General Information: Procedures for Collection, Processing, and Classification

Issued May 1978

U.S. Department of Commerce
Juanita M. Kreps, Secretary
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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Manuel D. Plotkin, Director
The survey data are based on a sample of partnerships selected from the 1974 Census of Agriculture. Where appropriate, related characteristics reported in the 1974 census are shown. The report has been prepared in cooperation with Economic Statistics and Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Part 7. Agricultural Production and Marketing Contracts. Presents detailed information on eight commodities produced and/or marketed under production and marketing contracts in 1977: feeder pigs, slaughter hogs, broilers, layers, tomatoes, and potatoes. Data are presented in tables by counties for States comprising areas of concentration, based on samples of farms reporting contracts in the 1974 Census of Agriculture. The report has been prepared in cooperation with the Economic Statistics and Cooperative Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.
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INTRODUCTION

Authority, Area Covered, and History
The 1974 Census of Agriculture was taken in accordance with the provisions of title 13, United States Code, reaffirmed by section 818 of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-86). Sections 142(a) and 191 of title 13 provide for a census of agriculture every 5 years in each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. The 1974 census is the 20th nationwide census of agriculture and the second conducted primarily by mail.

This report presents statistics for the United States and States based upon data from the 1974 census.

Farm Definition
1969 definition—All 1969 statistics in this report are in accordance with the farm definition used in 1969, which was also the definition used in the 1964 and 1959 Censuses of Agriculture. These farms are places on which agricultural operations larger than a specified minimum were conducted at any time during the census year under the control of an individual management. Places of less than 10 acres were counted as farms if the sales of the agricultural products amounted, or normally would amount, to at least $50. Places of 10 acres or more were counted as farms if the sales of agricultural products for the year amounted, or normally would amount, to at least $50.

1974 definition—All 1974 statistics in this report are in accordance with the 1974 farm definition, which differs from the earlier definition in only two respects:

1. The criterion for number of "acres in place" has been deleted.
2. The criterion for minimum value of agricultural products sold has been changed to $1,000.

For a more detailed explanation of the change in definition and measures of the effect of the change, see appendix A of Volume I, State and County Data.

Report Forms
Two basic census report forms were used for all States except Alaska and Hawaii:
A regular form (A1) was used for farms with an expected value of sales of $2,500 or more and a short version (A2) for farms with an expected value of sales of less than $2,500. The short form covered only major items and omitted most of the detail found in the regular form.

In Alaska, the regular form was used for all farms. In Hawaii, a modified version of the regular form was used for all farms. The changes were principally in the crop sections to cover the specialized agriculture in the islands.

Tabular Presentation
More detailed information was obtained for farms with sales of $2,500 or more than for farms with less gross sales. Thus, some tables in this report present data for all farms and others present data for farms with sales of $2,500 or more.

Comparability of Data
In general, data for the 1974 census are directly comparable with data from the 1969 census only for farms with $2,500 or more total value of sales, because the data for farms with less than $2,500 sales were affected by the change in farm definition.

Dramatic changes in rates of farm expenditure and unit prices of products sold between the 1969 and 1974 censuses also affect the comparability of some census data. Between the two censuses, prices paid by farmers greatly increased. Prices received by farmers also increased but with wide fluctuations among commodities at different times during the census year of 1974.

