

The lowered need for some of the larger items of farm machinery may well account for their disappearance from the lists of machinery on the smaller farms all over the dairy belt. It is much easier to arrange with a neighbor to have 5 or 10 acres of some crop harvested than if the field contained 20 or 30 acres. On the other hand, the number of farms having home conveniences probably is closely associated with net income of the operator.

Table 16.—FARM MECHANIZATION AND HOME CONVENIENCES ON DAIRY FARMS, BY MAJOR DAIRY REGIONS: 1954

Item	Major dairy region				
	North-eastern (Subregions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10)	Eastern Ohio-Western Pennsylvania (Subregions 17, 27, 28, 29, 30)	Central Michigan-New York Lake Shore (Subregions 9, 49, 50, 64)	Northern Lake (Subregions 65, 67, 68, 88)	Northern Woods (Subregion 66)
Number of farms.....	67, 521	40, 636	35, 605	124, 501	28, 001
Percent of farms with—					
Milking machine.....	90	72	83	82	62
Power grinder.....	8	29	25	22	20
Electric pig brooder.....	1	3	4	6	2
Farm tractors.....	89	86	95	94	91
Automobiles.....	84	82	92	93	85
Field forage harvesters.....	17	12	23	20	7
Motortrucks.....	62	53	55	50	42
Pickup balers.....	35	33	34	18	17
Grain combines.....	13	27	50	21	14
Corn pickers.....	3	21	28	17	3
Telephone.....	83	73	70	68	52
Electricity.....	90	96	99	97	95
Television.....	59	56	66	40	22
Piped running water.....	90	82	89	70	63
Home freezer.....	50	51	54	42	34

There are fewer farm homes with piped running water, home freezers, and television sets on the smaller farms. The levels of family income often will not permit their purchase. The prevalence of electricity on both small and large farms partly reflects the Rural Electrification Administration's program to electrify every farmstead.

The age pattern of dairy-farm operators does not vary greatly among the dairy regions (Table 17). Very few operators under 25 years of age are found in any area of the dairy belt; from 1 to 2 percent is the usual number. The largest number of operators under 25 years of age within any economic subregion does not exceed 3 percent. The 25- to 34-years-old group when considered with these younger men suggests a possible trend away from dairy farming on the part of the young people.

The Northern Dairy Regions as a whole have more dairy farm operators over 65 years old than under 35 years, and four times as many of the older operators as there are of the youngest group. If more young men do not take up dairying we may expect a greater reduction in the number of dairy farms than has already taken place. The obvious alternative is for the older operators to continue farming much beyond the usual retirement age. Most of the young men who are in dairying are not on the smallest farms, Economic Classes V and VI, they are on the middle-sized farms where chances of success are good. The smaller units are mostly in the hands of older operators.

These figures suggest a continuing reduction in the number of dairy farms because some of the older men who drop out will not be replaced by younger men. Larger farms and bigger dairy herds

will doubtless continue to be the tendency so that the industry will be maintained or expanded even though many of the smaller farms disappear.

Table 17.—A DISTRIBUTION OF OPERATORS BY AGE, FOR DAIRY FARMS BY MAJOR DAIRY REGIONS: 1954

Item	Major dairy region				
	North-eastern (Subregions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10)	Eastern Ohio-Western Pennsylvania (Subregions 17, 27, 28, 29, 30)	Central Michigan-New York Lake Shore (Subregions 9, 49, 50, 64)	Northern Lake (Subregions 65, 67, 68, 88)	Northern Woods (Subregion 66)
Number of farms.....	67, 521	40, 636	35, 605	124, 501	28, 001
Operators by age:					
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100
Under 25 years.....	2	2	2	2	1
25 to 34 years.....	13	13	13	10	12
35 to 44 years.....	23	23	24	25	24
45 to 54 years.....	25	24	24	26	23
55 to 64 years.....	21	21	21	20	22
65 years and over.....	16	17	16	11	18

The usual cropping patterns of these farms differ from region to region (Table 18). The cropping systems in each are built around the three-crop system of hay, corn, and small grain. The livestock are practically all dairy animals. From 5 to 15 percent of the animal units are hogs, poultry, and sheep; the dairy herd accounts for the remainder.

Table 18.—LAND, USES OF LAND, AND LIVESTOCK ON DAIRY FARMS, BY MAJOR DAIRY REGIONS: 1954

Item	Major dairy region				
	North-eastern (Subregions 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 10)	Eastern Ohio-Western Pennsylvania (Subregions 17, 27, 28, 29, 30)	Central Michigan-New York Lake Shore (Subregions 9, 49, 50, 64)	Northern Lake (Subregions 65, 67, 68, 88)	Northern Woods (Subregion 66)
Number of farms.....	67, 521	40, 636	35, 605	124, 501	28, 001
Average per farm:					
Land in farms.....acres.	218	153	157	167	186
Cropland harvested.....acres.	70	62	87	74	57
Total land pastured.....acres.	97	59	46	59	81
Cropland pastured.....acres.	18	12	22	15	16
Cropland not harvested and not pastured.....acres.	5	4	5	3	5
Total cropland.....do.	93	78	114	92	78
Animal units.....	32	24	28	30	20
Livestock, number—					
All cattle.....	38	27	32	32	24
Milk cows.....	24	15	18	18	13
Chickens.....	53	96	88	109	38
Hogs.....	1	6	6	13	2
Sheep.....	1	3	2	2	2
Percent of cropland harvested in—					
Corn for all purposes.....	12	23	28	27	11
Corn for grain.....	1	17	19	14	4
Small grains.....	12	29	31	32	21
All hay.....	74	45	35	38	65
Other crops.....	2	3	6	3	3