

FIGURE 6.

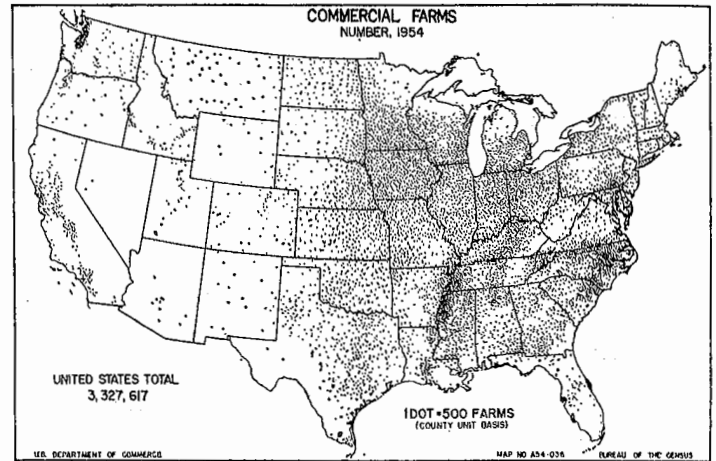


FIGURE 8.

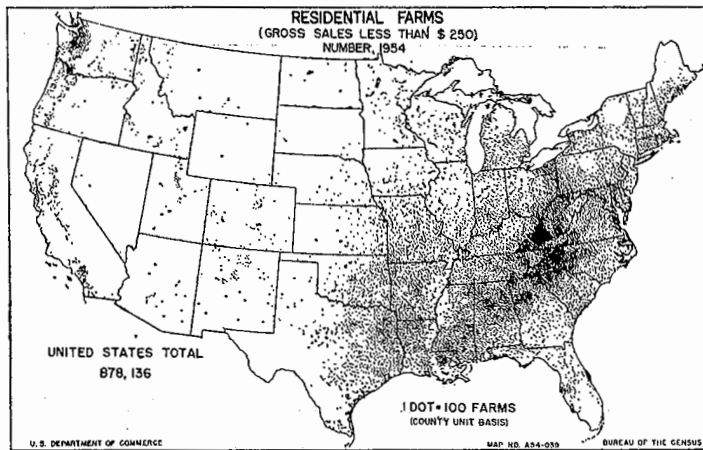


FIGURE 7.

The higher incidence of part-time and residential farms in the South is owing partly to the more recent industrial development there. Growth in manufacturing, in industries, and in trades and services coincided with other developments such as improvement of roads and the prevailing use of automobiles, which made it possible for farm people to commute to jobs in town, while continuing to live on the farms. Rural electrification made city conveniences possible in many rural homes and reduced some of the incentive for moving to town. An important factor has been the tendency of the manufacturing industries in the South to decentralize by locating their plants throughout many semirural areas. Also, the South contains a higher proportion of small, low-income farms than other broad regions of the country. Farm families on these small farms have probably had the greatest incentive to supplement their incomes through off-farm work.

A detailed analysis of part-time farming appears in chapter 8 of this report.

Commercial farms.—Commercial farms have a more general and widespread distribution over the United States than is true of the noncommercial farm categories. In most areas east of the 100th meridian there is a uniform and fairly heavy concentration of commercial farms. The density in the Mississippi River flood plains of Arkansas and Mississippi, the tobacco country of the Carolinas, and other scattered locations, reflect the larger numbers of small farms in these areas. The Corn Belt States of Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio have a uniformly heavy concentration of commercial farms that is due to the high proportion of land open and suitable for farming.

The small number of commercial farms in most of the western half of the United States reflects the low average productivity of a region that has rough terrain and limited rainfall. The farms are large, on the average, except where irrigation has been developed. In the West, wherever large numbers of farms are clustered, the presence of irrigation is indicated. Exceptions are the Willamette Valley of Oregon and the Puget Sound country of Washington, where rainfall is sufficient to allow a variety of crops to be grown without irrigation.

Economic Classes of Commercial Farms

The commercial farms are divided into six economic classes on the basis of the value of farm products sold. The criteria for separating commercial from noncommercial farms and for delineating the economic classes of commercial farms are shown in the table which follows.

Economic class of farm	Criteria	
	Value of farm products sold	Other
Commercial farms.....		Total of 6 classes below.
Class I.....	\$25,000 or more.....	None.
Class II.....	\$10,000 to \$24,999.....	None.
Class III.....	\$5,000 to \$9,999.....	None.
Class IV.....	\$2,500 to \$4,999.....	None.
Class V.....	\$1,200 to \$2,499.....	None.
Class VI.....	\$250 to \$1,199.....	Less than 100 days of off-farm work by operator and income of operator and members of his family from nonfarm sources less than value of all farm products sold.
Other farms.....		Total of categories below.
Part-time.....	\$250 to \$1,200.....	Operator worked off farm 100 or more days or other income of family greater than value of all farm products sold.
Residential.....	Less than \$250.....	None.
Abnormal.....		Public and private institutional farms, experiment stations, etc.

Economic class as a measure of farm size.—One of the major uses of the economic classes of commercial farms is in broad analysis of the structure of farming. Information is needed on the extent to which producers on different sizes of farms have been able to make adjustments in production and take advantage of new techniques that have proved efficient. The economic classification, being based on gross sales of farm products, also provides an indirect measure of relative levels of farm income and its distribution.