Abbreviations and Symbols
The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the tables:
- Represents zero.
D Data withheld to avoid disclosing information for individual farms.
X Not applicable.
Z Less than half of the unit reported.
NA Not available.
### HIGHLIGHTS of the Nation’s Agriculture: 1974 and 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Farms</th>
<th>Farms with sales of $2,500 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms</td>
<td>2,314,013</td>
<td>2,730,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres in farms</td>
<td>1,017,030,357</td>
<td>1,062,892,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres of harvested cropland</td>
<td>303,001,943</td>
<td>273,016,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms by size:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 49 acres.</td>
<td>507,797</td>
<td>635,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>75,174</td>
<td>917,858,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 499 acres.</td>
<td>1,443,982</td>
<td>1,113,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>1,198,102</td>
<td>2,527,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 acres and over.</td>
<td>362,234</td>
<td>352,799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>351,727</td>
<td>286,133,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 acres and over.</td>
<td>154,937</td>
<td>152,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of farms, excluding abnormal farms, by value of agricultural product sold:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $2,500</td>
<td>649,448</td>
<td>32,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>1,662,327</td>
<td>1,666,001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 and over</td>
<td>1,696,501</td>
<td>1,696,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 to $9,999</td>
<td>553,636</td>
<td>748,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>631,782</td>
<td>726,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $39,999</td>
<td>324,310</td>
<td>169,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>17,074</td>
<td>22,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>101,153</td>
<td>101,153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $199,999</td>
<td>51,446</td>
<td>51,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 and over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of agricultural products sold by farms, excluding abnormal farms, having sales of:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $2,500</td>
<td>742,393,000</td>
<td>982,837,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>80,552,855</td>
<td>44,428,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 and over</td>
<td>4,113,059</td>
<td>1,113,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 to $9,999</td>
<td>13,707,036</td>
<td>14,960,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>10,073,831</td>
<td>14,960,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $39,999</td>
<td>20,071,570</td>
<td>20,071,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>per farm.</td>
<td>14,960,508</td>
<td>14,960,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>13,758,044</td>
<td>13,758,044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $199,999</td>
<td>29,941,383</td>
<td>29,941,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 and over</td>
<td>15,282,099</td>
<td>15,282,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm production expenses—specified items:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercially mixed formula feeds</td>
<td>8,432,871,000</td>
<td>8,303,651,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fertilizer</td>
<td>5,137,361,000</td>
<td>5,028,120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline and other petroleum fuel and oil for the farm business</td>
<td>3,087,606,000</td>
<td>2,974,861,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm labor, contract labor, machine hire and customwork</td>
<td>6,506,409,000</td>
<td>6,380,234,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Not fully comparable because of change in farm definition; see introduction.

Farms with sales of $2,500 and over

Number of farms .................. total.
Acres in farms .................... total.
   per farm.
Acres of harvested cropland ....... total.
   per farm.

Number of farms by size:
1 to 49 acres ........................
50 to 499 acres ......................
500 to 999 acres .....................
1,000 to 1,999 acres ..............
2,000 acres and over .............

Value of land and buildings ..........
   total.
   per farm.
   per acre.

Value of all agricultural products sold .............
   total.
   per farm.
   per acre.

Crops ................................ total.
   per farm.

Livestock, poultry, and their products ........ total.
   per farm.

Number of farms by value of agricultural products sold:
Under $2,500 ........................
$2,500 and over ....................
$2,500 to $9,999 ...................
$10,000 to $39,999 ............... 
$40,000 to $99,999 ............... 
$100,000 and over ...............

FARMS WITH SALES OF $2,500 AND OVER

Value of agricultural products sold by farms having sales of—

- Under $2,500
- $2,500 and over
- $2,500 to $9,999
- $10,000 to $39,999
- $40,000 to $99,999
- $100,000 and over

Farm production expenses—specified items:

- Commercially mixed formula feeds
- Commercial fertilizer
- Gasoline and other petroleum fuel and oil for the farm business
- Farm labor, contract labor, machine hire, and customwork

Value of machinery and equipment on farms

Machinery and equipment on farms—specified items:

- Automobiles
- Motortrucks, including pickups
- Tractors, excluding garden tractors and motor tillers

