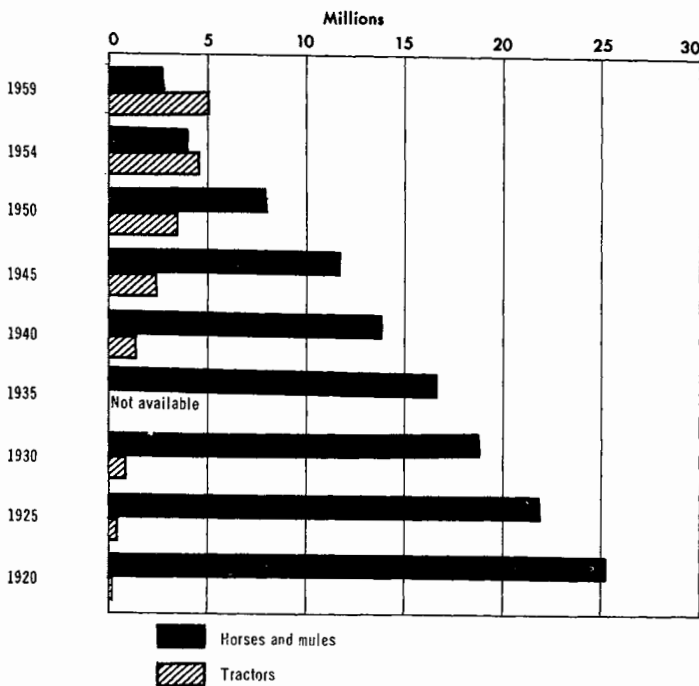
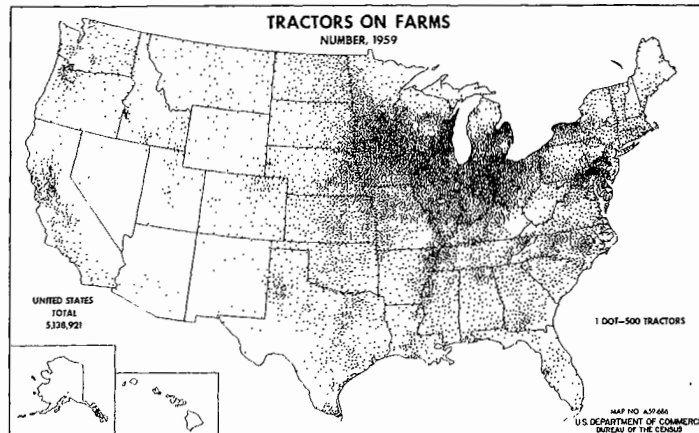


NUMBER OF HORSES AND MULES, AND TRACTORS, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1920 TO 1959



than was feasible with horses or mules. Tractors have made possible the use of larger and more effective equipment for many of the ordinary farm operations. The power takeoff has increased the efficiency and dependability of harvesting equipment such as mowers, combine harvesters, corn pickers, etc. Different sizes of tractors and rubber tires both for tractors and for other farm equipment have made possible the widespread mechanization of farms, especially the larger ones. Electricity has made power tools, water systems, milking machines, and other labor-saving equipment possible.

Tractors.—There were about 2.7 million farms reporting 5.1 million tractors of all types, sizes, and ages for the United States in 1959. These numbers represent a net decrease of 6.9 percent in the number of farms reporting tractors but an increase of 9.4 percent in the number of tractors reported for the conterminous United States since 1954. The number of farms reporting field tractors (tractors other than garden) decreased about 2.8 million to 2.6 million from 1954 to 1959 while the proportion of all farms having tractors increased from 60.1 to 72.3 percent.



More than four-fifth of the commercial farms have tractors. Commercial farms without tractors either do not require tractor power or the tractor power is furnished by the landlord or by a hired contractor. More than half of the commercial farms with tractors, other than garden, have two or more tractors. The average number of tractors, other than garden, per farm reporting tractors was 2.0.

Data on the age of tractors on farms and on the type of fuel used were obtained for the conterminous United States in a special sample survey made in 1960. According to this survey, one-fifth of all wheel-type tractors on farms were less than 5 years old, 29 percent were 5 to 9 years old, 30 percent were 10 to 14 years old, and 20 percent were 15 years old and over. Approximately 9 out of 10 of the wheel tractors used gasoline, kerosene, or distillate as fuel; 7 percent used diesel fuel; and 4 percent used liquid petroleum gas.

Motortrucks.—In 1920, only 131,551, or 2 percent of all farms in the conterminous United States, had motortrucks. Since 1920, each census has shown an increase in motortrucks until a peak of a little over 2.2 million farms reporting 2.7 million motortrucks was reached in 1954. Since that time, the number of farms with motortrucks declined to a little under 2.2 million in 1959, but the proportion of all farms having motortrucks increased from 46.3 percent in 1954 to 58.7 percent in 1959.

Automobiles.—The number of farms reporting automobiles in the conterminous United States decreased from about 3.4 million in 1954 to 3.0 million in 1959 for a decrease of 13.0 percent, while the number of automobiles reported on farms decreased about 4.3 million in 1954 to 3.6 million in 1959 for a decrease of 14.9 percent. At the same time, the percent of farms reporting automobiles increased from 70.9 percent in 1954 to 79.8 percent in 1959.

The largest decreases in the number of farms reporting automobiles and number of automobiles reported have occurred in the East North Central and South Atlantic States. The largest increases in the percent of farms reporting automobiles was in the South.

HARVESTING MACHINES

Corn pickers.—There were 766,948 farms reporting 792,379 corn pickers in the conterminous United States in 1959. There were 90,860, or 13.4 percent, more farms reporting and 104,913, or 15.3 percent, more corn pickers reported in 1959 than in 1954.

While these represent increases from 1954, they were not as great as increases in the previous census period. From 1950 to 1954, number of farms reporting corn pickers increased 228,701, or 51.1 percent, while number of corn pickers reported increased 231,947, or 50.9 percent.

Most of the corn pickers are concentrated in the North and especially in the Corn Belt part of the North Central divisions.

A special sample survey for 1960 indicated that corn pickers were used to harvest approximately 64 million acres of corn, or approximately 93 percent of the acreage harvested for grain. More than one-fourth of the acreage of corn picked by corn pickers was on farms other than the farm on which the corn picker was kept.

Grain combines.—While the number of grain combines on farms in the conterminous United States in 1959 was the highest ever reported, neither the increase in number nor the percent increase in number from 1954 to 1959 was as great as in the two previous census periods. Number of combines on farms increased from 373,687 to 713,633 (339,946 or 91.0 percent) from 1945 to 1950 and from 713,633 to 979,050 (265,417 or 37.2 percent) from 1950 to 1954. The increase in number from 1954 to 1959 was from 979,050 to 1,041,527, an increase in number of only 62,477 or 6.4 percent.