

The comparison given in Table 3 regarding the difference by States in the average investment per farm for all farms and for stock farms, shows rather clearly that stock ranching now has a higher investment requirement than do most other types of farming, in the Western States. These data also show that the arid and semidesert areas have larger operating units in terms of acres, and larger operating units in terms of scale of enterprise. Arizona and Nevada are outstanding examples.

TABLE 3.—AVERAGE VALUE PER FARM OF LAND AND BUILDINGS, FOR ALL FARMS AND FOR LIVESTOCK FARMS OTHER THAN DAIRY AND POULTRY, 17 WESTERN STATES: 1954

State	Average value of land and buildings per farm		State	Average value of land and buildings per farm	
	All farms (dollars)	Livestock farms other than dairy and poultry <sup>1</sup> (dollars)		All farms (dollars)	Livestock farms other than dairy and poultry <sup>1</sup> (dollars)
Arizona.....	83,530	95,766	North Dakota....	24,505	26,504
California.....	60,118	90,384	Oklahoma.....	18,913	26,655
Colorado.....	36,389	54,372	Oregon.....	27,803	49,431
Idaho.....	31,662	41,856	South Dakota....	28,683	33,160
Kansas.....	34,711	40,473	Texas.....	29,265	65,565
Montana.....	43,108	53,549	Utah.....	23,398	36,855
Nebraska.....	34,395	37,681	Washington.....	29,116	35,885
Nevada.....	61,056	95,838	Wyoming.....	45,887	67,152
New Mexico.....	38,774	76,525			

<sup>1</sup> The arithmetic mean is about \$56,000, for the 17 Western States.

In addition to its larger requirements for capital investment in land and buildings, the stock ranch has the investment requirement for the livestock. As a rule, this runs higher than the personal-property investment requirements for most of the types of farms other than the stock ranch. That is to say, in terms of total enterprise the stock ranch has one of the highest, if not the highest, investment requirement for any type of agricultural enterprise.

In Tables 4 and 5, a comparison is given by States concerning the trend of the last 35 years in the population of grazing animals for the 17 Western States. The pattern of this trend is fairly similar for all of the States, except for certain of the Plains States. Certain of the Plains States have not followed the trend in the reduction of sheep numbers from the 1930 peak to 1954. An analysis of this information in somewhat more detail indicates that this situation is due to an increase in farm-flock sheep operations in the eastern parts of the Plains States.

Sheep numbers in this area now stand near the very low point reached in 1920. A peak in sheep numbers was reached in 1930. There has been a considerable liquidation in sheep numbers since World War II and this was accentuated somewhat by the Korean conflict of 1950. Something comparable to this took place in World War I resulting in reduced numbers of sheep for the year 1920. Over the last 50 years or more a rather definite interrelated cyclical shift has taken place between cattle numbers and sheep numbers on western stock ranches. Ranches tend to go out of sheep when cattle become relatively more profitable and to go back to sheep when the reverse situation develops. The trends of livestock population shown in Tables 4 and 5 should be interpreted with this in mind.

TABLE 4.—ALL CATTLE, 17 WESTERN STATES: 1920 TO 1954

(Number in thousands)

State	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1954
Total, 17 Western States.....	29,075	27,907	28,726	30,481	25,552	37,682	34,747	43,334
Arizona.....	822	1,069	695	771	638	750	656	950
California.....	2,008	1,918	2,103	2,132	2,056	2,831	2,757	3,745
Colorado.....	1,757	1,436	1,454	1,590	1,144	1,781	1,776	2,098
Idaho.....	715	606	622	784	663	949	949	1,357
Kansas.....	2,975	3,068	3,224	3,386	2,508	4,062	3,509	4,305
Montana.....	1,269	1,322	1,290	1,530	1,040	1,817	1,758	2,600
Nebraska.....	3,154	3,283	3,150	3,232	2,559	3,979	3,629	4,899
Nevada.....	356	419	308	342	339	479	424	555
New Mexico.....	1,300	1,267	1,055	1,071	843	1,091	1,138	1,160
North Dakota.....	1,335	1,341	1,454	1,219	1,178	1,878	1,588	2,104
Oklahoma.....	2,074	1,657	2,098	2,632	2,195	3,101	2,658	3,302
Oregon.....	851	784	805	928	799	1,101	1,099	1,490
South Dakota.....	2,348	2,022	1,974	1,632	1,496	2,544	2,513	3,440
Texas.....	6,157	5,846	6,603	7,222	6,282	8,864	7,825	8,240
Utah.....	506	504	442	411	374	562	562	728
Washington.....	573	582	625	741	698	910	878	1,126
Wyoming.....	875	783	824	858	740	983	1,028	1,235

TABLE 5.—SHEEP AND LAMBS, 17 WESTERN STATES: 1920 TO 1954

(Number in thousands)

State	1920	1925	1930	1935	1940	1945	1950	1954
Total, 17 Western States.....	22,988	25,583	39,872	34,456	29,059	30,922	22,763	22,655
Arizona.....	882	1,164	1,340	931	624	511	473	489
California.....	2,400	3,045	4,084	2,724	1,707	2,396	2,057	2,050
Colorado.....	1,813	2,244	2,505	2,449	1,681	2,394	1,657	1,914
Idaho.....	2,356	1,746	3,302	2,209	1,372	1,336	1,509	1,198
Kansas.....	361	315	574	714	547	943	511	555
Montana.....	2,083	2,188	4,027	3,823	3,010	2,906	1,337	1,732
Nebraska.....	673	647	496	689	510	931	314	602
Nevada.....	881	1,184	1,202	834	514	534	321	370
New Mexico.....	1,640	1,743	2,291	1,801	1,554	1,618	1,197	1,011
North Dakota.....	299	311	857	740	823	810	386	698
Oklahoma.....	105	62	222	309	313	231	151	223
Oregon.....	2,002	1,775	3,319	2,210	1,423	1,032	913	861
South Dakota.....	844	644	1,150	1,320	1,370	1,771	880	1,395
Texas.....	2,573	3,137	7,021	7,027	8,448	8,586	7,750	5,734
Utah.....	1,692	2,355	2,922	2,452	1,597	1,672	1,101	1,397
Washington.....	624	516	1,143	748	487	447	368	252
Wyoming.....	1,860	2,507	3,417	3,476	3,079	2,804	1,829	2,084

Cattle numbers in the Western States are now at an all-time peak. It is much above anything previously shown by recorded statistics. It seems probable that this is, in some degree, a trend in itself, not too much associated with any economic interrelationship with the trend in sheep numbers. This rise in cattle population in the Western States was generated partly by the high prices and profits prevailing during the years 1950, 1951, and 1952; but it also is the result of the rising human population on the West Coast and of the consequent enlarged market for livestock in the West and in the United States as a whole.

For later comments on this subject of differences in stock ranching by States for the Western States, reference is here made to the concept of principal economic subregions and of the State economic areas as shown in Figure 10. A considerable summation of Census data has been made for such subregions. These subregions have been delineated on the basis of similarity in the characteristics of the land resources of the economic factors and of the types of farming.