PERCENT DECREASE

PERCENT INCREASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of agricultural products sold</th>
<th>PERCENT DECREASE</th>
<th>PERCENT INCREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $2,500</td>
<td>-4.4%</td>
<td>81.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 and over</td>
<td>-25.2%</td>
<td>99.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500 to $9,999</td>
<td>-8.4%</td>
<td>186.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $39,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 to $99,999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 and over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farm production expenses—specified items</th>
<th>PERCENT DECREASE</th>
<th>PERCENT INCREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercially mixed formula feeds</td>
<td></td>
<td>89.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial fertilizer</td>
<td></td>
<td>138.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gasoline and other petroleum fuel and oil for the farm business</td>
<td></td>
<td>69.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm labor, contract labor, machine hire and customwork</td>
<td></td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value of machinery and equipment on farms</th>
<th>PERCENT DECREASE</th>
<th>PERCENT INCREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Machinery and equipment on farms—specified items</th>
<th>PERCENT DECREASE</th>
<th>PERCENT INCREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automobiles</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motortrucks, including pickups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractors, excluding garden tractors and motor tillers</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHART 2. Profile of the Nation's Agriculture: 1974

ALL FARMS

Farms by size:
- 1 to 99 acres: 38.6%
- 100 to 499 acres: 45.8%
- 500 to 999 acres: 9.0%
- 1,000 to 1,999 acres: 4.0%
- 2,000 acres and over: 2.7%

Farms by value of land and buildings:
- $1 to $19,999: 14.7%
- $20,000 to $39,999: 18.2%
- $40,000 to $99,999: 30.2%
- $100,000 to $499,999: 31.9%
- $500,000 and over: 5.1%

Farms by value of machinery and equipment:
- $1 to $999: 1.1%
- $1,000 to $4,999: 17.3%
- $5,000 to $19,999: 40.2%
- $20,000 to $49,999: 25.5%
- $50,000 and over: 9.7%

Farm operators by age:
- Under 35 years: 12.6%
- 35 to 44 years: 17.3%
- 45 to 54 years: 24.9%
- 55 to 64 years: 25.4%
- 65 years and older: 18.2%

Farm operators working off farm:
- None: 35.9%
- 1 to 99 days: 8.5%
- 100 days or more: 35.2%

Farm operators by tenure:
- Full owners: 61.5%
- Part owners: 27.1%
- Tenants: 11.3%

¹Data apply only to individual or family operations (sole proprietorships) and partnerships.
### CHART 2. Profile of the Nation’s Agriculture: 1974—Continued

#### ALL FARMS

**Farms by value of agricultural products sold:**

- Under $2,500: 28.1%
- $2,500 to $4,999: 11.1%
- $5,000 to $9,999: 12.8%
- $10,000 to $19,999: 13.4%
- $20,000 to $39,999: 13.9%
- $40,000 to $99,999: 14.0%
- $100,000 and over: 6.6%

**Value of agricultural products sold by farms having sales of—**

- Under $2,500: 0.9%
- $2,500 to $4,999: 1.2%
- $5,000 to $9,999: 2.6%
- $10,000 to $19,999: 5.5%
- $20,000 to $39,999: 11.4%
- $40,000 to $99,999: 24.7%
- $100,000 and over: 53.8%

**Farms by amount of total production expenses:**

- $1 to $999: 13.1%
- $1,000 to $4,999: 31.3%
- $5,000 to $9,999: 15.5%
- $10,000 to $19,999: 14.6%
- $20,000 to $59,999: 17.3%
- $60,000 and over: 8.1%

**Sources of farm income:**

- Crops: 50.3%
- Livestock, poultry, and their products: 47.5%
- Other farm-related sources: 2.2%

**Type of organization for farms with sales of $2,500 and over:**

- Individual or family: 89.5%
- Partnership: 8.6%
- Corporation: 1.7%
- Other: 0.2%

---

1. Includes forest products sold, and income from customwork and other agricultural services, recreational services, participation in government farm programs, rental of farm property, and other miscellaneous sources closely related to the agricultural operation.
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS

This report presents general information about the 1974 Census of Agriculture. It explains how the census was planned and taken, describes the major steps taken in data collection and processing, provides needed definitions and explanations of terms, and discusses factors affecting the reliability and accuracy of the data. A more detailed account of the 1974 census is given in Volume IV, Special Reports, Part 4, Procedural History.

Volume II, Statistics by Subject, is presented in nine separate parts with statistical totals shown for the United States, the regions and divisions, and the 50 States.

