

Changes in the tenure of farm operators.—The goal of full ownership has been achieved by a majority of the farmers throughout the history of the United States. However, shifts have occurred among tenure groups as conditions favoring certain tenure arrangements have developed. The proportion of farmers in the full-owner group decreased from 1900 to 1930, while the proportion of tenant operators increased until the two groups were nearly equal. After 1930 this trend was reversed until, by 1959, full owners outnumbered tenants nearly three to one. Another significant trend is the growing proportion of farmers who are part owners (farmers who own part of the land they operate and rent additional land from others). The proportion of all operators classified as part owners increased from 10 percent in 1940 to 23 percent in 1959. Part owners outnumbered tenants for the first time in 1959 to become the second largest tenure group. Full owners numbered 2,116,594, part owners 834,470, all tenants 735,849, and managers 21,060.

Race of farm operators.—Farm operators are classified as "white" or "nonwhite" by the census. The nonwhite category includes Negroes, Indians, Orientals, and all other nonwhite races. In 1959 there were only 284,612 nonwhite farm operators in the United States, or half as many as in 1950. Ninety-three percent, or 265,621, of all nonwhite operators were in the South. In the West, most of the nonwhite farm operators were Orientals and Indians. Detailed information on nonwhite farm operators is available only for the 16 Southern States. In this region they are concentrated in the Mississippi Delta and the Coastal Plain. Between 1954 and 1959, the percentage of tenancy among the nonwhite operators of the South dropped from 61.0 to 52.0. A little more than half the nonwhite tenants in the South were croppers.

