

OTHER TYPES OF FARMING IN THE HARD RED WINTER WHEAT REGION

Rarely do all the farmers of an area follow the same line of production. Differences in production conditions, available resources, and personal preferences lead to diversity of production within an area. Throughout the wheat regions are farms that have been classified as other types because cash grain did not provide the major source of income in 1954. Only the most common types of farming other than cash-grain will be described. A little more than one-fifth of the wheat produced in the hard red winter wheat region is grown on these other types of farms.

General farms are those which diversify their production to the extent that no one enterprise provides one-half of the gross income. General farms usually produce the same commodities as the more specialized farms in the same area but they are less dependent on a single farm product. The difference in farm organization is more in emphasis on particular enterprises than in types of enterprises. Although cash grain is an important source of income for these general farms, it did not furnish one-half of gross sales in 1954.

In the northern part of the hard winter wheat region general farming is common. Here, general farms are organized much like the cash-grain farms in subregion 93 but more emphasis is given to feed grain and livestock production.

Also, in this subregion are more than 25,000 livestock farms that emphasize production of livestock other than dairy or poultry. Here again, the land-use pattern is much like that of the cash-grain farms with less emphasis on wheat and usually a larger acreage of pasture. In subregions 93 and 94 the livestock farms are similar to those of the Corn Belt. Here, the emphasis is on roughage-consuming livestock, especially beef cattle. A few farmers fatten cattle, some feed out only the cattle they raise, and many market their cattle as feeders. Farmers in subregion 93 raise many more hogs than sheep but the opposite is true in subregion 94.

The livestock farms in subregion 103 are much like the smaller livestock ranches described in Chapter VI. These farms have a much larger acreage in pasture than cash-grain farms, and a much larger number of cattle per farm. The cropland is used largely for a rotation of wheat and fallow and forage crops for winter feed.

Grain sorghum represents the other important cash-grain enterprise in the hard red winter wheat region. Its production in the United States is limited largely to this region. Grain-sorghum production is closely associated with winter wheat production, as many farmers grow both crops. Some farmers use the sorghum as another cash crop whereas others feed the grain to livestock.

The acreage of grain sorghum in the United States has fluctuated between 6 and 11 million acres per year. Grain sorghum is a drought-resistant crop and can be harvested with a grain combine which is common equipment in the wheat country. In earlier years, grain sorghum was mainly restricted to feeding on farms where grown, and as a basic ingredient in mixed poultry feeds but gradually it has become more widely accepted as a feed for fattening livestock. Grain sorghum is generally considered to have 90 to 95 percent of the feed value of corn by weight.

The leading States in grain-sorghum production are Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and New Mexico. (See table 29.) In 1954, in these 6 States, more than 135,000 farmers raised grain sorghum on 10.9 million acres and produced 168 million bushels for sale. Additional quantities were fed on the farms where raised. Few farms would be classed as grain-sorghum farms for usually the crop is grown on farms where wheat is a more important crop. Grain sorghum is well adapted to the conditions in the Great Plains and offers one of the more promising alternatives to individual wheat producers.

Table 29.—ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION OF GRAIN SORGHUM, BY STATES, IN THE MAJOR PRODUCING STATES: 1954

[Data are estimates based on reports for only a sample of farms]

| Item | Texas | Oklahoma | Kansas | Nebraska | Colorado | New Mexico |
|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of farms in the State..... | 293, 152 | 119, 270 | 120, 291 | 100, 733 | 40, 672 | 20, 977 |
| Number of farms producing grain sorghum..... | 55, 950 | 11, 867 | 46, 817 | 10, 829 | 3, 411 | 1, 953 |
| Acreage in grain sorghum..... | 5, 610, 766 | 606, 407 | 3, 551, 408 | 514, 706 | 387, 153 | 274, 949 |
| Number reporting by acres harvested: | | | | | | |
| Under 25 acres..... | 18, 495 | 6, 106 | 17, 962 | 9, 353 | 872 | 429 |
| 25-49 acres..... | 8, 784 | 2, 669 | 10, 777 | 4, 497 | 601 | 307 |
| 50-99 acres..... | 11, 118 | 1, 584 | 8, 689 | 2, 360 | 799 | 341 |
| 100-299 acres..... | 13, 603 | 1, 062 | 7, 043 | 577 | 816 | 610 |
| 300-499 acres..... | 2, 606 | 230 | 1, 315 | 19 | 194 | 170 |
| 500 acres and over..... | 1, 344 | 126 | 1, 031 | 14 | 129 | 96 |
| Quantity produced bushels..... | 132, 342, 834 | 6, 068, 530 | 49, 912, 097 | 13, 998, 621 | 3, 941, 131 | 4, 491, 088 |
| Quantity sold.....do..... | 117, 546, 674 | 3, 667, 790 | 32, 375, 634 | 8, 947, 772 | 2, 724, 378 | 3, 539, 871 |

THE HARD RED SPRING WHEAT REGION

This region lies in the northern Great Plains. Its major wheat-producing areas are subregions 89, 90, 91, and 105 (see fig. 8). Although less wheat is produced in this region than in the hard winter wheat region, it is the major source of income to 61,000 farmers and many other farmers here grow some wheat. The importance of wheat production in this region and the percentage of wheat produced on cash-grain farms are indicated in the following data:

| Item | Subregion | | | | Total (4 subregions) |
|---|-----------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| | 89 | 90 | 91 | 105 | |
| Total wheat produced on commercial farms (1,000 bu.)..... | 21, 142 | 36, 325 | 16, 002 | 73, 936 | 147, 405 |
| Percent of U. S. total wheat produced on commercial farms..... | 2 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 16 |
| Percent of total wheat for subregion produced on cash-grain farms..... | 73 | 86 | 60 | 89 | 83 |
| Percent of total wheat for subregion produced on farms other than cash-grain farms..... | 27 | 14 | 40 | 11 | 17 |

THE HARD SPRING WHEAT AREA SUBREGIONS 89, 90, 91, AND 105

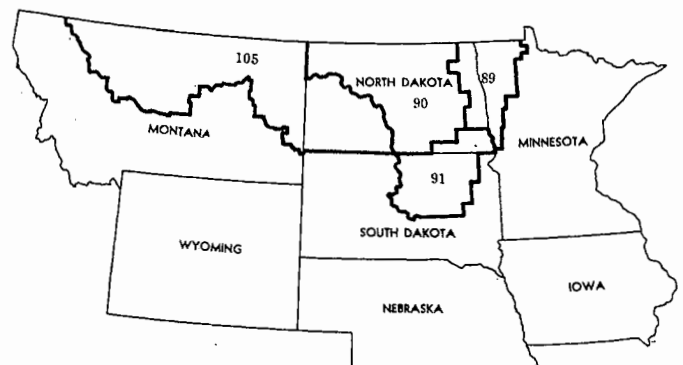


FIGURE 8.