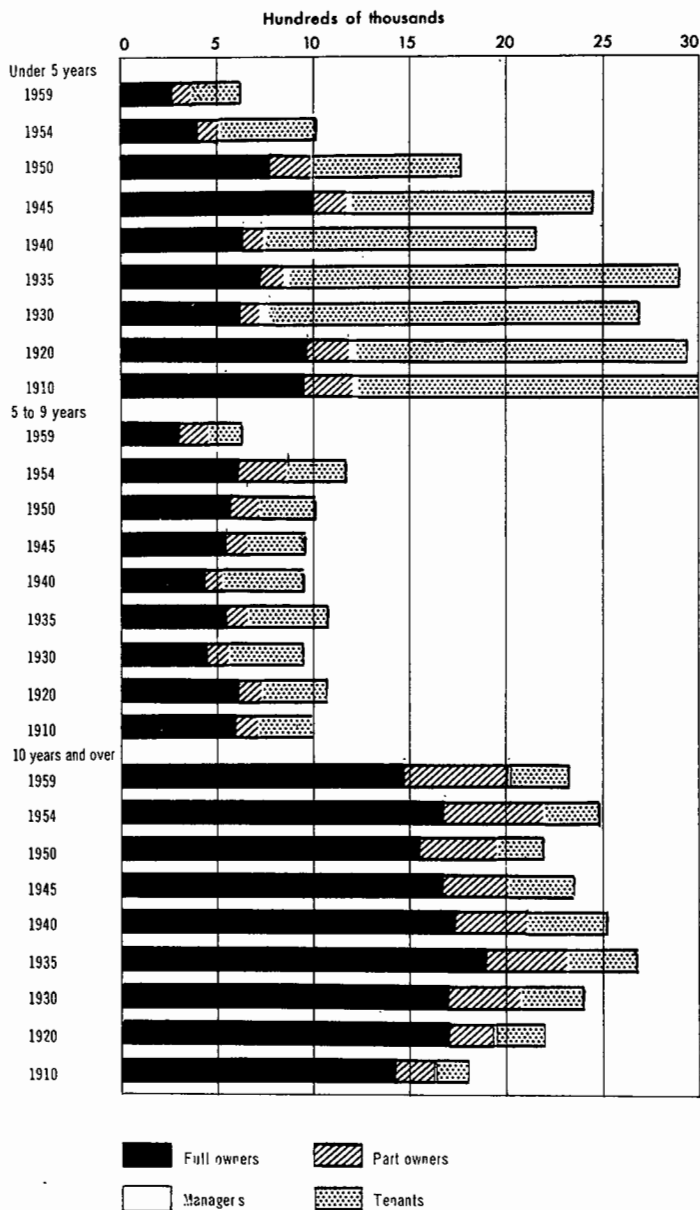


The proportion of operators reporting less than 5 years on present farm declined from 21.6 percent in 1954 to 17.7 percent in 1959, while operators reporting 10 or more years on their farm increased from 53.3 percent in 1954 to 64.9 percent in 1959. The large proportional decline in the number of farms operated by tenants representing about two-fifths of the decline in all farms since 1954, and the fact that the proportion of tenants in the years-on-farm group "under 10 years" is much higher than the other tenure groups of farm operators are mainly responsible for changes between 1954 and 1959 in the proportion of farm operators in the years-on-farm groups.

YEARS ON FARM-NUMBER OF OPERATORS REPORTING, BY TENURE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1910 TO 1959



Most of the change in the proportionate distribution of farm operators by years on farms has taken place in the South where there have been extensive changes in the number of farm operators together with some significant changes in the tenure system in recent years. For croppers there has been a 55 percent decrease in number since 1954, but the average years on the farm for croppers has increased from 6 years in 1954, to 7 years in

1959. The proportion of croppers on their farms less than 5 years has decreased from 55 percent in 1954, to 49 percent in 1959, and the proportion of croppers on their farms 10 years or more has increased from 20 percent in 1954, to 29 percent in 1959.

Table 5.—MONTH OF OCCUPANCY FOR FARM OPERATORS WHO BEGAN OPERATION OF THEIR PRESENT FARM SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CENSUS YEAR, FOR THE CONTERMINOUS UNITED STATES, THE NORTH, THE SOUTH, AND THE WEST: 1959 AND 1954

[Data for conterminous United States are based on reports of only a sample of farms. See text. Figures for 1959 for divisions and States in Table 25]

Month	Operators reporting		Percent distribution	
	1959	1954 ¹	1959	1954 ¹
United States:				
January to date of enumeration, total.....	157,313	251,881	100.0	100.0
January through April.....	108,297	183,420	68.8	72.8
May through August.....	30,687	40,581	19.5	16.1
September or later.....	18,329	27,880	11.7	11.1
North:				
January to date of enumeration, total.....	62,780	85,788	100.0	100.0
January through April.....	43,381	59,252	69.1	69.1
May through August.....	13,511	16,994	21.5	19.8
September or later.....	5,888	9,542	9.4	11.1
South:				
January to date of enumeration, total.....	77,201	142,768	100.0	100.0
January through April.....	55,675	112,018	72.1	78.5
May through August.....	11,680	16,295	15.1	11.4
September or later.....	9,846	14,455	12.8	10.1
West:				
January to date of enumeration, total.....	17,332	23,325	100.0	100.0
January through April.....	9,241	12,150	53.3	52.1
May through August.....	5,496	7,292	31.7	31.3
September or later.....	2,595	3,883	15.0	16.6

¹Data for Alaska and Hawaii not included.

Since most tenants begin farming operations or move to new farms during the first few months of a year, the large decrease in the number of farms operated by tenants has also had an effect on the number and the proportion of farm operators occupying new farms during different time periods during the year. Data in table 5 shows that the proportion of farm operators beginning new farm operations in the January through April period has decreased from 72.8 percent in 1954, to 68.8 percent in 1959. Again the decrease in the number of farms operated by tenants in the South accounted for most of the change in proportions.

Off-Farm Work.—Farm operators reporting off-farm work vary from those who supplement their farm incomes 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.