

## Chapter 7. Dissemination of the Census Results

### BASIC DECISIONS

The goal of the publication program for the 1969 Census of Agriculture, like that of previous agriculture censuses, was to make the data available as soon as possible after the data were collected, and to do so while maintaining the Bureau's standards relating to the quality and comparability of the statistics issued and to their presentation. To achieve this goal, the following basic decisions were reached regarding the census publications:

1. The data were to be made available in one or more of the following forms: Printed publications, computer tapes, and microfiche.
2. Reports would contain basic data for all farms, including the farms that received the abbreviated questionnaire, and would include more detailed data for farms with sales of \$2,500 or more, i.e., the farms that received the standard questionnaire.
3. The output of the high-speed printer of the Bureau's computer complex would be used as reproduction copy for offset printing, to the extent feasible, with a minimum of manual processing.
4. All published reports were to be produced by photo-offset. (The text for the reports was first typeset, then the pages of the text were reproduced by offset along with the rest of the report.)

Before the 1964 Census of Agriculture, the use of punchcard tabulating equipment in processing and tabulating the data that had been collected generally resulted in making preliminary tabulations available on a flow basis. In order to release the data as promptly as possible, preliminary reports containing the more important items were issued for each county. Later the volume I State and outlying area reports, containing complete and final data for each county as well as State summary tables, were published.

Although electronic data processing equipment, which processed and tabulated the entire farm record, was used in the 1964 Census of Agriculture, and the complete set of final tabulations for each county could have been made available quickly, the practice of publishing a preliminary report for each county followed by complete and final county tables in volume I was continued. In planning for the 1969 Census of Agriculture, the decision was made to replace the preliminary county

reports with a relatively complete final report for each county. Subsequently, brief summary tables showing totals for each county in the State for a few of the more important items were included in the volume I reports, together with a complete set of the county reports and the State tables. The volume I reports contain much more detailed breakdowns and cross-classifications of the data for the State or outlying area as a whole than are issued for the counties.

In general, the report series were scheduled so that all the county reports were issued first, followed by the volume I reports for States and outlying areas.

### QUANTITY OF 1969 STATISTICS PUBLISHED

The quantity of statistics published for the 1969 census was greater than that of earlier censuses. One of the major policy decisions resulting from consultation with the Census Advisory Committee and with the Conferences of Census Users (see page 84) was that more data, such as additional cross-tabulations, should be published, particularly data on farms with sales of \$2,500 or more.

There are approximately 24,500 pages in the individual county reports, nearly 18,000 additional pages in the series of Volume I *Area Reports* which include the county reports for each area, and about 1,500 pages in Volume II, *General Report*. This compares to about 15,000 pages in the preliminary county reports for the 1964 census, 15,000 in the 1964 census volume I reports, and 1,200 pages in the 1964 volume II.

### USE OF HIGH-SPEED PRINTER OUTPUT AS CAMERA COPY

The outstanding advantages of using high-speed printer copy for reproduction were the savings in time and in manpower. In censuses prior to 1964, tables had to be posted by hand, reviewed, typed (or sent to the printer for composition), proofread, and the arithmetic checked on a calculating machine. For the 1969 Census of Agriculture, as in the 1964, the tables in most of the publications, including the county reports and the volume I reports, were largely machine products; the computer was programmed so that the output fell into columns on the copy from the high-speed printer. Three copies were prepared by the high-speed printer. The original copy, white, was used as camera copy for offset reproduction. The second copy, yellow, was used for indicating corrections and changes to be made, if any,

and for other instructions for preparation of the white copy for offset. The second carbon, pink, was used for review, including analysis to prevent disclosure of information about individual agricultural operations, by the appropriate subject-matter specialists.

In 1969, a preprinted acetate overlay containing the appropriate page heading, table title, column and heading lines, and the stub was placed over the white camera copy of each page by the printer before it was reproduced. By contrast, for the 1964 census reports, most of the stub was produced on the high-speed printer, so that a double pass at the high-speed printer was required for most tables. This allowed almost no flexibility in type composition.

### GROUPING AND BINDING OF REPORTS

All eight-page county reports were issued separately for the 1969 Census of Agriculture. Prior to the 1969 census, the county reports had never been bound for any State, primarily because these reports were preliminary and it was felt that the average user of these reports was interested in preliminary figures for only one or a few counties. However, for the 1969 census, the eight-page county reports were considered to be final reports. As a consequence, all eight-page county reports for a State were bound in from one to three books (depending largely on the number of counties in the State) and were identified as section 2 of the volume I report for the State.

Section 1 of each of the volume I reports for the 50 States and outlying areas contains summary data for the State or outlying area. In all cases the summary data in section 1 for a State or outlying area were bound in one book.