Authority, Area Covered, and History

The 1974 Census of Agriculture was conducted primarily by mail. The first agriculture census data were collected in 1840 as a part of the sixth decennial census. Since that time, a census of agriculture has been a part of each decennial census program, and since 1920 a national census of agriculture has been taken every 5 years.

Censuses of irrigation and drainage augment the census of agriculture. Censuses of irrigation have been conducted every 10 years since 1910 and censuses of drainage every 10 years since 1920. Data were last collected and published for 1969.

In conjunction with the 1969 Census of Agriculture, the Census Bureau initiated collection and publication of data on agricultural services provided to farmers. This step became necessary because of the increasing incidence and importance of agricultural services as a method of accomplishing land preparation, crop and livestock care, crop harvesting, etc. The data show the increasing relationship between agriculture, agricultural services, and agri-business and will be collected every 5 years as a part of the census of agriculture. Statistics for agricultural services for 1974 are published in volume III.

Planning the Census

The final content and overall planning of the 1974 census program were significantly affected by a delay in funding the census. The delay shortened the planning stage by almost one year and, in the end, only sufficient funds for a limited program were made available. In recent prior censuses, some funds had been provided for follow-on surveys to be conducted a year after the census to gather data needed at the State or national level but not at the county level. Without such follow-on programs, it was necessary to add a number of data inquiries to the 1974 census, lengthening the report form and increasing the respondents' burden. The additions included inquiries about farm credit, off-farm income, and accidents and illnesses.

The final content, wording, and format of the inquiries on the report forms were the responsibility of the Bureau of the Census; however, selection of items was based on the expressed needs of data users, the recommendations of the Census Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics, the results of pretests, and the experience gained in earlier censuses.

As one of the first steps in the development of the census, the Bureau invited the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), State agricultural colleges, and other major public and private data users to provide recommendations on their data needs. The Bureau collaborated closely with USDA while planning and conducting the census, principally through departmental committees that coordinated the needs and suggestions of all the USDA agencies. The Statistical Reporting Service and Economic Research Service, of USDA, made significant contributions to the development and formulation of inquiries. A senior staff member of the Statistical Reporting Service, under the same oath of confidentiality required of all Census employees, was assigned to act as liaison and to work directly with the census during all phases of the census planning and processing.

The number of inquiries suggested by various data users far exceeded the feasi-
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS Continued

ble limits of the final report forms. Factors limiting content included the extent of respondent burden, the respondents’ ability and willingness to answer questions, the costs, and the requirement that the resulting data have reasonably broad significance among users of data. Final considerations included such other factors as the availability of data from other sources and the adequacy of the data to be collected.

The recommendations and the plans for the statistics to be published were reviewed by the Census Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics, comprised of representatives of the major farm organizations, State departments of agriculture, State agriculture colleges, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other major users. Each representative was responsible for reporting the suggestions from the organization he or she represented. The committee offered advice on relative priorities for selection of items submitted by data user groups and on supplementary surveys.

The membership of the committee during the planning and taking of the 1974 Census of Agriculture was:

- Mr. Richard Pommerrehn, Agricultural Publishers Association
- Dr. James T. Bonnen, succeeded by Dr. M. L. Upchurch, American Agricultural Economic Association
- Dr. Warren Collins succeeded by Mr. W. E. Hamilton, American Farm Bureau Federation
- Mrs. Chester Smith, American Farm Bureau Women's Committee
- Mr. Norman Coats, American Feed Manufacturers Association
- Dr. Dewey Bond, American Meat Institute
- Mr. James Tsikerdanos, American Petroleum Institute (through 1976)
- Mr. Robert L. Caumissar, Conference of Consumer Organizations (from 1976)
- Dr. Quentin West, Economic Research Service - U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Dr. L. S. Fife, Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute

