

Family Farm Still Backbone Of U.S., 1959 Census Of Agriculture Reveals

The family farm still is the backbone of American agriculture, an analysis of early reports from the 1959 Census of Agriculture reveals.

Not only has the gain in incorporation-type farms with 1,000 or more acres been relatively insignificant in the past five years, but the increase in the number of all farms having 500 acres or more has likewise been slight.

What has been happening, the survey shows, is that the number of "marginal" farms has declined sharply, while millions of middle-sized family-type farms have gained modestly in size.

Early figures show fewer farms in every state reported so far. Estimates made by the Bureau of the Census are that the final total will be about four million farms in the U.S. This compared with 4,800,000 reported in the 1954 Census of Agriculture.

Of this 800,000 drop, approximately 200,000 "farms" have been eliminated because the Census Bureau changed its own definition of what constitutes a farm.

(In 1954 a farm was a place of three or more acres that produced products worth \$150 or more, or a place of even less than three acres if it had sales of \$150 or more of farm products. For the current census a place can be counted as a farm only if it is 10 acres or more and has sales of \$50 or more, or, if less than 10 acres, if it has sales of \$250 or more.)

Contrary to frequently-made statements that "corporation farming" is gobbling up American agriculture, the Bureau of the Census reports that there were only 857 farms 1,000 acres or more in seven Eastern states—a gain of only 24 such farms in five years. In nine central states, the number of such farms increased less than 3,000, to a total of 31,530. And in seven Western states the number actually declined slightly—from 35,703 to 35,585.

The average size of farms in the east, according to analysis of early reports, is now about 164 acres. In the central states the average is 267 acres. In the range states of the west the average size ranch is 1,016 acres.

Although the average size of farms has been increasing only gradually, farmers' investment per farm has risen rapidly. This is both because land values have steadily risen and because farmers have had to buy additional machinery, build new buildings, and increase the number of acres in nearly every state used more fertilizer to keep crop output abreast of the growing population, the report showed.

Likewise, they acquired more newer devices such as pick-up hay balers and field forage harvesters. Seven eastern states, for ex-

ample, reported a 52 per cent increase in the number of pick-up balers in just five years' time; nine midwestern states reported a 56 per cent increase, and seven western states reported a 65 per cent gain. The percentage of farms with combines, corn pickers, trucks, tractors, and automobiles all increased since 1954—and this despite a cost-price squeeze that has seen the farmer's rate of return for his labor and investment drop sharply.

As a result of this expansion

Check Tests Pay Dividend To Consumers

Continuous check testing of packaged meat weights in Oregon retail stores is paying dividends to consumers and, where meats are overweight, to store owners, the State Department of Agriculture reports.

The 1959 legislature made appropriation for continuous consumer work in this field, previously handled through intermittent checking.

O. K. Beals, chief of the Foods and Dairies, Weights and Measures Division, revealed that in the April-June quarter this year 76 per cent of the packaged meats were correct or overweight and 24 per cent underweight. In the October-December, 1959, quarter, 35 per cent of packages checked were underweight.

During April, May and June, 4,631 packages were weighed. Of that number 62 per cent were correct in labeled net weight, 24 per cent underweight and 14 per cent overweight.

In October, November and December of 1959, a total of 5,091 meat packages was weighed in retail markets. Of that number 56 per cent were correct weight, 35 per cent underweight and nine per cent, overweight.

Store owners have been cooperative in correcting errors in labeled weights. In the October-December period, 76 warning letters were written. In the April-June testing period, only 60 warning letters were issued to storekeepers. In each period, one complaint was filed with the district attorney.

A comparative check of 25 of the "warned" markets showed correct weight packages climbed from 40 per cent earlier to 74 per cent after the warning and overweight packages from four to 10 per cent.

Many of the discrepancies were only one fourth ounce per package. However, each ounce costs several pennies so underweight packages can become an expensive product for the buyer while overweight packages are costly to the seller.

in mechanization, farmers' use of gasoline and oil has risen rapidly. Every state tabulated so far as shown marked gains. In Iowa, for instance, farmers spent 96.8 million dollars on petroleum products alone in 1959, compared with 84.2 million dollars in 1954.

While the Bureau of the Census was reporting these figures, the U.S. Department of Agriculture revealed further indications of the growing importance of farmers as customers of U.S. business and industry.

Gross income of farms from all

their livestock to feed and clothe a rapidly growing population.

The average investment in land and buildings in seven eastern states, according to the study, has gone up from \$14,806 in 1954 to \$23,380 per farm in 1959. In nine central states, the average investment for these capital items is \$41,652 per farm, compared with \$27,593 in 1954. For several western states, the average is \$52,646, versus \$43,442 in 1954.

With practically the same amount of land under cultivation last year as five years ago, farm-

sources last year reached a record-breaking 46.6 billion dollars and production costs also soared to a new high of 26.2 billion dollars. Farmers' capital expenditures of 4.8 billion dollars also hit a new peak.

On January 1, 1960, according to the Department of Agriculture estimates, U.S. agriculture was a 203.6 billion dollar business in terms of total assets, of which 179.3 billion dollars was free of debt.

Herald and News Oct. 30 Page 7

Fall Fertilization & Soil Correction... PAYS!

Get Your

FERRIC SULPHATE

From

SIMPLIT SOILBUILDERS

"Your Specialists in Fertilizers & Farm Chemicals"

KLAMATH FALLS and MALIN

Phone TU 2-1438 or Malin 723-2947

Or Call:

Bruce Tolmie TU 4-6070
Gene Book TU 4-3887



Ferric Sulfate Breaks Up 'Dobe Clay on Irrigated Farmland

Agricultural Ferric Sulfate has proved its ability to loosen the heavy adobe clay that forms slick spots and lumpy, unworkable patches in many Pacific Northwest pastures and fields.

At Meridian, Idaho, Dairyman Joe DeWaard succeeded in getting rid of adobe spots in irrigated pasture and forage crop land with ferric sulfate. He worked his fields successfully for two seasons after treatment, and couldn't even tell where the slick spots had been. On a field of corn grown for forage, he made a good crop where adobe and alkali probably would have prevented a crop without ferric sulfate treatment.

"Before I put on the ferric sulfate, I got a grain drill and two tractors stuck in the cornfield," he said. "After I treated, I could cultivate without difficulty."

Ferric sulfate is an iron salt which changes to sulfuric acid and iron oxide in the soil. The sulfuric acid reduces alkalinity of soils which are over-alkaline, while the iron oxide coats soil particles, keeps them from sticking together, improves water penetration and the development of plant root systems.

Ask your Stauffer dealer how Agricultural Ferric Sulfate can help solve your soil problems.

One of America's largest specialists in farm chemicals, Stauffer offers a complete line of highest quality chemicals for western agriculture. Look for and buy Stauffer brand INSECTICIDES, FUNGICIDES, WEED KILLERS, MITICIDES, SEED PROTECTANTS, FUMIGANTS, GROWTH REGULATORS, GRAIN PROTECTANTS, DEFOLIANTS.

75 YEARS OF SERVICE TO INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE



STAUFFER CHEMICAL COMPANY

Western Offices: San Francisco - Los Angeles - North Portland, Ore. - Glendale, Ariz. - Fresno