All 1969 census reports which are available for sale were paperbound. A few copies of each of the volume I State or outlying area reports were hardbound, primarily for use by Federal Government agencies.

As is usual with all types of census reports, there was considerable variation in the number of sales of the different volume I reports—a fact which supports the belief that many users are interested in data for only a single State or outlying area or a group of adjoining States.

### CORRECTION OF ERRORS IN PUBLICATIONS

If an error was found in one of the eight-page county reports after it had been issued, a correction was made before that report was published in section 2 of the volume I reports.

The correction of census figures, when errors are discovered, goes on without any time limitation. The Bureau of the Census maintains one set of bound volumes in which corrections are entered as they are found throughout the years. Corrections will be made at any time an error is discovered through the censal period and also when correcting data for comparability in the succeeding censuses. Some corrections of 1964 figures appear in the 1969 reports where they are given for comparison; some of them were found in the course of processing the 1969 censuses.

### PRINTING, PRICING, AND DISTRIBUTION

The 1969 Census of Agriculture publications conformed to the printing, pricing, and distribution policies for all Bureau publications, and these conformed to Government-wide policies. General U.S. Government policy is that all printing of Federal publications is done by the Government Printing Office.

The Government Printing Office subcontracted the final 1969 census publications to private printers, but the Superintendent of Documents handled sales and distribution.

For the eight-page county report, the printing was subcontracted to one private printer. When the bulk of the county reports went to the printer the facilities were overloaded, and when delays resulted, the Commerce Department handled some of the load in its own printing facilities.

Photo-offset was first used in the 1940 decennial census publications. It was used for the major portion of the succeeding censuses of agriculture and for all 1969 Census of Agriculture publications.

All U.S. Government publications have a subsidized price: The originating agency pays all the costs for preparation of a publication and the printing of copies for its own use, so that all the purchasers pay is the cost of printing extra copies plus the cost of handling. The result is that the Bureau, like all Federal agencies, makes information available to the public at a nominal charge. Prices of publications are based on a schedule maintained by the Government Printing Office; prices of Bureau publications not printed by the Government Printing Office are equivalent to prices of those that are.

The Bureau also has the responsibility for making some free distribution of all reports for certain uses, including consultation and reference in libraries. It maintains lists of people entitled, by virtue of their positions or functions, to receive publications free of charge. The Superintendent of Documents sends the Bureau's publications to 1,079 depository libraries for Government publications; this puts copies in the major reference libraries of the country. In addition, there are 89 other depository libraries for census publications in places with a large population and usually with a large educational institution. The depository libraries in both programs indicate which classes of publications they wish to receive. All of the 1,168 receive the annual *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, which includes summary figures from the most recent censuses. Most of the libraries receive at least the U.S. summary reports of the major censuses (volume II, in the case of the 1969 Census of Agriculture) and the reports pertaining to their particular State. A few receive all or almost all of the publications of the Bureau of the Census.

The Bureau works with the Superintendent of Documents, the Department of Commerce and its field offices, and other organizations to publicize the availability of census reports. It also publishes a quarterly catalog of publications, issues press releases, and issues announcements and order forms and distributes them widely. Statements on the publication programs of the 1969 Census of Agriculture were prepared and distributed from time to time throughout the census period. They included brief descriptions of each series of reports and the anticipated publication dates.

The storage and distribution of copies for sale were handled by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. A supply of the reports was also maintained in Jeffersonville for Bureau use as well as for filling requests for free copies.

## 1969 AGRICULTURE CENSUS PRINTED REPORTS

### County Reports

An eight-page county report was published separately for each of 3,052 counties, parishes, independent cities, and, in Alaska, combined election districts. Reports were not published for 27 counties or county equivalents which had fewer than 10 farms in the 1969 Census of Agriculture, including Yellowstone National Park and one island in Hawaii with no farms reported. An eight-page summary of the county data was also issued for each State. Each eight-page report was accompanied by an additional separate page of text. For the 1964 census, the county report consisted of five pages of tables and one page of text.

Each eight-page county report contains data for all farms and additional data for farms having gross sales of \$2,500 or more. Data for all farms are shown in eight tables which include farms by size, economic class, and value of farm products sold; value of farm products sold by kinds of products; farm operators by tenure, color, age, residence, and days of off-farm work; land in farms by use and land-use practices; specified equipment by age; specified farm expenditures; farms reporting and number of poultry and livestock; and farms reporting, acres harvested, and quantities of specified crops.