Dr. Carleton C. Dennis, Federal Statistics Users' Conference
Mr. Dudley Clark, National Agricultural Chemicals Association
Mr. Orville Thompson, National Agri-Marketing Association
Mr. Gus Douglas succeeded by Mr. S. Mason Carbaugh, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
Dr. Louis M. Thompson, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
Dr. Lawrence Van Meir, National Food Processors Association (Formerly National Canneries Association)
Mr. Paul Weller, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
Mr. Charles Frazier, National Farmers Organization
Mr. John Stencil, National Farmers Union
Dr. Kennedy Upham succeeded by Dr. Richard Rodenfeld, Rural Sociological Society
Mr. Robert Frederick, The National Grange
Dr. Harry Trelogan succeeded by Mr. William Kibler, Statistical Reporting Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

In addition to the regular members of the committee, representatives of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and other private and government agencies attended some of the meetings as observers.

The committee met at the Bureau of the Census seven times during the census period: Once in 1973 and twice in 1974, 1975, and 1976.

Taking the Census

Enumeration Method

The growing complexity in the structure of American agriculture, along with increasing numbers of farm operators living off-farm, has made an enumerator-type census as conducted in the past increasingly difficult. The mailout/mailback census, made possible by the availability of relatively complete administrative lists, provides the respondent the opportunity to complete the report more nearly at his own convenience than in an enumerator-type census. Generally the quality of data on reports completed by operators exceeds that of reports filled out by enumerators. Based on the overall satisfactory experience with the mailout/mailback procedure used in 1969, a decision was made to continue the mail procedure for 1974.

In censuses prior to 1969, enumerators were assigned to enumerate all farms in a specified geographic area and were instructed to call on all farm operators in person. Beginning with the 1950 census, copies of the report form were mailed to rural boxholders prior to the enumeration starting date, and farm operators were asked to complete the forms and have them ready for the enumerator to collect. Enumerators going door-to-door in rural areas would pick up and review any forms that had been completed; they would also fill in or complete reports for those places having some agricultural operations which did not have forms completed and ready for review.

The mailout/mailback procedure has not been used in taking the agriculture census in Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. A discussion of the direct enumeration methods used appears in the published reports for these outlying areas.

Mailing List

The starting point for the enumeration of the 1974 census was the mailing list, which consisted of all persons and organizations that could be identified from administrative records as associated with agricultural operations in 1973 or 1974. The list was assembled from the records of the 1969 Census of Agriculture and those of other government agencies. Only the more comprehensive sets of administrative records containing information related to agricultural activities were initially used: The principal lists were the IRS file of persons filing farm tax returns (form 1040 F) and the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) file of producers.
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS Continued

Other records used included the IRS file of farm related businesses (form 1040 C), the IRS file of farm partnerships (form 1065), the IRS file of small farm corporations (form 1120S), the Social Security file of farm employers (form 943), the economic census lists of names identified with agriculture, and trade association and private source lists of large or specialized operations.

To improve the mailing list and to identify individual units of multi-establishment farming operations, particularly corporations, a precanvas of the larger, more complex, and specialized operations (approximately 55,000 cases mostly identified from the 1969 Agriculture Census and the file of companies in retail, wholesale, and manufacturing areas known to have agricultural operations) was conducted in early 1974. This survey identified over 6,200 multi-establishment companies or other organizations having one or more separate establishments (or locations) producing agricultural products or providing agricultural services to others. In many cases, these agricultural establishments were in addition to non-agricultural establishments operated by the company. Separate census report forms were required of each individual farming unit or agricultural establishment identified in the precanvas. The precanvas form also provided information to distinguish primary farming corporations from business-associated farming corporations and family-controlled corporations from other corporations.

Lists of specialized operations, such as nurseries and broiler producers which might not be identified in other administrative records, as well as selected lists of other large and/or specialized producers such as feedlots and fish farms, were included in the mail list. In total, about 130,000 special list names were included.

