 acres of harvested cropland and 23 and 24 milk cows, respectively, as compared to 84 and 67 acres of harvested crops and 15 and 13 cows per farm for the subregions with smaller incomes. Diversification in the two Michigan subregions is probably the result of local environmental conditions and personal considerations rather than its favorable effect on income.