

FARMERS AND FARM PRODUCTION

Class III farms are the largest group in the Eastern, Northern, and Western Corn Belt, but in the Central Corn Belt Class II farms are most numerous and in the Southern Corn Belt the largest group is Class IV. This is true for both cash-grain and livestock types of farms. The smallest farms, those in Economic Classes V and VI, comprise 16.6 percent of all cash-grain farms and 18 percent of all livestock farms in the Corn Belt, compared with 21.6 percent of the cash-grain farms and 34.3 percent of the livestock farms in the United States as a whole. Within the Corn Belt these two low-income classes of farms account for the largest percentages of all commercial farms in the eastern and southern parts of the region.

TABLE 10.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LIVESTOCK OTHER THAN DAIRY AND POULTRY FARMS, BY ECONOMIC CLASS, IN THE UNITED STATES AND CORN BELT: 1954

Item and economic class of farm	United States	Corn Belt					
		Total	East-ern	Cent-ral	North-ern	West-ern	South-ern
Number of farms:							
Total livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	604,888	326,662	51,480	72,070	40,608	91,367	71,137
Class I.....	39,835	22,708	3,463	8,091	2,604	6,739	1,811
II.....	121,287	83,555	12,916	26,355	11,925	22,920	9,439
III.....	152,413	94,538	13,414	20,693	14,803	28,060	17,568
IV.....	143,072	66,978	10,469	10,331	7,900	19,725	18,553
V.....	137,490	40,000	7,782	4,785	2,496	9,851	15,086
VI.....	100,791	18,883	3,436	1,815	880	4,072	8,680
Percentage distribution of farms:							
Total livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Class I.....	5.7	7.0	6.7	11.2	6.4	7.4	2.5
II.....	17.5	25.6	25.1	36.6	29.4	25.1	13.3
III.....	21.9	28.9	26.1	28.7	36.5	30.7	24.7
IV.....	20.6	20.5	20.3	14.3	19.5	21.6	26.1
V.....	19.8	12.2	15.1	6.6	6.1	10.8	21.2
VI.....	14.5	5.8	6.7	2.5	2.2	4.5	12.2

TABLE 11.—SPECIFIED ITEMS FOR COMMERCIAL FARMS: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION AMONG PRINCIPAL TYPES OF FARMS, IN THE CORN BELT: 1954

Item	All commercial farms	Cash-grain farms	Livestock farms ¹	Other commercial farms ²
Farms.....	100.0	33.2	41.0	25.8
All land in farms.....	100.0	35.1	44.3	20.0
Total cropland.....	100.0	38.9	41.0	20.1
Total woodland.....	100.0	27.0	46.7	26.3
Pasture other than cropland or woodland.....	100.0	21.3	59.4	19.3
Other land ³	100.0	35.5	41.5	23.0
Total pasture.....	100.0	22.1	56.5	21.4
Cropland harvested.....	100.0	40.5	39.7	19.8
Corn harvested for grain.....	100.0	41.1	41.7	17.2
Soybeans harvested for beans.....	100.0	66.9	20.3	12.8
Horses and mules.....	100.0	21.0	52.1	26.9
All cattle and calves.....	100.0	19.4	59.0	21.6
Cows, including heifers that have calved.....	100.0	21.9	50.5	27.6
Milk cows.....	100.0	20.4	34.5	45.1
All hogs and pigs.....	100.0	13.8	69.2	17.0
Chickens 4 months old and over.....	100.0	25.8	41.0	33.2
All sheep.....	100.0	19.7	64.5	15.8
Ewes.....	100.0	22.5	58.9	18.6
Value of all farm products sold.....	100.0	30.3	49.5	20.2
Value of all crops sold.....	100.0	68.6	18.1	18.3
Value of all livestock and livestock products sold.....	100.0	11.4	67.4	21.2

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.

