

SPECIFIED EXPENSES

In the 1954 Census of Agriculture information was obtained on expenditures for machine hire, hired labor, feed for livestock and poultry, gasoline and other petroleum fuel and oil, commercial fertilizer and fertilizing material, and lime and liming material. These items account for a major share of the cash expenses on most farms (5). It is estimated that, in general, the specified expenses account for approximately two-thirds of all the farm expenses on Corn Belt farms, exclusive of land rent, interest on capital investment, and depreciation of buildings, machinery, and equipment.

Every farm did not have expenditures for each of the items covered by the Census inquiry. The proportion of commercial farms reporting specified expenditures by region and type of farm in the Corn Belt is shown in table 83.

About 70 percent of all the commercial farms reported expenditures for machine hire. This item included customwork such as tractor hire, combining, threshing, silo filling, baling, plowing, and spraying. Farms reporting machine hire were relatively most numerous in the Northern Corn Belt (75.3 percent), and relatively least numerous in the Eastern Corn Belt (65.1 percent).

Expenditures for hired labor were reported on 51.8 percent of the commercial farms in the Corn Belt. Almost half the farms used no hired help. The Central Corn Belt had the largest percentage of farms using hired labor (55.5 percent), and the Southern Corn Belt had the smallest proportion (47 percent). Hired labor was used by a larger proportion of the livestock farms than of the cash-grain farms in every region.

Expenditures for feed for livestock and poultry were reported on 89.2 percent of the commercial farms. This was a larger proportion of the farms than those reporting any other specified expense except for gasoline and oil. Items included under feed expenditures were grain, hay, mill feeds, concentrates and roughages purchased, and payments for grinding and mixing feed. The largest percentage of farms reporting expenditures for feed was in the Northern Corn Belt (91.6 percent), and the smallest percentage was in the Eastern Corn Belt (85.2 percent). A considerably larger proportion of livestock farmers than of cash-grain farmers reported expenditures for feed. For example, in the Eastern Corn Belt, 94.7 percent of the livestock farmers and 73.6 percent of the cash-grain farmers reported this expense.

Expenditures for gasoline and other petroleum fuel and oil for the farm business were reported by 92.2 percent of the commercial farms. The highest proportions of farms reporting this item were in the Northern, Western, and Central Corn Belt. This item was reported somewhat more frequently on cash-grain farms than on livestock farms in every region, reflecting the generally more complete degree of mechanization on the cash-grain farms. Farmers who did not report expenditures for gasoline and oil apparently were mainly those who use horse and mule power exclusively and those who hired tractors or custom operators to do all their field work.

Commercial fertilizer or fertilizing materials were bought by about two-thirds of all the commercial farms in the Corn Belt in 1954. The highest percentage of farms reporting expenditures for fertilizer was in the Eastern Corn Belt (88.1 percent), and the smallest percentage was among farms in the Western Corn Belt (50.2 percent). In the Eastern, Southern, and Central Corn Belt, the proportion of cash-grain farms reporting expenditures for fertilizer was larger than the proportion of livestock farms reporting fertilizer expenditures, but the opposite was true in the other two regions.

Expenditures for lime and liming material were reported by about a fifth of the commercial farms. Lime expenditures were reported relatively most frequently among farmers in the Southern and Eastern Corn Belt, and relatively least frequently among farmers in the Western Corn Belt. The percentage of farms reporting expenditures for lime generally varied considerably more between regions than between types of farms within regions.

TABLE 83.—PERCENT OF COMMERCIAL FARMS REPORTING SPECIFIED EXPENDITURES, BY TYPE OF FARM, IN THE CORN BELT AND COMPONENT REGIONS: 1954

| Region and type of farm | Specified farm expenditures | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| | Machine hire | Hired labor | Feed | Gasoline and oil | Commercial fertilizer | Lime and liming material |
| Total Corn Belt: | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Percent</i> |
| All commercial farms..... | 69.7 | 51.8 | 89.2 | 92.2 | 66.5 | 19.0 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 69.7 | 49.8 | 78.4 | 95.1 | 68.8 | 17.8 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 70.3 | 56.0 | 95.7 | 91.8 | 65.4 | 20.9 |
| Eastern Corn Belt: | | | | | | |
| All commercial farms..... | 65.1 | 51.1 | 85.2 | 89.3 | 88.1 | 26.1 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 66.1 | 47.8 | 73.6 | 93.2 | 92.7 | 24.4 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 64.8 | 56.0 | 94.7 | 88.1 | 86.9 | 31.6 |
| Central Corn Belt: | | | | | | |
| All commercial farms..... | 70.3 | 55.5 | 90.1 | 94.1 | 61.3 | 20.1 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 71.7 | 54.1 | 81.7 | 95.7 | 64.4 | 20.1 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 69.5 | 58.9 | 96.8 | 94.2 | 61.2 | 22.2 |
| Northern Corn Belt: | | | | | | |
| All commercial farms..... | 75.3 | 52.9 | 91.6 | 95.7 | 63.9 | 13.9 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 74.2 | 49.4 | 79.7 | 97.0 | 54.3 | 6.5 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 74.9 | 58.1 | 96.3 | 95.8 | 71.6 | 18.7 |
| Western Corn Belt: | | | | | | |
| All commercial farms..... | 72.6 | 52.7 | 90.1 | 94.3 | 50.2 | 7.7 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 74.2 | 51.4 | 79.8 | 96.8 | 49.3 | 6.4 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 72.3 | 55.9 | 96.8 | 93.8 | 52.5 | 8.7 |
| Southern Corn Belt: | | | | | | |
| All commercial farms..... | 67.0 | 47.0 | 90.0 | 88.4 | 68.8 | 26.8 |
| Cash-grain farms..... | 63.0 | 43.5 | 78.2 | 93.7 | 74.4 | 27.0 |
| Livestock farms ¹ | 69.7 | 52.1 | 94.7 | 87.2 | 67.2 | 28.7 |

¹ Livestock other than dairy and poultry farms.

Machine hire was reported somewhat more frequently among Class II and Class III farms than among the higher and lower economic classes of farms (table 84). Hired labor was reported relatively most frequently among the higher economic classes, ranging among the cash-grain farms, for example, from 88.8 percent of the Class I farms down to 18.2 percent of the Class VI farms. Expenditures for feed also were generally reported relatively more frequently among the upper economic classes of farms, but the range in frequency of farms reporting was greater among cash-grain farms than among livestock farms. Even among the Class VI livestock farms, 87.5 percent reported expenditures for feed. Gasoline and oil purchases were reported by nearly all Classes I, II, and III farms and by 60 to 75 percent of Class VI farms.

Commercial fertilizer and lime also were reported relatively more frequently by the upper economic classes of farms. Among cash-grain farms, for example, the range from Class I to Class VI farms in percentage of farms reporting expenditures for fertilizer was from 88.4 percent down to 48 percent. For lime on livestock farms, the percentage of farms reporting ranged from 30.9 percent of the Class I farms down to 9.7 percent of the Class VI farms.