

The level of living as measured by home conveniences is also low, electricity is the only home convenience item reported as available on most of the peanut farms. In the 3 peanut areas, 13 percent or less of the specialized farms reported telephones, 28 percent or less television sets and 24 percent or less home freezers. Fifty-seven percent of the farmers in the Oklahoma-Texas area reported piped running water, but only 32 percent in the Virginia-North Carolina area.

Average gross receipts of peanut farms are not high. Gross sales from specified products average \$5,101 in the Virginia-North Carolina area of which peanuts contributed 41 percent, tobacco 34 percent and livestock and livestock products 8 percent. Gross sales in the Georgia-Florida-Alabama area averaged \$3,547; of the total, peanuts contributed 47 percent, cotton 18 percent, tobacco 16 percent and livestock and livestock products 12 percent. Farms in the Oklahoma-Texas area were more specialized than in either of the other two areas. Of the average gross income of \$2,700, peanuts contributed 68 percent, cotton 10 percent and livestock and livestock products 17 percent.

The level of mechanization is not very high on peanut farms. For example, only about half of the farms in the Virginia-North Carolina and Georgia-Alabama-Florida areas reported tractors and 87 percent in the Oklahoma-Texas area.

The peanut farmer, like other farmers, is faced with the continuing problem of adjusting to changes in technology. Increases in mechanization make it possible for one man to operate a larger acreage, but on some farms it raises difficult problems. Even though capital is available it is not always possible to acquire additional land in the amount and place desired. Often it is difficult for the farmer to accumulate or acquire additional capital. Thus, many farmers may continue to operate their land with inefficient equipment because they cannot acquire the most modern machinery or having the machinery they may operate inefficiently for the lack of sufficient land. Inadequate knowledge and lack of capital may also be factors in the slowness of adoption of improved farm practices.

The capital investment on peanut farms is low compared to many other types of farming in the United States. However, the average size of farm is increasing and proportionally there has been a large increase in the amount of capital invested. Table 59 shows Census data for acres per farm and value of land and buildings for selected counties in the peanut areas for 1940, 1945, 1950, and 1954. During this period the average size of farm increased from a third to more than double; the value of land and buildings, while the figure was low in 1940, increased from two and

one-half to as much as five times in the various counties. Although data are not available for machinery and equipment, the relative increase in investment was probably greater than for land and buildings.

Adjusting peanut production to bring supplies in line with current needs is a problem for peanut producers. The demand for the crop during the war years resulted in a large expansion of acreage but the increase was different in the various areas. During recent years there also have been shifts in consumption trends between uses that have affected the market for some types of peanuts more than others. The varieties grown are not the same in all the areas and they supply different uses. These factors make it difficult to develop a control program that will yield a supply of peanuts in line with current needs and at the same time not be difficult to administer between areas.

The peanut farmer also faces a problem of conservation and improvement of the soil. In all of the peanut areas, a high percentage of the cropland is planted in row crops. During the war years much of the suitable cropland was planted too intensively to peanuts. Erosion has been and is a problem on those soils that are susceptible. Measures for conservation and improvement of all farmland need to be emphasized.

TABLE 59.—AVERAGE SIZE AND VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS PER FARM, SELECTED COUNTIES IN PEANUT AREAS: 1940 TO 1954

County	1940	1945	1950	1954
Average size of farm (acres)				
Southampton County, Va.....	111	101	126	141
Northampton County, N. C.....	74	72	77	94
Early County, Ga.....	89	72	138	185
Henry County, Ala.....	112	104	132	171
Jackson County, Fla.....	100	98	123	144
Bryan County, Okla.....	134	146	181	226
Comanche County, Tex.....	177	185	236	250
Average value of land and buildings per farm (dollars)				
Southampton County, Va.....	3,204	4,364	7,600	14,141
Northampton County, N. C.....	3,181	3,280	6,224	7,505
Early County, Ga.....	2,047	2,562	5,295	7,825
Henry County, Ala.....	2,468	3,035	5,873	6,089
Jackson County, Fla.....	1,845	2,633	4,063	6,635
Bryan County, Okla.....	2,537	3,098	6,906	12,080
Comanche County, Tex.....	3,172	5,322	12,380	16,861