² Dairy farms, poultry farms, general farms, other field-crop farms, cotton farms, vegetable farms, fruit-and-nut farms, and miscellaneous farms.

³ House lots, roads, wasteland, etc.

The percentage distribution of farms, of cropland, and of other land in farms among cash-grain farms, livestock farms, and other commercial farms in the Corn Belt in 1954 is shown in table 11. Also shown in this table are the percentage distributions of production of specified crops, numbers of livestock, and value of products sold among these groups of farms.

SIZE OF FARM

The great bulk of the farms in the Corn Belt have between 70 and 500 acres of land (table 12). Farms in this range of acreage comprised 84 percent of all commercial farms in the belt. About 11 percent of the farms are smaller than 70 acres and less than 5 percent are larger than 500 acres. In the United States as a whole 9 percent of the farms are units of 500 acres or more, but 29 percent have less than 70 acres of land.

The average size of all farms in the United States in 1954 was 242 acres. In most of the counties in the eastern half of the country the average size was less than 200 acres (fig. 11). In the western half of the country there were large areas where the average size was 2,500 acres or over. In the majority of counties in the Corn Belt the average size of farm was between 100 and 200 acres.

The average size of commercial farms in the United States was 310 acres. The average for the United States, of course, includes the large farms and ranches of the western United States as well as small farms in the eastern part of the country. Two out of every 10 commercial farms in the Corn Belt were approximately quarter-section units, or in the range of 140 to 179 acres (table 13). Four farms out of every 10 had from 180 to 499 acres of land. The average size of all commercial farms in the Corn Belt in 1954 was 214 acres.

Small farms are relatively most numerous in the eastern part of the Corn Belt and large farms in the western part. In the Eastern Corn Belt, more than half of the commercial farms are smaller than 140 acres, but in the Western Corn Belt such farms make up only a fifth of the total. On the other hand, farms of 260 acres or larger comprise only a seventh of the total in the Eastern Corn Belt but account for more than a third of the total in the Western

TABLE 12.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF COMMERCIAL FARMS IN SPECIFIED ACREAGE SIZE GROUPS, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND CORN BELT REGIONS: 1954

Size group	United States	Corn Belt					
		Total	East-ern	Cent-ral	North-ern	West-ern	South-ern
Number of farms:							
Total all sizes.....	3,327,889	797,259	177,280	167,845	108,569	186,176	157,389
Under 30 acres.....	496,798	35,301	14,082	6,596	3,070	5,973	5,580
30 to 69 acres.....	483,281	55,000	25,440	7,656	4,126	6,757	11,021
70 to 139 acres.....	760,815	179,264	67,934	34,508	23,755	24,813	38,254
140 to 179 acres.....	403,032	167,208	25,628	41,322	26,860	38,061	25,737
180 to 259 acres.....	422,131	170,717	29,086	41,032	26,431	30,877	34,291
260 to 499 acres.....	451,921	161,925	21,403	32,593	22,011	51,586	34,272
500 to 999 acres.....	182,550	31,654	3,281	3,862	3,016	14,275	7,220
1,000 acres and over.....	127,361	6,190	366	276	300	4,234	1,014
Percentage of farms:							
Total all sizes.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 30 acres.....	14.9	4.4	7.9	3.9	2.8	3.2	3.5
30 to 69 acres.....	14.5	6.9	14.4	4.6	3.8	3.6	7.0
70 to 139 acres.....	22.9	22.5	32.7	20.6	21.9	13.3	24.3
140 to 179 acres.....	12.1	19.7	14.5	24.6	23.8	20.8	16.4
180 to 259 acres.....	12.7	21.4	16.4	24.4	24.3	21.4	21.8
260 to 499 acres.....	13.6	20.3	12.1	19.4	20.3	27.7	21.8
500 to 999 acres.....	5.5	4.0	1.9	2.3	2.8	7.7	4.6
1,000 acres and over.....	3.8	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.3	2.3	0.6