

**Electric Milk Coolers, Crop Driers, and Power-operated Elevators, Conveyors, or Blowers.**—Inquiries regarding these items were asked for the first time during the 1959 enumeration. A question regarding bulk-type milk coolers, used for the first time in 1959, appeared on the questionnaires for six States—New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota.

Questions for such items as running water, television sets, electric pig brooders, power feed grinders, and artificial ponds, reservoirs, and earth tanks were not carried on the 1959 agriculture questionnaire. A brief discussion of the questions used in earlier censuses but not used in 1959 is found in Volume II: General Report, 1954 Census of Agriculture, Chapter III.

**Number of Farm Machinery and Equipment Items on Farms.**—Data in terms of the actual number were obtained for the following specified items of farm equipment "on this place" in 1959:

Section XIV.—EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES NOW ON THIS PLACE		Number
Include equipment, whether owned by you or by others, on this place. Include equipment and facilities that are temporarily out of order.		
How many of the following are on this place—	[291] Grain combines? . . . . .	_____
	292. Corn pickers (include picker-shellers and corn combines)? . . . . .	_____
	293. Pick-up balers? . . . . .	_____
	294. Field forage harvesters (for field chopping of silage and forage crops)? . . . . .	_____
	295. Motortrucks (include pick-ups)? . . . . .	_____
	296. Wheel tractors other than garden? . . . . .	_____
	297. Garden tractors? . . . . .	_____
	298. Crawler tractors (tracking, caterpillar)? . . . . .	_____
	299. Automobiles? . . . . .	_____

Enumerators were specifically instructed to exclude stationary balers but to include both hand-tie and automatic balers in the pick-up baler count. Corn pickers related to all types of machines used for picking corn whether used in separate or in combined picking-shelling operations. Motortrucks were to include pick-up trucks and truck-trailer combinations; jeeps and station wagons were also to be included if they were used primarily as trucks, but school buses were specifically excluded. Wheel tractors were to include home-built tractors but specifically excluded garden tractors, implements with built-in power units, such as self-propelled combines or powered buckrakes, and the power unit of a truck-trailer combination. Garden tractors were not defined. Automobiles were to include jeeps and station wagons if they were used primarily as passenger vehicles. The automobile count was to include automobiles owned by the farm operator, by hired workers, or by others living on the place.

Within the last 40 years, mechanical power has almost completely displaced animal power for farming purposes. The displacement of horses and mules by tractors, trucks, and automobiles is now so widespread that there is no longer any need for a classification of farms by type of work power. Consequently such a classification is not presented in the 1959 Census of Agriculture. Data on farms by class of work power for 1954, 1950, and 1945 are provided in the census of agriculture reports for those years.

**Changes in the Number of Farms Reporting Farm Machines, Equipment, and Facilities.**—Mechanical power with its complement of adapted machines has enabled the average farm family or farm worker to handle a larger acreage. From 1920 to 1959, the number of farm workers declined 45 percent, from 13.4 million

to 7.4 million, while the acreage of cropland handled per worker increased 70 percent, from 30 acres to 52 acres. During this period the average size of farm in the United States increased from 148 acres to 303 acres. This increase resulted mainly from farm consolidations. Total land in farms increased only 17.2 percent during the 4-decade period while the number of farms decreased from 6.5 million in 1920 to 3.7 million in 1959. Fewer families with fewer workers now handle more land and produce substantially more products for sale than they did in 1920.

The number of farms in the United States declined 22.6 percent (conterminous United States only) or 1,079,000 from 1954 to 1959. Approximately 232,000 of the 1,079,000 decrease in the number of farms resulted from a change in the definition of a farm. Using the 1954 definition, the 1959 count would have shown approximately 3,935,000 farms, or a decrease of 847,000 (17.7 percent) from 1954 to 1959. The number of farms in 1959 was smaller than in 1954 in every State and in all except 42 counties of the 3,067 in the 48 conterminous States. (Comparative data for 1954 are not available for Alaska and Hawaii.) Almost three-fifths (59.8 percent) of the decrease in number of farms was in farms of fewer than 50 acres each. Between 1954 and 1959, the number of farms of 500 to 999 acres increased by 4.3 percent while the number of those 1,000 acres and over rose by 4.5 percent. Farms of 500 acres or more have increased 62.3 percent in number during the last 35 years and farms in this size group now comprise over 9 percent of the Nation's farms. The trend toward fewer but larger farm operating units has continued as farmers in general have combined smaller farms units to obtain greater efficiency in the use of their modern power and equipment.

Nearly two farms out of three had telephones in 1959. The proportion of farms with telephones was higher in 1959 than in 1954 in every State. The number of farms with telephones was 3.2 percent higher in 1959 than in 1954 but the percent of all farms having telephones increased from 48.8 to 65.0 (conterminous United States only, see table 6). Despite the increase from 1954 to 1959 in the number of farms with telephones, fewer farms were equipped with this facility in 1959 than in 1920, when 38.7 percent of all farms in the United States had telephone

Table 6.—FARMS REPORTING SPECIFIED FACILITIES, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1920 TO 1959

[Data for conterminous United States for 1959, 1954, and 1950 are based on reports for only a sample of farms. See text. Figures for divisions and States in Tables 10 and 11.]

Year	Farms reporting			
	Number	Percent of all farms	Increase or decrease (-) <sup>1</sup>	
			Number	Percent
Telephone				
1959.....	2,410,982	65.0	74,096	3.2
1954 <sup>1</sup> .....	2,332,309	48.8	274,753	13.4
1950.....	2,059,659	38.2	191,447	10.3
1945 <sup>1</sup> .....	1,866,109	31.8	339,155	22.2
1940 <sup>1</sup> .....	1,526,954	25.0	-612,240	-28.6
1930 <sup>1</sup> .....	2,139,194	34.0	-359,299	-14.4
1920 <sup>1</sup> .....	2,498,493	38.7	...	...
Home freezer				
1959.....	2,067,425	55.8	523,435	34.0
1954 <sup>1</sup> .....	1,541,415	32.2	890,903	137.0
1950.....	650,687	12.1	...	...

<sup>1</sup>Data for Alaska and Hawaii not included.