A farm for census purposes was defined as a "place" under the control or supervision of one person or partnership at the time of enumeration, and on which agricultural operations were conducted at any time in 1964. (See vol. 1, page 2, 1964 Census of Agriculture.)

Size of farm—The number of farms has decreased rapidly in the last 30 years, but the acreage of land in farms has changed very little; as a result the average size of farm has doubled since 1935. The increase of farm size has been one of the significant developments in agriculture in the United States in the twentieth century.

The number of farms in each of the size of farm groups under 500 acres has decreased, while the number of farms in the size groups over 500 acres has increased. Many small farms have ceased operation and the land in many of these has been incorporated into other farms. New technology and mechanization have accelerated the consolidation of farms.

Acres in the farm, with the large scale substitution of capital inputs for farmland and labor, has become an increasingly unsatisfactory measure of scale of farm operation, i.e. size of farm business. The differences in the productivity of an acre of land in various areas, and in various size groups of farms, need to be considered when using data for various groupings of farms on the basis of physical area alone.