

**Land in Farms.**—Except for managed farms, the land to be included in each farm was determined from the answers to questions about the number of acres owned, the number of acres rented from others or worked on shares for others, and the number of acres rented to others or worked on shares by others. The acres owned and the acres rented from others or worked on shares for others were first added together and then the acres rented to others or worked on shares by others were subtracted. The result represented the number of acres in the farm. The number of acres in a managed farm was the difference between the total land managed and that part of the managed land that was rented to others or worked on shares by others.

The acreage designated as "land in farms" consists primarily of "agricultural" land—that is, land used for crops and pasture or grazing. It also includes extensive areas of land not actually under cultivation nor used for pasture or grazing. For example, the entire acreages of woodland and wasteland owned or rented by farm operators are included as land in farms, unless they were being held for nonagricultural purposes or unless the acreages were unusually large. For 1959 and 1954, if places reported 1,000 or more acres of woodland not pastured and wasteland, and if less than 10 percent of the total acreages in the places was used for agricultural purposes, the acreages of woodland not pastured and wasteland were reduced to equal the acreages used for agriculture. In 1950, adjustments were made in places of 1,000 or more acres (5,000 or more acres in the 17 Western States) if less than 10 percent of the total acreage in the place was used for agricultural purposes.

Except for open range and grazing land used under Government permit, all grazing land was to be included as land in farms provided the place of which it formed a part was a farm. Grazing land operated by grazing associations was to be reported in the name of the person chiefly responsible for conducting the business of the association. Land used rent-free was to be reported as land rented from others. All land in Indian reservations that was used for growing crops or grazing livestock was to be included. Land in Indian reservations that was not reported by individual Indians and that was not rented to non-Indians was to be reported in the name of the cooperative group that used the land. In some instances, an entire Indian reservation was reported as one farm.

**Classification of Farms by Size.**—In the 1959 census, all size-of-farm tabulations were classified into 12 size groups based on the total acres of land in farms. For the "under-10-acre" group, separate counts are shown for farms under 3 acres and farms 3 to 9 acres. The size groups used in the 1954 census are based on size-of-farm groups established in 1935. A change was made in the size classification for 1959 by subdividing the 1,000-acre-and-over group and by combining two previously recognized groups—10 to 29 acres and 30 to 49 acres. These size groups, established by the census, were based primarily on class intervals of the natural groupings which have resulted from the Government land-survey system, along with certain natural farm groupings in other areas. Most of the land in the western part of the United States was surveyed by the Government and initially divided into sections of approximately 640 acres. Transfers of this land have been made for the most part on the basis of these initial Government surveys. A classification of these farms according to size, therefore, will reflect approximate class interval midpoints of 30, 60, 80, 120, 160, etc. acres. These natural groupings were considered in determining the size groups used in the 1935 census. The classification avoids some of the bimodal distributions of farms that occurred under the classification used for prior censuses. It provides midpoints for each size group (except for the extremely small or the extremely large farms) that reflect the most common frequency or mode for these survey groupings.

In the Southern States where the acreage of land rented to individual croppers or tenants is relatively small under usual conditions, the concentration of farms in certain reported size groups may be due in part to the plantation system of farming. Under this system, the tenant generally farms only cropland and the total area of the individual farm unit tends to be smaller than other farms having a similar acreage of crops. The pastureland, woodland, and wasteland which normally would be associated with the cropland may be retained by the landlord. In such cases, the landlord's farm has a higher proportion of pastureland, woodland, and wasteland than other farms of similar size in the area.

**History of Classification of Farms by Size.**—The first tabulation of farms by size was made in the census of 1860. However, for that year and also for 1870, the classification was based on the acres of improved land rather than on the total acres in the farm. Data for the number of farms by size are shown for the United States in table 1.

Table 1.—FARMS CLASSIFIED BY ACRES OF TOTAL LAND IN FARMS, FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1880 TO 1959; AND ACRES OF IMPROVED LAND, FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1860 AND 1870

Year	Number of farms by acres of total land in farms								
	Total	Under 3 acres	3 to 9 acres	10 to 29 acres	30 to 49 acres	50 to 99 acres	100 to 499 acres	500 to 999 acres	1,000 or more acres
1959.....	3,710,503	79,083	165,245	(813,216)		657,990	1,658,530	200,012	136,427
1954 <sup>1</sup> .....	4,782,416	99,896	384,395	713,335	499,496	864,063	1,899,053	191,697	130,481
1950.....	5,388,437	78,110	410,420	855,000	624,596	1,048,075	2,068,466	182,297	121,473
1945 <sup>1</sup> .....	5,859,169	98,966	495,595	945,608	708,796	1,157,320	2,166,208	173,777	112,899
1940.....	6,102,417	37,022	472,325	(1,782,061)		1,291,328	2,255,396	163,711	100,574
1935 <sup>1</sup> .....	6,812,350	35,573	535,258	1,241,431	882,164	1,444,007	2,417,803	167,452	88,662
1930.....	6,295,103	44,244	317,755	(2,002,115)		1,375,198	2,315,403	159,723	80,665
1925 <sup>1</sup> .....	6,371,640	15,151	363,384	(2,038,692)		1,421,078	2,326,155	143,852	63,328
1920.....	6,453,991	21,158	320,348	(2,013,516)		1,475,005	2,456,729	149,826	67,409
1910 <sup>1</sup> .....	6,361,502	18,033	317,010	(1,918,499)		1,438,069	2,494,461	125,295	50,135
1900.....	5,739,657	41,882	226,564	(1,664,797)		1,366,167	2,290,561	102,526	47,160
1890.....	4,564,641	(150,194)		(1,168,327)		1,121,485	2,008,694	84,395	31,546
1880.....	4,008,907	4,352	134,889	(1,036,323)		1,032,810	1,695,983	75,972	28,578
	Number of farms by acres of improved land								
	Total	Under 3 acres	3 to 9 acres	10 to 19 acres	20 to 49 acres	50 to 99 acres	100 to 499 acres	500 to 999 acres	1,000 or more acres
1870.....	2,659,985	6,875	172,021	294,607	847,614	754,221	565,054	15,873	3,720
1860 <sup>2</sup> .....	2,044,077	NA	54,676	162,178	616,558	608,878	487,041	20,319	5,364

NA Not available.  
<sup>1</sup>Data for Alaska and Hawaii not included.  
<sup>2</sup>Includes farms of 100 acres or more for Hawaii.  
<sup>3</sup>Data for Alaska not available.  
<sup>4</sup>Includes 62 farms for Alaska, in the under 50 acres size group.  
<sup>5</sup>For 1860, the classification is for "Farms containing 3 acres or more." The number of farms in the various classes adds to 1,955,014, which is 89,063 less than the total number of farms.