

Table 14.—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: PERCENT CHANGE 1950 TO 1954

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
	1950 to 1954	1949 to 1954	1950 to 1954	1950 to 1954
<b>UNITED STATES</b>				
All farms.....	Percent +12.5	Percent +11.4	Percent +42.1	Percent +27.1
Class I.....	-19.9	-10.1	-22.0	-60.6
Class II.....	-5.1	-4.1	-24.7	-29.6
Class III.....	+4.6	-1.7	-22.1	+15.7
Class IV.....	+5.1	-2.8	+20.6	+15.0
Class V.....	+9.4	-3.3	+25.5	+16.2
Class VI.....	+14.4	-6.8	+31.2	+14.0
Part-time.....	+7.3	-8.7	+27.2	+19.7
Residential.....	+4.6	-20.7	+23.7	+32.2
Abnormal.....	+58.0	+16.0	+51.8	+16.6
<b>THE NORTH</b>				
All farms.....	+9.6	+11.7	+37.9	+23.9
Class I.....	-15.0	-5.8	+23.1	+47.9
Class II.....	-3.7	-1.5	+24.4	+27.1
Class III.....	+4.4	+1.8	+22.2	+11.6
Class IV.....	+6.5	+3.0	+22.0	+13.5
Class V.....	+5.8	+1.4	+24.1	+15.6
Class VI.....	+8	-2.0	+23.4	+15.6
Part-time.....	-1.5	-4.3	+19.6	+19.3
Residential.....	-3.0	-15.0	+17.4	+26.4
Abnormal.....		+25.1	+44.6	+57.2
<b>THE SOUTH</b>				
All farms.....	+12.3	+6.1	+40.9	+28.6
Class I.....	-11.4	-13.9	+19.4	+58.5
Class II.....	-2.1	-9.4	+23.9	+22.8
Class III.....	-9	-9.5	+20.1	+20.8
Class IV.....	+1	-7.6	+19.6	+21.6
Class V.....	+8.9	-7.6	+26.2	+19.6
Class VI.....	+16.2	-12.0	+32.3	+16.1
Part-time.....	+11.6	-12.7	+33.6	+22.2
Residential.....	-4.1	-23.0	+25.6	+30.9
Abnormal.....	-21.8	+11.2	+17.8	+30.9
<b>THE WEST</b>				
All farms.....	+13.6	+8.9	+45.1	+34.3
Class I.....	-18.6	-10.4	+24.5	+65.4
Class II.....	-1.7	-11.2	+28.4	+33.3
Class III.....	+14.2	-6.0	+29.0	+13.1
Class IV.....	+25.5	-1	+34.7	+10.6
Class V.....	+29.9	+9	+34.0	+8.2
Class VI.....	+38.7	+9.9	+33.2	-4.6
Part-time.....	+6.3	+2.0	+27.2	+22.5
Residential.....	+8	-18.9	+20.3	+32.3
Abnormal.....	+67.1	+2.8	+102.3	+28.6

The smaller relative increase in the North in comparison with the South and the West suggests that consolidations are taking place more slowly in the more industrialized North. The expansion in average size of farm in the South suggests a continuation of the trend toward reorganization within management units and a continuation of the trend toward more mechanized farming. This also implies a decrease in the number of cropper units and a continuation of the shift toward types of farming requiring less labor per unit of product. The larger increase in the West is associated with trends toward fewer operating units rather than with development of more land for agricultural uses. As seen below, the increase in the West was associated with increases in grazing land per unit, with relatively little change in cropland.

The trends by economic class are more mixed. In general, the average size of Classes I and II farms decreased. This reflects increased yields and movement from lower classes into Classes I and II. For Classes III to VII, average size increased slightly for the country at large; but the changes varied from relatively

little in the South to sharp increases in the West. Outside of the West, this increase in size of unit was largely offset by a shift upward from one economic class to another, while the increase in size in the West appeared to be largely the result of increases of pasture or range land in the unit between 1949 and 1954. Average size of part-time (Class VII) farms, which increased from 75.6 acres to 81.1 acres for the United States, was due to increases in the South and the West.

**Cropland harvested.**—Cropland harvested increased from an average of 72.8 acres per farm for all farms in 1949 to 81.1 acres per farm in 1954, an increase of more than 11 percent. However, in each of the economic classes in the country as a whole, cropland harvested per farm decreased during these same years, as shown in Tables 13 and 14. This is further evidence of the shift of farms from a given economic class into a higher economic class.

Thus, a two-way shift is in progress: (1) Individual farms are increasing in total acreage of cropland harvested through consolidation of land and additional units into a given farm unit. (2) Farms moving up from one economic class to another have fewer acres of cropland harvested than the farms already in the higher class. So, although the individual farm exhibits an increase in crop acres harvested as well as in total acres, the advance in intensity of cultivation and the improvements in farm operations in general are such that the crop acreage required to support a farm in a given economic class was generally less in 1954 than in 1949.

**Value per farm and per acre.**—Increases in value per farm of all farms, averaging 42.1 percent between 1949 and 1954, were substantially larger than the average of the increases by economic class. Class I farms increased in value by 22.0 percent, for example, as compared with an increase of 24.7 percent for Class II, 22.1 for Class III, 20.6 for Class IV, 25.5 for Class V, 31.2 for Class VI, and 27.2 for part-time (Class VII), and 23.7 for residential (Class VIII) farms; or an unweighted average for all eight classes of 24.6 percent. This is further evidence of the shift upward of farms from one economic class to another.

The substantially higher values placed on part-time (Class VII) farms, as compared with Class VI commercial farms, suggest some advantages in location, buildings, etc., for part-time farmers (Class VII) as compared with the commercial operators in Class VI. This suggestion applies particularly in the South. The reverse appears evident in the West.

Increases in value per acre were uniform among regions between 1950 and 1954, but rather remarkable differences are shown in respect to changes in value per acre by class of farm. Increases were more general and greater for the farms in the higher economic classes, such as Classes I and II than for the lower classes, such as Classes III to VI. Part-time (Class VII) and residential (Class VIII) farms showed a greater increase in value per acre. This suggests that urban expansion and the demand for land arising out of residential and industrial expansion, were affecting the values for these farms more than the values of other farms in Classes III to VI.<sup>9</sup>

The sharp increases in value per acre among the higher class commercial farms suggests two developments. They are (1) a more rapid rate of capital accumulation per farm and per acre resulting in a relatively greater capital investment in the higher economic classes than in the lower and (2) a more rapid shift upward in economic class of those farms that are relatively more valuable per acre. The relatively slight increases in value per acre among farms in Classes III, IV, and V in the West and the decline in Class VI, as compared with increases in value per acre in part-time and residential farms, suggest that part-time and residential farms did not shift into the other commercial classes in large numbers during 1950-54.

<sup>9</sup> The assumption underlying this statement is based on the fact that in metropolitan counties, the percentage of part-time and residential farms is higher than in nonmetropolitan counties and that the growing demand for farmland for residential or industrial use affected land prices more strongly during 1949-54 in the metropolitan counties than in the nonmetropolitan counties.