

HORSES AND MULES

Data on the number and distribution of horses and mules on Corn Belt farms are given in tables 68 to 72 along with data on other livestock. Horses and mules are important as work power, and so should be mentioned briefly at this point.

The number of horses and mules on farms in the North Central States has shown a decline in every Census year since 1920. The total number on farms in the North Central States in 1954 was only about 9 percent of the number in 1920.

In 1954 there were 451,000 horses and mules on commercial farms in the Corn Belt. Only 1 farm out of 4 reported horses or mules that year. Horses and mules were found most frequently on farms in the Southern Corn Belt, where they were reported on 37.2 percent of all the commercial farms and on 43.6 percent of the livestock farms. They were found relatively least frequently (on only 10.7 percent of the farms) among cash-grain farms in the Eastern Corn Belt. The average number of horses and mules on the farms reporting was 2 in every region, on cash-grain and livestock farms as well as on all commercial farms. The average number per farm reporting was also 2 for each of the economic classes of farms except Class I farms where the average number was 3.

AUTOMOBILES AND HOME FACILITIES

Upwards of 90 percent of the commercial farms in the Corn Belt as a whole had automobiles (table 41). The proportion of farmers reporting automobiles varied somewhat between the regions, being as high as 94 percent in the Central and Northern Corn Belt and as low as 83 percent in the Southern Corn Belt. There was practically no difference between cash-grain and livestock farms in the same region as to possession of automobiles.

Practically all commercial farms in the Corn Belt have the use of electric current. Electricity was reported by about 97 percent of the farms in 1954 (table 41). The great increase in use of electricity on these farms is an event of the last 10 years. In 1945, only 56.8 percent of the farms in the 5 Corn Belt States had the use of electricity (2). In 1945, 59 percent of the farms in Iowa had electricity; in 1955 the proportion was 97.6 percent.

Telephones were reported on about 78 percent of the commercial farms. The proportion having telephones ranged from 87 percent in the Central Corn Belt to 69 percent in the Southern Corn Belt.

Television sets were reported on 1 out of every 2 cash-grain and livestock farms and on only slightly fewer of the other commercial farms. The proportion was highest in the Eastern Corn Belt and lowest in the Northern and Southern Corn Belt. Having or not having a TV set depends upon being within range of a TV broadcasting station as well as upon having the income available for buying the receiving set.

About two-thirds of the farms in the Corn Belt had piped running water in 1954. The proportion was highest on livestock farms in the Eastern Corn Belt (82.5 percent) and was lowest on cash-grain farms in the Southern Corn Belt (47.7 percent). Piped running water was more common on livestock farms than on cash-grain farms. Running water is an especial convenience and labor-saver in connection with livestock production.

Home freezers were reported on about 45 percent of the farms in the Corn Belt as a whole. Generally, they were found somewhat more frequently on livestock farms in the Eastern Corn Belt and were least common on commercial farms other than cash-grain or livestock in the Southern Corn Belt.

In the case of automobiles and facilities such as electricity, telephone, TV set, and piped running water, as in the case of farm machinery and equipment, there was a positive correlation between the percentage of farms reporting and size (economic class) of farm (table 42). For example, electricity was reported on 99.1 percent of the Class I cash-grain farms and on 84.3 percent of the Class VI cash-grain farms. Piped running water was reported on 94.8 percent of the Class I livestock farms but on only 36.9 percent of the Class VI farms of this type.

TABLE 41.—PERCENT OF COMMERCIAL FARMS IN EACH TYPE REPORTING SPECIFIED FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT, IN THE CORN BELT AND COMPONENT REGIONS: 1954

Region and type of farm	Auto- mobile	Elec- tricity	Tele- phone	Televi- sion set	Piped running water	Home freezer
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Total Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	90.5	96.7	78.2	48.7	66.7	44.9
Cash-grain farms.....	91.4	95.6	73.8	50.5	63.4	43.8
Livestock farms ¹	91.0	97.4	82.4	50.6	70.6	46.5
Eastern Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	90.0	97.7	76.9	62.7	78.8	54.3
Cash-grain farms.....	91.2	97.6	73.4	64.1	76.0	51.5
Livestock farms ¹	90.2	98.2	81.6	65.8	82.5	58.8
Central Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	94.0	97.6	87.3	56.5	72.8	52.1
Cash-grain farms.....	94.2	96.8	84.1	56.3	68.8	51.7
Livestock farms ¹	94.8	98.5	90.8	60.0	78.3	53.5
Northern Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	94.1	96.5	79.1	37.7	64.6	46.1
Cash-grain farms.....	94.2	94.1	69.9	35.8	55.0	41.6
Livestock farms ¹	94.4	97.5	84.8	41.5	71.3	49.2
Western Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	92.2	95.8	78.2	44.0	65.2	37.7
Cash-grain farms.....	92.2	93.3	72.3	41.4	57.3	32.2
Livestock farms ¹	92.8	97.1	82.0	47.9	71.9	42.2
Southern Corn Belt:						
All commercial farms.....	82.6	95.6	69.3	37.9	49.5	34.1
Cash-grain farms.....	83.9	94.5	62.0	40.9	47.7	36.0
Livestock farms ¹	83.4	96.0	73.8	38.9	52.1	34.3

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.

TABLE 42.—PERCENT OF COMMERCIAL FARMS IN EACH TYPE, BY ECONOMIC CLASS, REPORTING SPECIFIED FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT, IN THE CORN BELT: 1954

Type and economic class of farm	Auto- mobile	Elec- tricity	Tele- phone	Televi- sion set	Piped running water	Home freezer
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
All commercial farms.....	90.5	96.7	78.2	48.7	66.7	44.9
Cash-grain farms:						
Total.....	91.4	95.6	73.8	50.5	63.4	43.8
Class I.....	98.1	99.1	90.3	74.8	90.5	74.1
II.....	97.2	98.7	85.8	63.4	79.9	60.7
III.....	94.0	97.2	77.3	50.8	64.9	45.0
IV.....	89.4	94.4	66.6	43.3	54.0	34.5
V.....	82.5	90.5	59.7	40.9	48.8	28.5
VI.....	69.9	84.3	50.2	27.6	37.0	19.3
Livestock farms: ¹						
Total.....	91.0	97.4	82.4	50.6	70.6	46.5
Class I.....	98.3	99.5	95.7	72.7	94.8	70.2
II.....	96.8	99.2	91.3	62.6	85.8	59.6
III.....	93.9	98.4	84.7	50.8	73.1	47.3
IV.....	88.7	97.0	77.3	42.0	60.3	37.1
V.....	82.2	95.0	69.9	39.0	52.1	31.8
VI.....	68.7	88.0	60.5	25.0	36.9	19.7

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.