The master list primarily contained the names and addresses of persons and organizations known to be associated with agricultural operations in 1973. Since a name for the same farm could appear on more than one source list, a two-phase computerized record linkage operation was performed. First, all records were merged and unduplicated on Social Security and Employer Identification numbers. Second, all records were subjected to a record linkage system based on an alphabetic match of recorded first and last names and selected address characters within a 5-digit ZIP code area. Most duplicate names not identified prior to mailing were either reported by respondents or located during the office processing. To facilitate processing and to allow for special handling, each name on the master list was assigned a size code to indicate an estimate of value of sales as well as a code to indicate county location.

The entire record linkage and unduplication operation reduced the initial file of about 12.4 million names to approximately 5.3 million. For budgetary reasons, the final mail file was reduced to about 4.1 million units by selecting for inclusion in the data collection phase, only a sample of the names that were found only on the ASCS source list. This action was taken in expectation that names not also appearing on any other source list would be unlikely to belong to active 1974 farm operations.

Report Forms
Two basic census report forms were used for all States except Alaska and Hawaii. A regular 20-page report form (A1) was mailed to all farms whose 1974 sales of agricultural products were expected to total $2,500 or more. To minimize the respondents' burden, a short six-page report form (A2) was sent to all operators whose 1974 sales were expected to total less than $2,500. This short form covered the major subjects (crops, land use, livestock and poultry, equipment, expenditures, and value of sales), but omitted most of the additional detail found in the regular form. The wording and format of both forms were designed so that basic summary data could be added together and published for all farms. Both report forms, with the instructions for completing them, are reproduced in the appendix.

In 1969, a short form was also used. In 1969, there were 994,456 farms with annual sales of less than $2,500 (about 36 percent of all farms), but they accounted for less than 2 percent of the total value of all farm products sold. For 1974, final figures under the 1974 definition of a farm show that this group of farms numbers 616,728 or 26.7 percent of all farms and accounts for less than 0.9 percent of the total value of farm products sold by all farms.

For Alaska, only the regular report form was used because of the small total number of farms. For Hawaii, a modified version of the regular form was used for all farms. The modifications were made principally in the crops section in order to cover the specialized agriculture on the islands. For both States, only the data items collected on the short form were tabulated for farms with $1,000 to $2,499 in sales.

Initial Mailing
The report forms were mailed during the last week of December 1974 and the first week of January 1975 to all persons and organizations on the mailing list. This mailing consisted of 4,133,000 report forms (2,391,000 regular forms and 1,742,000 short forms). Undeliverable mail returned by the Postal Service reduced the mailing list by 232,000, including 67,000 regular forms and 165,000 short forms.

Instructions for completing the forms were attached in the centerfold of each form. In an effort to provide additional help to farmers in completing their reports, approximately 35,000 copies of a Farm Census Guide booklet were sent to various county officials to whom farmers might turn for assistance. Included were rural banks, vocational agricultural instructors, and the following county offices: Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Soil Conservation Service, Farmer's Home Administration, and Federal Extension Service. This guide contained descriptions and definitions for various items in more detail than the instructions included with each report form. Representatives of the above
agencies thus were able to assist the farmers in filling out their report forms if the farmers came to them for help.

The regular report form was expected to be filled out by all farm operators who received it regardless of the amount of farm products sold. If the recipient of a regular report form had sales less than $2,500, the data were condensed during the processing to those items appearing on the short form. When recipients of the short form reported sales in 1974 substantially greater than $2,500, it was sometimes necessary to contact them again for the additional data needed to complete the more detailed regular form.

**Followup Procedures**

Data collection plans included a “thank you” card and four followup letters at approximately 1-month intervals, two of which were accompanied by census report forms. The “thank you” card was sent to all addresses on January 14, 1975, urging prompt response and expressing thanks to those who had already responded. By April 4, slightly over 70 percent of the farms had been enumerated. See table 8 for detailed data on dates of enumeration.

Data collection was expected to be substantially completed by June 30. However, because of a marked increase in respondent resistance as compared with the 1969 census, the data collection phase was extended into the office processing phase. Additional followup letters were sent to most of the remaining nonrespondents in June, July, August, and November.

