Some types of forage harvesters contain a combination of types of cutting or chopping systems. These types of reporting problems may have resulted in some overstatement of the census figures for these equipment items.

The data on the year of manufacture which were obtained in the 1969 Census of Agriculture appear to be subject to frequent reporting errors in the classification between the two age groups. A comparison of this data with statistics from other sources, along with a small research study matching 1969 census reports to 1964 census reports indicates that a sizable number of farm operators may have reported all of their selected items of machinery and equipment in the first reporting column of the equipment section, “manufactured 1965 or later,” regardless of the actual year of manufacture.

This resulted in an overstatement of machinery and equipment manufactured in the period 1965 or later and an understatement of that manufactured in 1964 or earlier. The totals for machinery and equipment of all ages are not believed to be affected by the apparent age misclassification.

Table 4 provides a comparison of census data, by years of manufacture, with farm equipment data from the Current Industrial Reports.

The estimated market value of machinery and equipment as reported by farm operators was subject to the operator’s interpretation of the question. The wide variations in the values reported indicate that, in place of market value, operators in some cases reported the replacement value; in other cases, they reported the depreciated value used for tax purposes; or yet in other cases, they reported an estimate of the value for only those items of equipment which had been listed on the report farm.

Only the most obvious errors in reported value were located and corrected by an imputation procedure during the computer edit process. For those census reports with an entry for some machinery or equipment, but for which a value was not reported, an estimated value of equipment was imputed. The value imputation was based on a census report for a farm with a similar type of operation and value-of-sales class.

### CHANGES IN FARM EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY

#### Automobiles

Since 1954, there has been a steady decline in both the number of farms reporting automobiles and in the number of automatics...