

both for places of less than 3 acres and places of 3 or more acres. For several censuses prior to 1950, places of less than 3 acres were counted as farms, if the value of agricultural products for home use and for sale amounted to \$250 or more. For 1950 and 1954, places of less than 3 acres were not counted as farms unless the value of agricultural products sold amounted to \$150 or more. The more restricted definition used for 1950 and 1954 resulted in the inclusion of fewer farms of less than 3 acres than would have been the case if the definition of a farm had not been changed in 1950. In the 48 conterminous States the number of farms of less than 3 acres was 98,966 in 1945; 76,606 in 1950; 99,896 in 1954; and 77,562 in 1959.

Places of 3 or more acres were counted as farms in censuses prior to 1950 if there were farm products produced during the year preceding the census (other than only a small home garden, a few fruit trees, or a very small flock of chickens, etc.). For the 1950 and 1954 censuses, places of 3 or more acres were counted as farms only if the annual value of agricultural products, exclusive of home-garden products, amounted to \$150 or more. The agricultural products could have been either for home use or sale. This more restricted definition for places of 3 or more acres, likewise, resulted in the inclusion of fewer farms in the 1950 and 1954 censuses than would have been included had there been no change in the definition for farms of 3 or more acres. The smaller size farms were most affected by this change. (In the 48 conterminous States in 1945 there were 2,149,999 farms of 3 to 49 acres; in 1950, the number was 1,886,158; in 1954 it was 1,597,226; and in 1959 it was 974,373.)

The more restrictive definition of a farm in 1950 resulted in the elimination in the office processing of 247,000 enumerated places, most of which would have been counted as farms if the same criteria had been used in 1950 as in prior censuses. Had the 1950 criteria been used in 1945, the number of places eliminated would have been appreciably less than the 247,000 places eliminated in 1950. The number of part-time farms and country homes with meager agricultural production was increasing during this period. A decrease of an estimated 150,000 to 170,000 farms between 1945 and 1950 was attributable to the change in the census definition.

By 1945, the number of small farms, marginal in respect to the census definition, had reached significant proportions. A part of this situation was the result of the increasing importance of part-time farms and country homes, and part to increasing price levels. Numerous places were included in the count of farms only because of the reported value of products for family use was sufficient to qualify the place as a farm. In some instances, the only agricultural production was a home garden. In 1945, there were nearly 100,000 farms of under 3 acres, or two and three-fourths times as many as in 1940. This situation led to the adoption of the more rigid definition used in 1950 and 1954, and to the determination of marginal cases during the office processing instead of providing the enumerator with the definition of a farm and permitting him to make the determination of which places were to be enumerated as farms.

Census procedures sometimes have had an appreciable effect on county data for the number of farms without necessarily affecting significantly the totals for a State or the United States. For example, a part of the increase in number of farms in some of the citrus-growing counties in Florida, in 1954 as compared with 1950, was the result of the improvement in enumeration procedures. In 1954, the enumerators were provided with a list of known citrus growers to assist them in accounting for all farms in their districts. An effort was made to obtain reports directly from each owner. In 1950 and earlier censuses, the enumeration depended largely on getting information for groves of nonresident

owners from caretakers, often with one questionnaire filled in the name of the caretaker as manager covering all groves under his care.

Much of the variation in number of farms in some counties with Indian reservations occurred because of differences in enumeration procedures. For 1959, 1954, and 1950, the instructions called for filling questionnaires for every individual Indian having allotted or owned lands. Land in Indian reservations not reported by individual Indians or not rented to non-Indians was to be reported in the name of the cooperative group using the land. Enumerators had difficulty in determining which Indians required separate questionnaires and frequently reported the entire reservation on one questionnaire.

In 1945, a procedure which differed from that previously followed, was adopted for the enumeration of Indian reservations. It permitted much of the Indian agriculture to be reported for cooperative groups whereas previous censuses required a report for each Indian. Largely as a result of this procedure the reported number of nonwhite farm operators in 24 counties in 4 Western States was about 11,000 fewer in 1945 than in 1940. (See page 16, chapter 1, of Volume II: General Report, 1945 Census of Agriculture.)

CHANGES IN LAND USE

The changes in the major uses of land in the United States were significantly different during the period prior to 1920 and the period since 1920. The period prior to 1920 was marked by the settlement and development of lands west of the Mississippi River and the clearing of forest lands. From 1890 to 1920, cropland other than that used for pasture increased from 248 to 402 million acres. This significant expansion of cropland was accompanied by decreases in grazing land. Grazing land not in farms was reduced about 107 million acres from 1900 to 1920. Part of this grazing land was converted to cropland and part of it has since been included as land in farms. Clearing of forest lands continued during this period as cropland and nonwooded pastureland increased in the Eastern States and in parts of the Pacific Northwest.

ALL LAND IN FARMS IN THE UNITED STATES: 1850 TO 1959