Data for farms with \$2,500 or more gross sales are shown in 18 tables which include the same kinds of data as are shown for all farms but with considerably more detail and with different size groupings for some items. In addition, the tables include number of hired workers; farms reporting agricultural chemicals used on crops, acres treated, and cost of the chemicals used; farms reporting insecticides used on livestock and poultry, and cost of the insecticides; farms reporting irrigation, and amount of water used for irrigation; acres of land drained; and use of irrigation and commercial fertilizer for major crops.

A standard stub was used for each eight-page county report. This meant that only the major crops and major types of livestock commonly produced were included. Since county data are also collected and tabulated for relatively minor crops such as popcorn and for crops such as citrus fruits, which are of major importance in only a small number of counties, as well as for other types of livestock such as chinchilla, a miscellaneous report was published for each State or outlying area showing data by county for other items of agricultural inventory and production. Each of these miscellaneous county reports contains a count of farms by type of farm for each county (inadvertently omitted from the standard county report) and data for localized or miscellaneous agricultural products that could not economically be included in the standard report. For each State or outlying area, the table for each product shows only those counties reporting the product.

Each county report contains both 1969 data and, where available, comparable 1964 data.

All county reports—eight-page summaries and miscellaneous reports—were published by April 1972. (For dates at which the first and last reports for each State were issued, see appendix D.)

### Volume I, Area Reports

A separate report was published for each of the 50 States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Trust Territory. The area reports for the 1969 census included 98 separate books rather than the 54 that were published for the 1964 census. For each of 20 States and for each of the outlying areas, the entire volume I report for that State or area was included in one binding. An additional 20 States required two books each, nine States required three each, while only one State, Texas, required four books for its complete State report. The volume I reports include data for all farms and data for farms with sales of \$2,500 or more. In section 1, chapter 1 contains State summary data; chapter 2, county summary data for selected items; and chapter 3, specialized county data for commodities or items appearing in relatively few counties. Section 2 contains the detailed eight-page county reports bound together.

All Volume I *Area Reports* for the 50 States were sent to the printer by July 1972, and the last released were available by early September. The reports for the outlying areas were published between October and December 1972. (For the dates that each report was issued, as well as the number of pages and price, see appendix D.)

### Volume II, General Report

Volume II presents statistics by subject for the United States as a whole and for regions, geographic divisions, and States, in nine separate paperbound chapters. Each chapter was published during the first half of 1973. A small number of complete sets of the nine chapters were hard-bound for use by Federal Government agencies. Data are shown for all farms as well as for those farms with sales of \$2,500 or more. The subject-matter chapters are:

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Title</u>
1	General Information; Procedures for Collection, Processing, Classification
2	Farms: Number, Use of Land, Size of Farm
3	Farm Management, Farm Operators
4	Equipment, Labor, Expenditures, Chemicals
5	Livestock, Poultry, Livestock and Poultry Products
6	Crops, Nursery and Greenhouse Products, Forest Products
7	Value of Products, Economic Class, Contracts
8	Type of Farm
9	Irrigation and Drainage on Farms

### Volume III, Agricultural Services<sup>1</sup>

This new report contains data for counties, States, and the United States on establishments classified in Major Group 07 of the Standard Industrial Classification, the growing field of agricultural services such as crop dusting and veterinary services. It was published in September 1972.

### Volume IV, Irrigation

This report, which appeared in the spring of 1973, contains irrigation data for drainage basins in the United States. The data included are on land irrigated, production of crops on irrigated land, number of establishments, water conveyed, users served, water obtained by source, and type of organization. Also presented in this report are data for irrigation on farms including data on land use, farm sales and expenses on irrigated farms; the method of water distribution on and sources of water to irrigated farms; acres irrigated on farms; and other data comparing irrigated and nonirrigated farms.

### Volume V, Special Reports

Parts 1 to 9, *Specialized Agriculture, 1971*, are separate reports, one for each of the major type-of-farm categories:

1. Grains (corn, sorghum, milo, wheat, oats, barley, rye, rice, etc.), soybeans, dry beans, and dry peas
2. Tobacco
3. Cotton
4. Sugar crops, potatoes, and other specified crops
5. Vegetables, including tomatoes and melons
6. Fruits, nuts, and berries
7. Poultry
8. Dairy
9. Cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats

Each report contains data for the counties and States in which the particular type of operation was significant and for the United States. The data are from the supplemental surveys conducted in 1972 and also from the regular 1969 census report forms. The reports were issued in the second half of 1973.

The content of Part 10, *Horticultural Specialties*, is similar to that of parts 1 to 9. It appeared in the fall of 1973.

Part 11, *Farm Finance*, issued in 1974, contains data by States and for the United States.

