

TOTAL, RURAL, AND FARM POPULATION, FOR THE UNITED STATES:
1850 TO 1959—Continued

Item and year	Number of persons ¹	Percent of total population	Increase or decrease (-)	
			Number	Percent
Rural population:⁴				
Current urban definition: ⁵				
1960	54,054,425	30.1	-424,556	-0.8
1950	54,478,981	36.0	NA	NA
Previous urban definition:				
1960	66,266,822	37.0	5,069,218	8.3
1950	61,197,604	40.4	3,738,373	6.5
1940	57,459,231	43.5	3,417,206	6.3
1930	54,042,025	43.9	2,273,770	4.4
1920	51,768,255	48.8	1,603,760	3.1
1910	50,164,495	54.4	4,167,159	8.3
1900	45,997,336	60.4	NA	NA
1890 ³	40,841,449	64.9	4,815,401	13.4
1880 ³	36,026,048	71.8	7,370,038	25.7
1870 ³	28,656,010	72.0	3,429,207	13.6
1860 ³	25,226,803	80.2	5,578,643	28.4
1850 ³	19,648,160	84.7		
Farm population:⁶				
1960	13,444,898	7.5	-8,445,102	-38.6
1954 ²	21,890,000	13.5	-1,441,738	-6.2
1950 ²	23,331,738	15.4	-1,963,262	-7.8
1945 ²	25,295,000	18.1	-5,251,911	-17.2
1940 ²	30,546,911	23.1	-1,614,089	-5.0
1935 ²	32,161,000	25.3	1,715,650	5.6
1930 ²	30,445,350	24.7	-744,650	-2.4
1925 ²	31,190,000	27.0	-424,269	-1.3
1920 ²	31,614,269	29.8	-462,731	-1.4
1910 ²	32,077,000	34.9		

NA Not available.

¹ Figures for 1910 to 1959 relate to April 1; those for earlier years, to June 1. Figures for decennial years are based on the decennial censuses with adjustments to obtain comparability; those for other years are estimates.² Figures for 1940 to 1959 include members of the Armed Forces overseas, for the earlier years the number of persons in the Armed Forces overseas was not available but was probably negligible. Figures for 1870 include adjustments for underenumeration in Southern States.³ Data for Alaska and Hawaii not included.⁴ Figures shown for rural population exclude members of Armed Services overseas; the percent of total population for 1959, 1954, 1950, and 1940, respectively, is based on the civilian population.⁵ The data for 1960 and 1950 for the current urban definition are not comparable with those for earlier years because of change in definition.⁶ The figures shown for farm population in the quinquennial censuses are estimates roughly comparable with the current estimates of the farm population obtained from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. These estimates differ substantially from the farm population as tabulated from the 1945, 1935, and 1925 Censuses of Agriculture.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PERSONS PER FARM, WITH PER CAPITA DATA FOR LAND IN FARMS, CROPLAND HARVESTED, AND VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, FOR THE UNITED STATES: CENSUSES OF 1850 TO 1959

