

CHARACTERISTICS OF FARM OPERATORS

Residence of Farm Operators

In 1969, 81.2 percent of the farm operators reporting residence reported that they lived on the farm operated. About 10.6 percent, or 290 thousand operators did not respond to the inquiry on place of residence versus only 2.9 percent in 1964. The proportion of those reporting residence that reported living on their farm varied from 86.3 percent in the North to 75.5 percent in the South. In 1964, 90.5 percent of the operators reporting residence lived on the farm. The percentage by region was 92.4 for the North, 89.2 for the South, and 87.0 for the West in 1964.

The higher nonresponse rate in 1969 probably has very little effect on comparability of residence data with that from previous censuses. It is likely, however, that an agriculture census taken by mail would result in a higher proportion of report forms being completed by farm owners and their representatives (accountants, bookkeepers, lawyers, etc.) than if the census had been taken by enumerators, as was done prior to 1969.

By value of sales, farms with sales of \$20,000 to \$39,000 had the highest proportion of resident operators, 90.4 percent in 1969. For part-time farmers (those grossing less than \$2,500 from the sales of farm products, less than 65 years old, and working off the farm 100 days or more), only 71.8 percent reported that they lived on the farm they operated.

A number of counties with substantial numbers of farms and amounts of agricultural production had 20 percent or more nonresident operators in 1969. Such counties, with at least 300 nonresident operators are presented in table 5.

Farm characteristics for farms with nonresident operators by economic class of farm were obtained in the 1969 census. The number of all farms versus farms operated by nonresident operators by class of farm, type of farm, years on present farm, and age of operator is shown in table 6.

Nonresident operators tended to be somewhat younger than resident operators. About 61 percent of the nonresident operators reporting the year they began operations of their place had been on their present farm less than 10 years versus only 30 percent for farm operators as a whole. Over 20 percent of the cash-grain, cotton, other field crop, fruit and nut, and miscellaneous type farms had nonresident operators.

Table 3. All Farm Operators by Residence: 1940 to 1969

	Farm operators			Percent of operators reporting as to residence		Percent of all operators not reporting residence
	Residing on farm operated	Not residing on farm operated	Not reporting residence	Residing on farm	Not residing on farm	
United States:						
1969.....	1,982,738	457,679	289,833	81.2	18.8	10.6
1964.....	2,773,815	290,971	93,071	90.5	9.5	2.9
1959.....	3,236,247	266,988	207,268	92.4	7.6	5.6
1954 ¹	4,392,205	289,876	100,335	93.8	6.2	2.1
1950.....	4,987,134	269,546	131,757	94.9	5.1	2.4
1945 ¹	5,459,841	336,893	62,435	94.2	5.8	1.1
1940 ¹	5,506,322	313,598	276,879	94.6	5.4	4.5
North:						
1969.....	1,028,612	163,422	111,716	86.3	13.7	8.6
1964.....	1,333,993	109,070	36,518	92.4	7.6	2.5
1959.....	1,529,703	104,498	81,240	93.6	6.4	4.7
1954 ¹	1,907,865	105,068	30,159	94.8	5.2	1.5
1950.....	2,111,847	106,481	47,738	95.2	4.8	2.2
1945.....	2,330,614	132,527	20,437	94.6	5.4	0.8
1940.....	2,351,054	120,664	108,241	95.1	4.9	4.2
South:						
1969.....	762,340	246,871	152,188	75.5	24.5	13.1
1964.....	1,181,713	143,313	47,706	89.2	10.8	3.5
1959.....	1,412,867	125,363	107,719	91.9	8.1	6.5
1954 ¹	2,107,121	145,290	64,196	93.5	6.5	2.8
1950.....	2,456,595	121,327	74,501	95.3	4.7	2.8
1945.....	2,683,655	159,442	38,038	94.4	5.6	1.3
1940.....	2,708,859	149,848	148,463	94.8	5.2	4.9
West:						
1969.....	191,786	47,386	25,929	80.2	19.8	9.8
1964.....	258,109	38,588	8,847	87.0	13.0	2.9
1959.....	293,677	37,127	18,309	88.8	11.2	5.2
1954 ¹	377,219	39,518	5,980	90.5	9.5	1.4
1950.....	418,692	41,738	7,518	90.9	9.1	1.6
1945 ¹	445,572	44,924	3,960	90.8	9.2	0.8
1940 ¹	446,409	43,086	20,175	91.2	8.8	4.0

¹Does not include Alaska and Hawaii.

Table 4. Class 1-5 Farm Operators by Residence: 1959 to 1969

	Farm operators			Percent of operators reporting as to residence		Percent of all operators not reporting residence
	Residing on farm operated	Not residing on farm operated	Not reporting residence	Residing on farm	Not residing on farm	
United States:						
1969.....	1,344,557	246,509	142,617	84.5	15.5	8.2
1964.....	1,603,548	168,292	45,600	90.5	9.5	2.5
1959.....	1,829,504	151,591	85,968	92.3	7.7	4.2
North:						
1969.....	800,702	96,297	67,653	89.3	10.7	7.0
1964.....	952,662	72,840	22,095	92.9	7.1	2.1
1959.....	1,077,479	65,300	40,131	94.3	5.7	3.4
South:						
1969.....	405,230	117,965	59,984	77.5	22.5	10.3
1964.....	496,034	69,997	18,393	87.6	12.4	3.1
1959.....	568,394	61,994	36,612	90.2	9.8	5.5
West:						
1969.....	138,625	32,247	14,980	81.1	18.9	8.1
1964.....	154,852	25,455	5,112	85.9	14.1	2.8
1959.....	183,637	24,297	9,225	88.3	11.7	4.2

Years on Present Farm (Year Began Operation of Present Farm)

In 1969, 78.6 percent of all operators reported the year they had begun operation of their farm. Of those reporting, 35.4 percent reported 10 years or less on the present farm, 20.0 percent reported 5 years or less, and 8.3 percent reported 2 years or less. The comparable percentages for 1964 were 36.2, 20.5, and 8.1 respectively. Because of the high rate of nonresponse in 1969, it is advisable to use only data for farms reporting when comparing 1969 data with previous censuses.

The distribution of operators by years began operation is provided in tables 7 and 8 for the United States and the four regions.

Farm operators in the Northeast and North Central regions tended to report a longer period on their present farms. Also, operators of class 1-5 farms had generally operated their places somewhat longer than had operators of other farms.

The distribution by tenure by years on farm indicates that part owners had operated their farms for the longest period of time and tenants the shortest. For all farms, the percentage of full owners operating their place for 10 years or more declined from 69.2 percent in 1964 to 64.8 percent in 1969, possibly due to operators who were full owners in 1964 increasing the size of their operations by renting additional acreage in 1969. (See tables 9 and 10.)