

D. OPERATING CHARACTERISTICS AND FACILITIES BY CLASS OF FARM, 1949 AND 1954

Discussion in this section centers around several comparisons. They include comparisons of farms by economic class and by region. Phases considered are acreage and land use, machinery and other operating facilities, farm expenditures for such items as feed and tractor fuel, days work off farm, and specified home and living facilities. These comparisons provide valuable information on use of resources and on levels of living both by economic class and by region. They also form the basis for additional inferences as to trends in commercial and part-time farming.

Land Use and Farm Values

In general, the trends between 1949 and 1954, discussed in this section, show that farms have been upgraded (moved upward from one economic class to another), that values per farm and per acre have increased, that size of farm has continued to increase, and that the extent of cultivated or harvested acreage required to establish a farm in a given economic class has declined. This decline is attributed to the increase in yields that took place between 1949 and 1954. Values per acre increased substantially more for farms in Class I and Class II than for those in Classes III, IV, V, and VI. Although this may reflect a growing advantage on the part of Classes I and II farms in taking advantage of new capital and innovations, it indicates the increasing numbers in these classes of such farms as fruit-and-nut and cash-grain. These farms characteristically have high values per acre. Residential

farm values increased more per acre than did the values of the lower commercial classes, thus reflecting the effects of suburban expansion and population growth in the country as a whole.

Part-time and residential farms, as defined in the 1949 and 1954 Censuses, seem to be declining in relative importance in the total agricultural picture. The number of part-time and residential farms decreased sharply between 1950 and 1954. The evidence suggests that many of the operators who moved out of these classes have discontinued farming, others have reduced their farming operations. At the same time, a large number of commercial farmers are working off the farm 100 days or more. Inferences that part-time and residential farms have moved into higher economic classes do not appear to be well-grounded.

Average acreage per farm.—Acreage figures suggest two interesting trends. (1) Farms in general have continued to grow larger, according to acreage per unit, and (2) farms have moved up from one economic class to a higher one. Between 1950 and 1954, the average of all land in farms increased from 215.6 acres to 242.5 acres, an average increase of about 12.5 percent per farm in that 4-year period. This trend was in the same direction in each of the three regions given in Tables 13 and 14. The change in the North was from an average of 194.6 acres per farm to 213.2 acres, or 9.6 percent; in the South, from 148.7 acres to 167.0 acres, or 12.3 percent; and in the West, from 703.0 acres to 798.9 acres, or 13.6 percent.

Table 13.—AVERAGE LAND IN FARMS, CROPLAND HARVESTED PER FARM, AND VALUE OF FARMS (LAND AND BUILDINGS) PER FARM AND PER ACRE, BY ECONOMIC CLASS, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1954 AND 1950

Region and economic class	All land in farms, average per farm		Cropland harvested per farm		Value of farms (land and buildings)			
					Average per farm		Average per acre	
	1954	1950	1954	1949	1954	1950	1954	1950
UNITED STATES								
All farms.....	242.5	215.6	81.1	72.8	13,761	13,911	84.82	66.75
Class I.....	1,939.1	2,421.7	397.6	442.2	134,169	110,008	73.30	45.65
Class II.....	537.8	566.8	201.1	209.6	51,510	41,318	97.03	74.85
Class III.....	311.9	298.2	128.8	131.0	27,992	22,918	89.87	77.68
Class IV.....	201.0	191.2	75.6	77.8	15,880	13,162	79.23	68.90
Class V.....	134.3	122.8	41.0	42.4	9,829	7,829	73.89	63.57
Class VI.....	97.1	84.9	23.2	24.9	6,096	4,648	62.48	54.79
Part-time.....	81.1	75.6	17.8	19.5	7,781	6,117	98.86	80.90
Residential.....	47.7	50.0	7.3	9.2	5,784	4,675	127.34	95.36
Abnormal.....	14,502.4	9,178.9	290.1	250.5	160,601	105,795	30.22	25.91
THE NORTH								
All farms.....	213.2	194.6	113.4	101.5	23,647	17,152	107.76	86.94
Class I.....	773.6	999.8	347.5	368.9	92,787	75,352	120.37	81.41
Class II.....	369.6	383.8	209.5	212.7	49,356	39,674	131.73	103.66
Class III.....	263.9	252.7	143.7	141.1	27,966	22,908	104.88	90.38
Class IV.....	200.7	188.5	97.5	94.7	17,293	14,177	84.42	74.37
Class V.....	142.4	134.6	58.8	58.0	11,577	9,331	78.66	68.02
Class VI.....	99.5	98.7	34.9	35.6	7,883	6,300	72.33	62.56
Part-time.....	67.6	68.6	22.0	23.0	8,149	6,812	117.04	98.08
Residential.....	42.5	46.2	9.1	10.7	6,788	5,780	155.53	123.09
Abnormal.....	857.2	857.5	283.3	226.5	112,139	77,540	161.70	102.83
THE SOUTH								
All farms.....	167.0	148.7	44.6	42.0	11,972	8,495	74.97	58.39
Class I.....	2,286.3	2,910.8	444.1	515.6	161,009	126,448	66.73	42.09
Class II.....	691.7	706.5	187.8	207.2	51,685	41,713	74.62	60.76
Class III.....	311.2	314.0	95.1	105.1	24,544	20,435	80.50	66.03
Class IV.....	162.0	162.0	50.0	54.1	12,308	10,367	78.93	64.93
Class V.....	112.6	103.4	30.3	32.8	7,631	6,046	70.62	59.05
Class VI.....	87.4	75.2	19.0	21.6	4,960	3,749	58.33	50.22
Part-time.....	86.4	77.4	15.8	18.1	6,587	4,932	78.13	63.03
Residential.....	49.3	51.4	6.7	8.7	4,618	3,678	93.67	71.56
Abnormal.....	1,325.5	1,694.9	298.1	268.1	119,885	101,743	90.45	60.03
THE WEST								
All farms.....	798.9	703.0	115.0	105.6	41,791	28,807	62.46	46.51
Class I.....	3,333.3	4,096.9	434.6	484.8	180,765	145,191	59.82	36.17
Class II.....	1,125.3	1,144.2	176.8	199.0	61,239	47,709	58.47	43.85
Class III.....	648.7	567.9	107.3	114.1	35,986	27,901	57.69	50.99
Class IV.....	429.1	341.9	69.5	69.6	25,175	18,685	62.25	56.28
Class V.....	289.9	223.1	42.3	41.9	19,606	14,630	71.49	66.07
Class VI.....	256.0	184.6	32.2	29.3	15,339	11,520	61.63	64.60
Part-time.....	96.0	90.3	15.5	15.2	13,888	10,922	151.76	123.86
Residential.....	51.1	50.7	6.0	7.4	11,243	9,346	252.01	190.49
Abnormal.....	59,353.9	35,523.3	296.0	287.8	356,421	175,648	14.28	11.55