All nonrespondent multi-establishment companies and other nonrespondents believed to be operating farms with sales of $40,000 or more were contacted by telephone during the period April 1975 through February 1976 to insure coverage in the census. Most of the nonresponse telephone calls were made by the staff of the Data Preparation Division in Jeffersonville, Indiana, although some were made from the census office in Pittsburg, Kansas. Some of the calls to the more complex cases were referred to the Agriculture Division staff for handling. In total, nearly 107,000 cases were completed by telephone during this period.

As part of the routine followup procedures, specialized farms identified on the mailing list as producing items such as broilers, beef cattle, hogs, etc., were checked to insure coverage in the census. If no report had been received for farms on these special lists, they were contacted by telephone to obtain the required information. Also, farms and ranches with large acreages in the 1969 census were checked to insure coverage in 1974. If 1974 reports were found missing, telephone calls were made to obtain the necessary information to insure proper coverage. In some instances, successor operators were discovered and enumerated. The processing system was designed to permit the inclusion of missing reports as late as the final tabulation of the county data for each State.

In total, the mail and telephone followup achieved a response from about 88 percent of all farms on the mailing list, covering about 94 percent of the estimated total acres of land in farms and 96 percent of the estimated total value of sales of agricultural products in 1974. Response rates varied by State, with the Northern and Western States generally having higher mail responses than the Southern States.

**Data Review and Disclosure Analysis**

The general procedure for processing data for the 1974 Census of Agriculture was:

- Sorting of returns and check-in.
- Screening of report forms.
- Data keying.
- Computer processing.
- Review of computer editing.
- Preliminary tabulation of data.
- Review of preliminary tabulations.
- Final tabulation of county, State, regional, and U.S. tables.
- Final review of tabulations and disclosure analysis.

**Review**

Prior to keying the data to magnetic tapes, all reports were subjected to a clerical screening, during which significant notes or major problems were referred to technical assistants or, if necessary, to the professional analyst for solution. Records of all large agricultural operations, including multiunit operations and operations having $500,000 or more sales of agricultural products in 1974 (lesser levels in specified States) were reviewed by professional employees of the Agriculture Division. Omissions, inconsistencies, and other problems that could not be resolved by reference to other information on the report were resolved by contact (usually telephone) with the respondent.

The data for each report form were subjected to a detailed item-by-item computer edit which required almost the full capacity of a large electronic computer. The program made comprehensive checks for consistency and reasonableness, corrected data found to be in error or inconsistent, supplied key missing data, and assigned farm classification codes to facilitate tabulation of the data. Entries of large magnitude and significant computer changes of a doubtful nature were manually verified for accuracy. Obvious errors such as reports of cotton and citrus in the Northern States were also identified and corrected. However, it was impossible to identify and correct all errors or to supply estimates for all the incompleteness within the census reports. These factors and others may affect the reliability of some data for some minor items, but they will not have a significant effect on major data items in any county.

Preliminary tabulations for each State and county were reviewed prior to publication. During the review, data were compared to those from prior censuses, to other county and State estimates where available, and to other related data within the census. Significant differences or inconsistencies were checked out and, in many cases, farm operators were contacted by telephone to verify data entries. If the review indicated that a report for a larger or specialized farm was missing, the farm was enumerated by telephone and a report was added.

To expedite the issuance of the preliminary reports, only substantially significant changes were made to the data.
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS  
Continued

During review of the final data, however, a final check was made of detailed data not previously reviewed in depth, and all remaining known data changes were carried to the computer record prior to the final tabulations.

Disclosure Analysis

Section 9 of title 13, United States Code, prohibits the publication of statistical data that reveal information furnished by individual respondents. In keeping with the provisions of this law, a thorough review is made of all statistical tables prior to publication to locate and prevent any potential disclosure of confidential information. Some of this review, referred to as disclosure analysis, was accomplished by computer programs and the remainder by statisticians following guidelines regarding what constitutes a disclosure.

