

## NUMBER OF FARMS AND LAND IN FARMS

United States 1959-66  
By States 1964-66

January 12, 1966

### NUMBER OF FARMS DECLINED ONE-FIFTH SINCE 1959

The number of farms in operation during 1965 declined from a year earlier in 47 States and remained unchanged in 3 States, bringing the national total to 3,380,000 -- 3 percent under 1964, according to estimates of the Crop Reporting Board. Total land in farms, at about 1,155 million acres, decreased less than 1 percent from 1964, yielding slowly to encroachments of urban and suburban extensions, widening highways, and other non-farm uses.

The total of 3,286,000 farms in prospect for 1966 operation continues the downward trend from earlier years with little change in the rate of reduction. The reduction in total land in farms also continues at practically the same rate with a preliminary estimate of about 1,151 million acres for 1966. Preliminary estimates are shown by States on page 2.

The changes in estimated national totals have been much greater for the number of farms than for land in farms. Farm numbers during the period 1959 to 1966 declined 20 percent, while land in farms decreased only 3 percent. The "average farm operator" in 1966 manages a farm unit of 350 acres -- a fifth larger than seven years earlier. Average farm sizes shown in the table below are derived by dividing estimated total acreage in farms by the number of farms. Discontinuance of small farming enterprises and merging of larger units with existing farms continue as important influences in the change in farm numbers.

This report includes data for Alaska and Hawaii in national totals for all years presented. State data for farm numbers for 48 States, 1910-1959, are published in Statistical Bulletin No. 316, June 1962.

Number of Farms and Land in Farms, U. S. 1959-66

Year	Farms (Thousands)	Land in Farms (Thousand Acres)	Average Size of Farm (Acres)
1959	4,105	1,182,658	288
1960	3,956	1,177,565	298
1961	3,818	1,172,910	307
1962	3,695	1,168,115	316
1963	3,580	1,163,180	325
1964	3,479	1,158,505	333
1965	3,380	1,154,560	342
1966 1/	3,286	1,150,725	350

1/ Preliminary.

Number of Farms and Land in Farms, by States, 1964-66

State	Number of Farms			Land in Farms		
	1964	1965	1966 1/	1964	1965	1966 1/
				1,000	1,000	1,000
				acres	acres	acres
Maine	16,300	15,700	15,000	3,180	3,100	3,020
N.H.	5,500	5,200	5,000	1,120	1,070	1,030
Vt.	11,600	11,200	10,800	3,020	2,910	2,850
Mass.	10,400	9,800	9,300	1,130	1,100	1,070
R.I.	1,200	1,200	1,200	125	120	115
Conn.	7,700	7,400	7,100	990	960	940
N.Y.	72,000	69,000	66,000	13,500	13,300	13,100
N.J.	13,000	12,000	11,000	1,330	1,250	1,160
Pa.	88,000	85,000	82,000	11,500	11,300	11,100
Ohio	130,000	124,000	119,000	18,400	18,200	18,000
Ind.	122,000	119,000	116,000	19,000	18,900	18,800
Ill.	144,000	141,000	138,000	30,300	30,200	30,100
Mich.	105,000	101,000	98,000	14,300	14,000	13,800
Wis.	127,000	124,000	121,000	21,600	21,400	21,200
Minn.	146,000	143,000	140,000	32,400	32,400	32,400
Iowa	170,000	166,000	161,000	34,600	34,500	34,400
Mo.	162,000	160,000	157,000	34,400	34,400	34,400
N.Dak.	50,500	49,000	48,000	42,100	42,000	42,000
S.Dak.	53,500	52,000	51,000	45,000	44,900	44,900
Nebr.	84,000	82,000	80,000	48,100	48,100	48,100
Kans.	101,000	99,000	97,000	49,900	49,900	49,800
Del.	5,000	4,900	4,700	760	750	740
Md.	23,600	23,000	22,200	3,550	3,500	3,450
Va.	88,000	85,000	81,000	13,100	13,000	12,900
W.Va.	38,000	37,000	36,000	6,200	6,100	6,000
N.C.	195,000	188,000	183,000	17,300	17,200	17,100
S.C.	68,000	65,000	63,000	9,100	9,000	8,900
Ga.	91,000	88,000	86,000	20,000	19,800	19,600
Fla.	41,000	39,000	37,000	15,900	15,700	15,500
Ky.	144,000	142,000	140,000	17,600	17,500	17,300
Tenn.	154,000	152,000	150,000	16,200	16,100	16,000
Ala.	101,000	101,000	101,000	16,100	16,100	16,100
Miss.	114,000	109,000	104,000	18,600	18,300	18,000
Ark.	82,000	78,000	74,000	17,200	17,000	16,700
La.	68,000	65,000	62,000	10,200	10,100	10,100
Okla.	88,000	86,000	84,000	37,300	37,300	37,300
Texas	210,000	202,000	196,000	154,000	154,000	154,000
Mont.	30,400	29,900	29,500	66,700	66,600	66,550
Idaho	36,000	35,600	35,300	15,300	15,300	15,300
Wyo.	9,600	9,500	9,400	35,800	35,800	35,700
Colo.	33,000	33,000	32,500	41,000	41,000	41,000
N.Mex.	15,400	14,900	14,600	51,700	51,600	51,500
Ariz.	7,000	6,700	6,400	45,000	45,000	45,000
Utah	15,800	15,000	14,500	13,500	13,500	13,500
Nev.	2,200	2,100	2,000	8,800	8,800	8,800
Wash.	52,000	51,000	50,000	18,200	18,200	18,200
Oreg.	44,500	43,500	42,000	21,200	21,200	21,200
Calif.	95,000	91,000	86,000	38,700	38,600	38,500
48 States:	3,472,200	3,373,600	3,279,500	1,155,005	1,151,060	1,147,225
Alaska 2/ :	380	350	330	900	900	900
Hawaii ....	6,600	6,500	6,400	2,600	2,600	2,600
U.S. ....:	3,479,180	3,380,450	3,286,230	1,158,505	1,154,560	1,150,725

