



COMMERCIAL FARMS AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL FARMS

In the Great Plains States, adjacent parts of the Mountain States, and the western part of the Corn Belt and Lake States a very high percentage of all farms were classified as commercial. Elsewhere, smaller areas of contiguous counties with high proportions of all farms in the commercial class were found mainly in the lower Mississippi Valley and in eastern North Carolina. There were numerous counties, mainly in the Eastern States, where commercial farms constituted less than a fifth of all farms.

AVERAGE SIZE OF COMMERCIAL FARMS

Commercial farms vary greatly in size. In the Western States where grazing of livestock is a common activity, farms or ranches are large. Florida also has some counties in which the average size of commercial farms exceeds 2,560 acres. Partly no counties have commercial farms averaging less than 80 acres per farm; however, numerous counties in areas where tobacco and cotton are grown have commercial farms that average between 80 and 159 acres in size. In the Corn Belt and the Lake States, the average size of commercial farms is between 160 and 319 acres for nearly all counties. This is also a common range in size of farm for many counties in the Northeast, Southeast, and Delta States.

When the average sizes of all farms are compared on a State basis, the range is from 83 acres per farm in North Carolina to 5,558 acres in Arizona. In North Carolina, many small farms producing mainly tobacco are a major factor in the small average size of farm; in Arizona, large Indian reservations make for a high average size.

The average size of all farms in the United States was 302 acres in 1959. This compared with 242 acres per farm in 1954 and 155 acres in 1935. Thus, American farms have approximately doubled in size during the past 25 years.

AVERAGE VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS PER ACRE

The average value of land and buildings per acre in 1959 varied widely throughout the United States. Among the States, New

Jersey had the highest average values with \$520 per acre and Wyoming the lowest with \$21 per acre. Average values per acre in the Northeast ranged from \$81 and \$83 in Vermont and Maine to the State high in New Jersey and to \$380 and \$444 in Rhode Island and Connecticut. In the Lake States the State averages ranged from \$132 to \$193. In the Corn Belt the range was between \$245 and \$320, except for Missouri where the State average was only \$112. In the Northern and Southern Plains States, \$51 to \$100 was the overall range by States. In the Appalachian, Southeastern, and Mississippi Delta States, average per-acre values ranged from \$74 in West Virginia to \$218 in Florida. Among the Western States, California had by far the highest land values with \$353 per acre.

An example of the variations in land values associated with the production of different crops may be found in the May 1961 issue of the *Farm Real Estate Market*, in which some of the current developments are summarized. In California and Florida particularly, market values of farmland per acre vary greatly because of the special crops grown and also because of strong demand for land for such nonfarm uses as subdivisions and industrial and commercial sites.

The very high value of irrigated land in California was stressed in this report.

Land in avocado groves had the highest average value per acre (\$4,500) in 1961. Orange groves were second, with average values per acre ranging from \$3,750 for navel oranges to \$3,900 for valencia oranges. Land on which prunes, peaches, apricots, almonds, and walnuts were being grown had average values per acre ranging from \$1,600 to \$2,375. Land used under irrigation for the production of vegetables averaged between \$800 and \$2,500 per acre in value, with \$1,500 as an overall average. Land on which field crops such as cotton, sugar beets, rice, beans, barley, and alfalfa were being grown under irrigation had values ranging from an average of about \$800 per acre for the more intensively used land to \$600 for that used mainly for beans, barley, and alfalfa.