

The average acreage of soybeans harvested for beans per commercial farm reporting was 36 acres, the average for cash-grain farms was 45 acres, and for livestock farms, 27 acres. Cash-grain farms had substantially larger acreages of soybeans than did livestock farms in all regions. The acreage of soybeans per farm reporting was as large on cash-grain farms in the Southern Corn Belt as in the Central Corn Belt, and almost as large in the Northern Corn Belt. Since nearly all farmers had corn and a large percentage in every region had soybeans, it is evident that the acreage of intertilled crops (row crops) approaches or exceeds 100 acres on many farms.

In general, the acreage of wheat threshed or combined per farm reporting was smaller than the acreage of soybeans. In the Western Corn Belt, however, acreages of wheat per farm were substantially larger than acreages of soybeans. Cash-grain farms had larger acreages of wheat than did livestock farms except in the Eastern Corn Belt where the average was 23 acres on both types.

Livestock farms generally had somewhat larger acreages of oats than did cash-grain farms. However, in the Central Corn Belt the average oat enterprise on both types of farms was 39 acres, and in the Northern Corn Belt it was largest on the cash-grain farms.

A look at the average acreages of the principal crops on the different economic classes of farms gives a clearer mental picture of the relative sizes of these farms and the general scale of their crop operations. Class I cash-grain farms averaged 196 acres of corn per farm reporting, while Class II farms averaged 97 acres, and Class III farms, 64 acres (table 55). The average acreage of corn per farm reporting declined consistently with economic class to an average of only 20 acres on Class VI cash-grain farms. On livestock farms the pattern was similar, although the average acreages of corn were substantially smaller on the Classes I, II, and III livestock farms than they were on these classes of the cash-grain farms. With soybeans, wheat, and oats—as with corn—the pattern is consistent. The average acreage of these crops per farm reporting declines as we proceed from Class I to Class VI, reflecting the strong correlation between income size (economic class) of farm and the acreage size of the principal crop enterprises. Economic Class V cash-grain farms had an average of less than 30 acres of corn, 20 acres of soybeans, and less than 20 acres of wheat or oats per farm reporting these crops. The contrast in average size of operations on Class V farms and Class II farms is striking. Obviously, farm incomes must be relatively very low on the Class V farms and even lower on the Class VI farms.

TABLE 55.—AVERAGE ACREAGE OF PRINCIPAL CROPS PER FARM REPORTING, BY TYPE AND ECONOMIC CLASS OF FARM, IN THE CORN BELT: 1954

Type and economic class of farm	Corn harvested for grain	Soybeans harvested for beans	Wheat threshed or combined	Oats threshed or combined
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
All commercial farms.....	56	36	29	34
Cash-grain farms:				
Total.....	65	45	36	34
Class I.....	196	135	91	68
II.....	97	63	51	44
III.....	64	40	36	34
IV.....	43	28	25	25
V.....	29	20	16	17
VI.....	20	15	12	14
Livestock farms: ¹				
Total.....	58	27	25	36
Class I.....	122	54	56	61
II.....	74	32	32	44
III.....	53	22	22	35
IV.....	38	16	16	27
V.....	29	13	13	18
VI.....	19	10	10	14

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.

The quantity of grain produced per farm reporting is another useful measure of the size of farm business. It comes a step closer to indicating the potential income than does the acreage of crops. The average quantity of corn produced in 1954 per commercial farm reporting this crop in the Corn Belt was 2,624 bushels (table 56). In most regions of the Corn Belt the cash-grain farms produced somewhat more corn per farm than the livestock farms, but the differences between types were smaller than the differences between the averages per commercial farm in different regions. Corn production per farm was largest in the Central Corn Belt and smallest in the Southern Corn Belt, but in all regions corn production stands out as the big crop enterprise.

TABLE 56.—QUANTITY PRODUCED PER FARM REPORTING CROP HARVESTED, FOR PRINCIPAL CROPS, BY TYPE OF FARM IN THE CORN BELT AND COMPONENT REGIONS: 1954

Region and type of farm	Corn	Soybeans	Wheat	Oats
	<i>Bushels</i>	<i>Bushels</i>	<i>Bushels</i>	<i>Bushels</i>
Total Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	2,624	793	737	1,216
Cash-grain farms.....	2,995	1,006	898	1,190
Livestock farms ¹	2,729	604	648	1,344
Eastern Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	2,489	765	617	789
Cash-grain farms.....	2,729	902	674	777
Livestock farms ¹	2,839	650	663	906
Central Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	3,872	1,074	759	1,480
Cash-grain farms.....	4,224	1,308	856	1,446
Livestock farms ¹	3,836	750	564	1,575
Northern Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	2,779	727	265	1,495
Cash-grain farms.....	3,158	935	332	1,635
Livestock farms ¹	3,107	562	245	1,555
Western Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	2,528	669	988	1,372
Cash-grain farms.....	2,737	833	1,268	1,231
Livestock farms ¹	2,591	540	725	1,525
Southern Corn Belt:				
All commercial farms.....	1,082	556	727	773
Cash-grain farms.....	1,365	755	937	741
Livestock farms ¹	1,112	460	607	848

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.

The volume of soybean production per farm on the farms reporting this crop indicates the generally substantial scale of this cash-crop enterprise, especially in the Central Corn Belt. Even on livestock farms in the Southern Corn Belt the average production per farm reporting was 460 bushels. At 1954 season average prices, 460 bushels had a value of about \$1,100. The volume of wheat produced per farm reporting exceeded the volume of soybeans produced per farm that reported soybeans, in the Western and Southern Corn Belt, but it was much smaller than soybean production per farm in the Central and Northern Corn Belt. The volume of oat production per farm reporting ranks second only to that of corn throughout the Corn Belt. The average size of the oat crop per farm reporting ranged from 741 bushels on cash-grain farms in the Southern Corn Belt to 1,635 bushels on cash-grain farms in the Northern Corn Belt.

Quantities shown in table 56 provide a generalized down-on-the-farm picture of the volume of crops available for sale or for feeding. They also help to explain the popularity of mechanical harvesting machinery and trucks as labor-saving equipment on Corn Belt farms. In addition, they indicate the scale of farm-storage buildings needed for crops that are to be fed on the farm, and for cash crops if these are to be held on the farm for a period before marketing.