Part 12, *Ranking Agricultural Counties*, shows the top ranking counties in descending order of importance for various agricultural characteristics and products. Data are included for both the 1969 and 1964 Censuses of Agriculture. The report appeared in February 1973.

Part 13, *Data-Collection Forms and Procedures*, contains facsimiles of the data-collection forms used in the 1969 censuses of agriculture, irrigation, and agricultural services, along with a brief description of the enumeration procedures. It was published in September 1972.

Part 14 is this *Procedural History*.

Part 15, the *Graphic Summary* containing maps and charts, was published in November 1973.

Part 16, *Evaluation of Coverage*, will be published in 1974.

### Volume VI, Drainage of Agricultural Lands

The report on drainage, issued in June 1973, includes data on numbers of farms reporting and acres drained, and on publicly organized drainage projects.

### COMPUTER TAPES

The raw material for the statistical tables are the individual replies on questionnaires. Questionnaires from the censuses of agriculture from 1900 to 1959 were processed by punchcard equipment. Before 1900, the replies on the census questionnaires were read by clerks and "tallied" on previously prepared worksheets with space provided for the items and combinations of items or groups to be tabulated.

Computer tapes containing data published in the county reports of the 1969 Census of Agriculture are available from the Bureau of the Census. The information contained on the tapes is the same as that contained in the printed reports. Data that might disclose information on the operations of individual farms have been suppressed or combined with adjacent cells. These tapes permit retabulation of the data for special geographic areas or cross-tabulations of particular interest to the purchaser. Tapes were released on a flow basis as the States were processed.

The data on computer tape are organized into two files. The data which have been published in the eight-page county reports are in file A. Eighteen tapes include these data for all 50 States. Normally, two States are included on each tape reel, but some tape reels include information for as many as eight States, while one tape reel contains data for Texas only. The "County Data for Miscellaneous Items" are in file B; in this case nine tape reels contain the information for the 50 States. As data processing of the States in each of the nine geographic divisions was completed, a reel of tape was made available containing the "County Data for Miscellaneous Items" for all States in that division.

All tape reels are sold at a price of \$70 per reel.

<sup>1</sup> For more complete information on the contents of volumes III to VI, see the appropriate other chapters in this Procedural History.

## MICROFICHE

One of the newest and most inexpensive methods of filing and later retrieving data is through the use of microfiche. Microfiche is quite similar to microfilm except that microfiche is reproduced on a 4" x 6" film sheet which is capable of containing 98 pages of printed data. Each printed page is photographically reduced 24 times to approximately thumbnail size. This enables an individual to comfortably carry at least 15,000 pages on microfiche at one time. All volume I reports and the volume II to VI subject reports will be available on microfiche. The approximately 1,500 pages of volume II will be contained in about 26 4" x 6" microfiche film sheets. Unlike other census volumes, microfiche data are available only through the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service Office, Springfield, Va. Census volumes usually are placed on microfiche approximately 12 months after the printed publication has been issued.

## USERS' CONFERENCES

Responding to requests from users of agriculture census data, the Bureau conducted 11 Conferences of Census Users for the 1969 Census of Agriculture from December 1970 through August 1972.

The purpose of these conferences was to allow users of agriculture census data to meet and discuss with Bureau staff the agriculture census publications and data tapes, what was contained in each, and how the data could be used.

Each conference was scheduled only after a local group interested in agriculture statistics agreed to sponsor or underwrite the expenses of a representative from the Bureau and to

handle all arrangements for the meeting, including facilities, registration, etc.

The sponsor, in issuing invitations, usually established a maximum number of participants. Most conferences were attended by from 40 to 60 registrants, while two were attended by fewer than 40, and one by 110 registrants.

Each conference was held at a location that would be convenient for users of census data within the State where the conference was held as well as for users from all adjoining States. (See appendix B.)

Approximately 40 percent of all the persons who attended these conferences represented the agribusinesses, that is, firms that produce or distribute products for sale to farmers and ranchers and firms that purchase items produced by farmers and ranchers. Approximately 25 percent of those attending were representatives of institutions of higher learning, primarily agricultural colleges, including land-grant institutions. About 20 percent represented farm and agricultural commodity organizations such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, National Farmers Organization, National Farmers Union, National Grange, National Hog Producers, and National Wheat Growers. The agricultural news media were represented by 5 percent of the participants, including farm radio and television directors as well as publishers of farm newspapers and magazines. The remaining 10 percent of those who attended the conferences included persons from State and local governments, the transportation industry, etc.

Of the 11 user conferences that were conducted, 5 covered primarily the 1969 Census of Agriculture and the other 6 included information on both the 1969 Census of Agriculture and the 1970 Census of Population and Housing.