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Exclusive of grazing land leased from U.S. Government, Alaska farmland totals about 70,000 acres.

### Basis for Estimates of Number of Farms

The estimates of the number of farms by years published by the Crop Reporting Board are benchmarked on the quinquennial Census of Agriculture with adjustments for incompleteness. The annual estimates between Census years are based upon expansions and projections from the Statistical Reporting Service enumerative and mailed surveys, data from State farm censuses in a limited number of States, indications derived from other various inquiries, and extension of trends.

Post-Census analyses by the Bureau of the Census indicated that the count of the number of farms was short by about 8 percent in both 1954 and 1959. Additional analysis indicated that some places covered by Whole Farm Soil Bank contracts were not considered farms in the 1959 enumeration. An explanation of these special studies is shown in the General Report of the Bureau of the Census for 1959, and allowance for such incompleteness or difference in definition is included in the estimates.

Annual State farm censuses supply data on numbers of farms in 12 States, 10 of which are in the North Central Region. Changes shown by these surveys are the principal basis for the annual estimates in these States. Some of these censuses may be less inclusive than the U.S. Census with respect to farms that are marginal either in size or in sales of farm products. Annual appraisals of the data are made for each State.

The annual enumerative surveys provide indications of the number of farms in operation at the time the surveys are conducted. Beginning with small samples in 1957 these surveys are being expanded with resulting gains in dependability of indications. In 1963 the number of area segments enumerated in 28 States was about 10,500. Enumeration also was expanded to represent 48 States with some area segments in each State and a national total of 12,350 segments. In 1965 the sample represented 48 States with a total of 15,785 segments, 14,485 in 39 States. Variability in the enumerative data is of course greater for individual States than for all States combined, and the data are necessarily interpreted with regard to sample size, consistency, procedural changes and trends in individual States, as well as geographic regions.

In addition to data from the Census and enumerative surveys, various collateral data aid in estimating the direction and extent of change in number of farms. The regular mail surveys conducted by the Statistical Reporting Service in estimating crop and livestock numbers provide comparisons of size of reporting farms. In some States, data are available on the number of farms selling milk, or the number of producers of other commodities produced commercially.

Estimates of land in farms represent the places defined as farms in the number of farms estimates. As in the Census of Agriculture, these estimates of farm land exclude Government owned land grazed on a permit or fee basis but include land leased from the Government for grazing purposes. In Alaska this type of land represents about 830,000 acres of the total, leaving about 70,000 acres of other land, averaging about 200 acres per farm.

Estimates of number of farms and land in farms for 1966 are to a large extent based on extension of previous trends. They are published by States on a preliminary basis and are subject to revision as results of enumerative surveys, State farm censuses, and the U.S. Federal Census of 1964 become available. With each Federal Census, the annual estimates published by the Crop Reporting Board are revised to bring the series in line with the results of the Census, with appropriate adjustments for under-enumeration.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
STATISTICAL REPORTING SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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