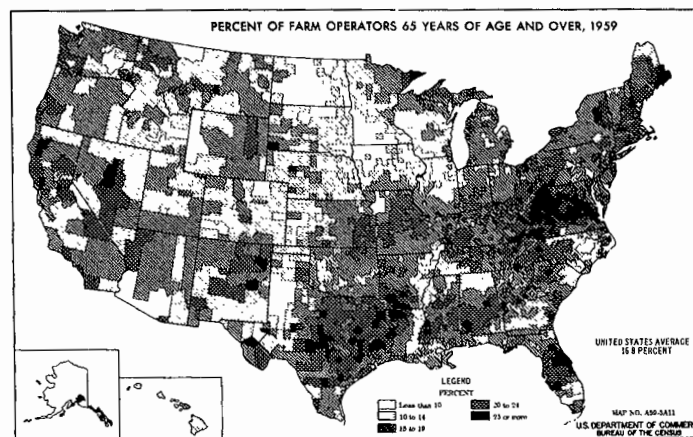
Item and year	Average number of persons per farm	Average per capita		
		Land in farms (acres)	Cropland ¹ harvested (acres)	Value of farm products sold (dollars)
Total population:				
1960	48.33	6.3	1.7	170
1954 ²	33.82	7.2	2.1	152
1950	28.08	7.7	2.3	147
1945 ²	23.82	8.2	2.5	116
1940	21.66	8.1	2.4	251
1935 ²	18.65	8.3	2.3	NA
1930	19.57	8.0	2.9	290
1925 ²	18.11	8.0	3.0	NA
1920	16.43	9.0	3.3	NA
1910	14.49	9.6	3.4	NA
1900	13.28	11.0	3.7	NA
1890 ²	13.79	9.9	3.5	NA
1880 ²	12.51	10.7	3.3	NA
1870 ²	14.91	10.2	NA	NA
1860 ²	15.38	13.0	NA	NA
1850 ²	16.00	12.7	NA	NA
Farm population:				
1960	3.62	83.6	23.2	2,268
1954 ²	4.58	52.9	15.2	1,126
1950	4.34	49.7	14.8	945
1945 ²	4.32	45.1	14.0	642
1940 ²	5.01	34.7	10.5	219
1935 ²	4.72	32.8	9.2	NA
1930	4.84	32.4	11.8	316
1925 ²	4.90	29.6	11.0	NA
1920	4.90	30.2	11.0	NA
1910 ²	5.04	27.4	9.7	NA

NA Not available.

¹ Prior to 1924, based on total acreage of crops.² Data for Alaska and Hawaii not included.

Age of farm operator.—Farm operators in the United States are becoming fewer and older. The average age of farm operators has been going up since 1950 as opportunities for younger operators to enter farming have been decreasing. In 1959, the average age of farm operator for the conterminous United States was 50.5 years as compared with 49.6 years in 1954, and 48.3 years in 1950. In 1959, for the three geographic regions, farm operators in the South had the highest average age with 51.5 years.

For the United States, the proportion of farm operators in the age group 65 years or more increased from 16.6 percent in 1954, to 16.8 percent in 1959. During the same period the proportion of farm operators under 35 years of age decreased from 15.1 percent to 12.7 percent. Two of every three farm operators were 45 years of age or older in 1959.



OFF-FARM WORK

Farm operators reporting off-farm work vary from those who supplement their farm income with odd or spare-time jobs to those operators who have regular nonfarm jobs and use the farm to either supplement their regular income or as a rural residence. The operators with odd or spare-time jobs usually consider their nonfarm employment to be of secondary importance, and they may work part-time on someone else's farm, or work at seasonal nonfarm jobs.

Many persons who may be employed in cities, or have other regular nonfarm jobs, are living in rural areas but have sufficient agricultural activities to qualify their places as farms. Some of these operators may be producing agricultural products largely for home use, while others are using the farm to supplement their regular nonfarm income. Some of the farm operators working off their farms are using their nonfarm income as a source of capital for expanding their farming operations.

The proportion of farm operators who work off their farms increased significantly during the last 15 years. Prior to 1949, approximately 3 out of 10 farm operators reported some work off the farm operated. During the last two censuses about 5 out of every 11 farm operators reported some work off their farms. The change during the last 15 years in the proportion of the farm operators working off their farms 100 or more days or 200 or more days has been much greater than the change in the proportion of farm operators working off their farms. From 1949 to 1959, the proportion of farm operators working off their farms 100 days or more increased from 23.3 to 29.9 percent, and the proportion of farm operators working off their farms 200 days or more, from 17.5 to 23.7 percent.

The increase during the last 15 years in the proportion of farm operators working off their farms is the result largely of the increase in proportion of farm operators of commercial farms working off their farms. Also, there has been a very significant increase during the last decade in the percentage of the farm op-