

TYPE OF FARM BY ECONOMIC CLASS

Substantial differences exist between types of farms in regard to the proportions that fall into the various economic classes. The number of each type of commercial farm by economic class is shown in table 2.

TABLE 2.—NUMBER OF FARMS IN EACH TYPE OF FARM BY ECONOMIC CLASS, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1954

Type of farm	Total	Economic class of farm					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
All commercial farms	3,327,889	134,064	448,847	706,852	812,108	763,515	462,503
Cash-grain.....	537,974	21,905	110,597	160,337	129,042	82,789	33,214
Cotton.....	525,463	15,230	25,585	47,013	116,163	187,228	134,235
Other field-crop.....	367,733	5,585	15,414	47,706	114,222	117,121	67,685
Vegetable.....	32,581	3,751	4,480	5,094	6,384	6,495	6,377
Fruit-and-nut.....	82,096	10,675	15,330	16,367	16,876	15,853	6,905
Dairy.....	548,767	11,698	76,083	156,506	153,690	102,836	47,954
Poultry.....	154,251	13,137	28,554	28,582	27,605	28,923	27,450
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	694,888	39,835	121,287	152,413	143,072	137,490	100,791
General:							
Primarily crop.....	80,039	3,784	9,955	14,417	20,255	21,054	10,574
Primarily livestock.....	68,197	592	7,156	16,414	18,662	13,804	6,569
Crop and livestock.....	203,843	3,292	28,578	56,470	69,015	41,565	14,923
Miscellaneous.....	37,057	4,481	5,828	5,533	7,122	8,357	5,736

Class I farms (farms with a total value of farm products sold of \$25,000 or more) are not numerous, nationally. They numbered 134,064 in 1954 and comprised only 4 percent of the commercial farm numbers. Most of the Class I farms are found among types of farms that are numerically important. Livestock farms, for example, account for 21 percent of all commercial farms. About 30 percent of the Class I farms are of this type. Cash-grain and cotton farms, also numerous nationally, accounted for 16 percent and 11 percent, respectively of the Class I farms. Of these types, however, Class I farms comprise a small proportion of the number of farms. Only 3 percent of the cotton farms, and 4 percent of the cash-grain farms were classified in Class I.

In some types of farming, farms with sales of \$25,000 or more account for a sizable proportion of the farms. These are primarily highly specialized types that are not numerous nationally. Fruit-and-nut farms accounted for less than 3 percent of the commercial farms, but among farms of this type 13 percent were classified as Class I. More than 11 percent of the vegetable farms and 8 percent of the poultry farms had sales of \$25,000 or more.

Classes II, III, and IV are often referred to as the family-size farms. The value of farm products sold ranges from a lower limit of \$2,500 on Class IV farms to an upper limit of \$25,000 on Class II farms. About three-fifths of all commercial farms fall in these classes. But farms in these economic classes are much more typical of some types of farming than others.

Economic Classes II, III, and IV comprised about 75 percent of the total number of cash-grain farms, and only slightly less of the dairy farms and general farms. Substantially more than half of the farms in each of the other types were in these economic classes with the exception of cotton farms, other field-crop farms, and vegetable farms. More than 60 percent of the cotton farms, 50

percent of the other field-crop farms, and 40 percent of the vegetable farms fell in Classes V and VI (gross farm sales of less than \$2,500). These farms are often referred to as "low-production" or "low-income" farms.

TABLE 3.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FARMS IN EACH TYPE OF FARM BY ECONOMIC CLASS, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1954

Type of farm	Total	Economic class of farm					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
All commercial farms	100.0	4.0	13.5	21.2	24.4	22.9	13.9
Cash-grain.....	100.0	4.1	20.6	29.8	24.0	15.4	6.2
Cotton.....	100.0	2.9	4.9	8.9	22.1	35.6	25.5
Other field-crop.....	100.0	1.5	4.2	13.0	31.1	31.8	18.4
Vegetable.....	100.0	11.5	13.8	15.6	19.6	19.9	19.6
Fruit-and-nut.....	100.0	13.0	18.7	19.9	20.6	19.3	8.5
Dairy.....	100.0	2.1	13.9	28.5	28.0	18.7	8.7
Poultry.....	100.0	8.5	18.5	18.5	17.9	18.8	17.8
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	100.0	5.7	17.5	21.9	20.6	19.8	14.5
General:							
Primarily crop.....	100.0	4.7	12.4	18.0	25.3	26.3	13.2
Primarily livestock.....	100.0	0.9	11.3	26.0	29.5	21.8	10.4
Crop and livestock.....	100.0	1.6	14.0	27.7	29.0	20.4	7.3
Miscellaneous.....	100.0	12.1	15.7	14.9	19.2	22.6	15.5

TABLE 4.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FARMS IN EACH ECONOMIC CLASS, BY TYPE OF FARM, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1954

Type of farm	Total	Economic class of farm					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
All commercial farms	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Cash-grain.....	16.2	16.4	24.6	22.7	15.9	10.8	7.2
Cotton.....	15.8	11.4	5.7	6.7	14.3	24.5	29.0
Other field-crop.....	11.0	4.2	3.4	6.7	14.1	15.3	14.6
Vegetable.....	1.0	2.8	1.0	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.4
Fruit-and-nut.....	2.5	8.0	3.4	2.3	2.1	2.1	1.5
Dairy.....	16.5	8.7	17.0	22.1	18.9	13.5	10.4
Poultry.....	4.6	9.8	6.4	4.0	3.4	3.8	5.9
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	20.9	29.7	27.0	21.6	17.6	18.0	21.8
General:							
Primarily crop.....	2.4	2.8	2.2	2.0	2.5	2.8	2.3
Primarily livestock.....	1.9	0.4	1.6	2.3	2.3	1.8	1.4
Crop and livestock.....	6.1	2.5	6.4	8.0	7.3	5.4	3.2
Miscellaneous.....	1.1	3.3	1.3	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.2

To summarize, cash-grain farms, dairy farms, livestock farms, and general farms are characterized by a small proportion of very large farms or of extremely small farms, when measured in terms of gross sales. Poultry farms, fruit-and-nut farms, and vegetable farms have a relatively high proportion of operations which grossed \$25,000 or more in 1954 and somewhat fewer farms in the medium-size groups. Vegetable and poultry farms are also characterized by a fairly high proportion of small operations which had gross sales of less than \$2,500. Relatively few fruit-and-nut farms produce at this small volume of business.

Few of the cotton and other field-crop farms sold as much as \$25,000 of farm products. More than half sold less than \$2,500 of farm products. More than two-fifths of all Class V and Class VI farms were of these two types.