

FARMERS AND FARM PRODUCTION

TABLE 36.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL INVESTMENT BY ECONOMIC CLASS AND BY TYPE OF FARM, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1954

Economic class and type of farm	Value of investment			
	Total	Land and buildings	Livestock inventory	Machinery and equipment
All commercial farms (million dollars).....	110,545	85,768	10,497	14,280
Percent distribution by economic class:				
All classes.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Class I.....	21.0	22.2	19.2	14.7
Class II.....	27.1	27.3	25.6	26.5
Class III.....	23.7	23.1	24.9	26.3
Class IV.....	15.7	15.1	16.9	18.4
Class V.....	0.2	8.8	9.7	10.7
Class VI.....	3.4	3.3	3.8	3.4
Percent distribution by type of farm:				
All types.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Cash-grain.....	23.3	24.6	11.7	24.1
Cotton.....	8.0	8.5	4.2	7.7
Other field-crop.....	4.5	4.7	2.7	5.1
Vegetable.....	1.3	1.5	0.3	1.4
Fruit-and-nut.....	4.2	5.0	0.5	2.7
Dairy.....	13.2	11.9	17.0	17.4
Poultry.....	2.5	2.5	2.3	2.7
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	31.1	29.6	49.8	26.0
General:				
Primarily crop.....	2.7	2.9	1.3	2.7
Primarily livestock.....	1.6	1.4	2.1	1.9
Crop and livestock.....	6.3	6.1	6.8	7.3
Miscellaneous.....	1.2	1.4	0.4	1.0

Value of Farm Products Sold

The total value of farm products sold from commercial farms amounted to \$24.3 billion in 1954. The distribution of gross sales of farm products among types of farms is more equitable than that of land resources or the value of investment. For example, cash-grain farms, which contained more than a third of the harvested cropland, produced only a fifth of the farm products sold. Livestock farms, with half the land in farms, produced only a fourth of the farm products sold. On the other hand, dairy, cotton, and other field-crop farms, and the less numerous highly specialized farm types such as vegetable, fruit-and-nut, and poultry, accounted for substantially more of the gross sales than the amount or value of farm resources.

By economic class of farm, however, a much greater proportion of gross sales than of farm resources is shown for the larger economic classes. Class I farms accounted for nearly three-fourths of the gross sales from vegetable farms and two-fifths that from fruit-and-nut farms. (See table 37.) About two-fifths of the gross sales from cotton, poultry, livestock, and general crop farms was from Class I farms. In contrast, more than three-fourths of the gross sales from dairy, general livestock, and general crop and livestock farms, was sold from the medium-size Classes II, III, and IV.

The average value of farm products sold per commercial farm is shown in table 38. The average commercial farm grossed slightly more than \$7,000 in 1954. This average ranged from about \$4,000 on other field-crop farms to \$16,000 on vegetable farms.

TABLE 37.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF GROSS SALES FOR 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	32.0	27.5	20.9	12.4	5.8	1.4
Cash-grain.....	100.0	22.3	36.4	26.1	11.1	3.5	0.6
Cotton.....	100.0	40.8	15.1	12.2	15.2	12.7	4.0
Other field-crop.....	100.0	20.8	14.4	20.7	26.6	14.1	3.4
Vegetable.....	100.0	72.6	13.2	6.9	4.3	2.2	0.8
Fruit-and-nut.....	100.0	59.3	20.8	10.8	5.9	2.7	0.5
Dairy.....	100.0	16.4	30.1	31.0	16.1	5.4	1.0
Poultry.....	100.0	43.7	30.2	14.2	7.0	3.7	1.2
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	100.0	37.8	30.2	18.1	8.7	4.1	1.1
General:							
Primarily crop.....	100.0	42.0	22.8	16.1	11.7	6.1	1.3
Primarily livestock.....	100.0	6.8	29.7	34.1	20.2	7.6	1.6
Crop and livestock.....	100.0	12.3	31.7	31.8	17.1	6.1	1.0
Miscellaneous.....	100.0	65.1	18.0	7.7	5.2	3.1	0.9

TABLE 38.—AVERAGE VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD PER FARM BY TYPE AND ECONOMIC CLASS, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1954

Item and type of farm	Total	Economic class of farm					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Value of farm products sold per farm:	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
All commercial farms.....	7,302	57,997	14,883	7,178	3,703	1,851	756
Cash-grain.....	8,340	45,582	14,776	7,315	3,846	1,911	779
Cotton.....	4,902	69,744	15,429	6,787	3,418	1,765	769
Other field-crop.....	4,344	59,586	14,939	6,917	3,716	1,924	806
Vegetable.....	16,053	101,301	15,468	7,037	3,492	1,737	687
Fruit-and-nut.....	14,409	65,699	16,083	7,806	4,108	2,041	798
Dairy.....	6,529	50,130	14,178	7,099	3,744	1,886	785
Poultry.....	9,634	49,400	15,727	7,359	3,808	1,878	666
Livestock other than dairy and poultry.....	8,828	58,114	15,246	7,296	3,745	1,834	698
General:							
Primarily crop.....	7,365	65,432	13,478	6,579	3,411	1,708	735
Primarily livestock.....	5,436	39,659	14,298	7,145	3,714	1,886	812
Crop and livestock.....	6,244	47,502	14,129	7,165	3,689	1,877	825
Miscellaneous.....	13,189	70,983	15,117	6,845	3,536	1,830	749

The averages by economic class show the extreme range in size of business that characterizes farming in the United States. Class I farms are 50 to 100 times as large in business volume as Class VI farms. The two extremes would compare Class I vegetable farms with gross sales of more than \$100,000 and Class VI vegetable farms with gross sales of less than \$700.

Since the economic classification (based on the value of farm sales) groups farms within fairly narrow intervals of value, a close similarity is found in the average sales for each type by economic class. The exception is for Class I farms which contain all farms with gross sales of \$25,000 or more. The effect of the open-end value grouping is apparent in the averages for Class I which range from less than \$40,000 to more than \$100,000.