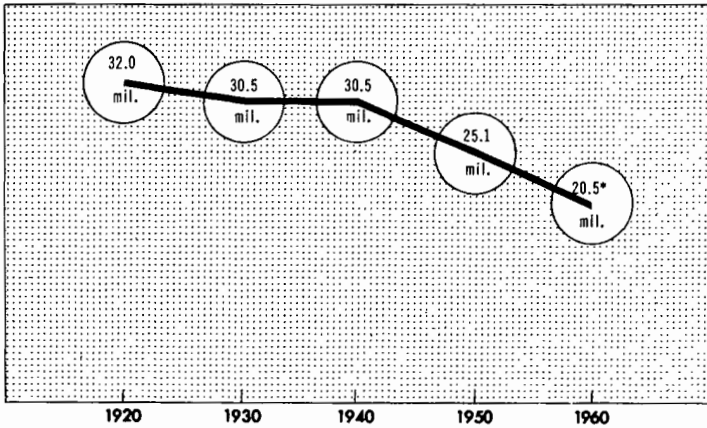


UNITED STATES FARM POPULATION 1920 TO 1960



(Estimates from Population Surveys)

\*Farm population according to the old definition of current population surveys. Farm population in 1960 estimated by the new definition is 15.6 million.

U.S. FARM POPULATION

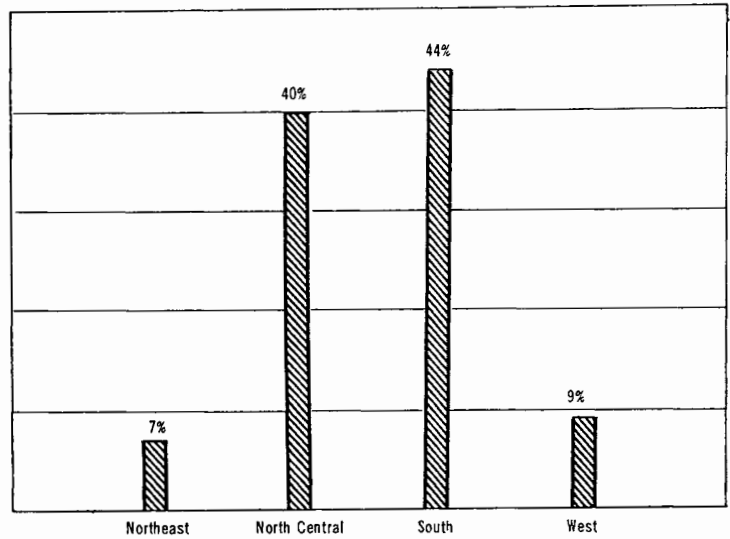
Farm population continued to decline sharply during the decade 1950 to 1960. Using the old definition of farm population in order to obtain comparable figures for 1950 and 1960, one finds that the reduction amounts to 4.6 million, or a 22-percent decrease. In 1950 the 25.1 million persons living on farms constituted 16.6 percent of the total population. The comparable estimate of farm population in 1960 is 20.5 million persons, or 11.4 percent of the total population. Under the new definition, the estimated farm population is only 15.6 million, which comprises only 8.7 percent of the total population.

All of these totals include the rural farm population of Alaska and Hawaii.

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION REPRESENTED BY FARM POPULATION

A change in the definition of farm population was made for the 1960 Census of Population. For this census, farm residence was determined by using the new definition of a farm. It was formerly determined by asking a person whether or not his house was located on a farm or ranch. The number of people living in the open countryside whose livelihood is not gained from farming has been increasing in recent years. Many of these people in replying to questions asked under the old definition tended to report themselves as living on farms. Therefore the effect of applying the new definition was to reduce the farm population sharply

UNITED STATES FARM POPULATION BY REGIONS, 1960  
Percentage of total farm population



by eliminating many persons who sold little or no farm produce but who previously reported themselves as living on farms.

The comparison of the farm population as reported under the old and new definitions is as follows:

*New definition:* 1960 farm population—15.6 million, or 8.7 percent of the total population.

*Old definition:* 1960 farm population—20.5 million, or 11.4 percent of the total population.

The overall pattern of farm population did not change very much between 1950 and 1960. The greatest concentration of farm population still remains in the South. In areas where tenant-operated cotton and tobacco farms are still numerous and where there are many part-time and residential farms, the percentage of the total population living on farms is relatively high. Of the counties with a relatively small part of the total population living on farms, many are highly urbanized. Mining and forestry are more important activities than farming in numerous other counties with very few farm people.

The regional distribution of the farm population has changed only slightly during the past 40 years. In 1920, the regional distribution was as follows: Northeast, 8 percent; North Central, 32 percent; South, 53 percent; and West, 7 percent. In 1960, the census of population indicated that the Northeast had 7 percent of the farm population; the North Central States, 40 percent; the South, 44 percent; and the West, 9 percent.