Change in Farm Definition

For each of the 20 censuses of agriculture except the first, taken in 1840, the federal organization responsible for conducting the census has established minimum criteria to define a farm for the purpose of the census. As the Nation has developed and grown, agriculture also has changed and grown, and from time to time the minimum criteria for the definition of a farm have been changed. The criteria for minimum size of agricultural operations to be counted as census farms have included measures of land area and agricultural output or sales. Some criteria for census farms have been different for places of less than 3 acres than for places of 3 acres or more. The various size criteria for agricultural operations used for the censuses of agriculture from 1850 to 1974 are shown in tables 1 and 2.

For most censuses prior to 1950, census enumerators were given a definition of a farm and were instructed to obtain data only for places which met the criteria. However, application of the definition was not always uniform, and part of the change in the number of farms from census to census may have resulted from this lack of uniform application. As the data in table 2 indicates, the minimum criteria for value of agricultural products produced or the value of agricultural products sold has not changed from census to census in the same proportion as changes in price level of farm products. The definition used for the final publication of the 1974 census marked the ninth change. The eighth was for the 1958 Census of Agriculture, when the definition of a farm was based primarily on a combination of acres in the place and value of agricultural products sold. The word "place" was defined to include all land on which agricultural operations were conducted at any time in the census year under the day-to-day control or supervision of one person or partnership. Control may have been exercised through ownership or management or through a lease, rental, or cropping arrangement.

For the censuses of 1959, 1964, and 1969, places of less than 10 acres in the census year were counted as farms if the estimated sales of agricultural products for the year amounted to at least $250.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Minimum value of agricultural products produced for farm use or sale (dollars)</th>
<th>Minimum value of agricultural products sold (dollars)</th>
<th>Other criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>None</td>
</tr>
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<td>None</td>
</tr>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>Not applied 150</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
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<td>None</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Minimum Criteria for Census Farms of Under 3 Acres: Censuses of 1850 to 1974

For the censuses of 1959, 1964, and 1969, places of less than 10 acres in the census year were counted as farms if the estimated sales of agricultural products for the year amounted to at least $250.

During review of the final data, however, a final check was made of detailed data not previously reviewed in depth, and all remaining known data changes were carried to the computer record prior to the final tabulations.

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For most censuses prior to 1950, census enumerators were given a definition of a farm and were instructed to obtain data only for places which met the criteria. However, application of the definition was not always uniform, and part of the change in the number of farms from census to census may have resulted from this lack of uniform application. As the data in table 2 indicates, the minimum criteria for value of agricultural products produced or the value of agricultural products sold has not changed from census to census in the same proportion as changes in price level of farm products. The definition used for the final publication of the 1974 census marked the ninth change. The eighth was for the 1958 Census of Agriculture, when the definition of a farm was based primarily on a combination of acres in the place and value of agricultural products sold. The word "place" was defined to include all land on which agricultural operations were conducted at any time in the census year under the day-to-day control or supervision of one person or partnership. Control may have been exercised through ownership or management or through a lease, rental, or cropping arrangement.

For the censuses of 1959, 1964, and 1969, places of less than 10 acres in the census year were counted as farms if the estimated sales of agricultural products for the year amounted to at least $250.
Places of 10 or more acres in the census year were counted as farms if the estimated sales of agricultural products for the year amounted to at least $50. Places having less than the $50 or $250 minimum estimated sales in the census year were also counted as farms if they could normally be expected to produce agricultural products in sufficient quantity to meet the requirements of the definition.

Using the 1959 definition, the 1969 census reported about 571,000 farms in the United States having sales of less than $1,000; these farms comprised 20.9 percent of all farms but contributed less than 1 percent of total sales. In 1974 there were only about 152,000 such farms, accounting for less than one-tenth of 1 percent of total sales. Between censuses many of these small farms had ceased operations, while many others had sales of $1,000 or more in the census year, either because of increased agricultural activity or because of increases in the per-unit value of agricultural products sold.

In view of increases in price levels and other changes in the structure of agricultural operations, various individuals and organizations, including members of the Census Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics, the Office of Management and Budget, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, agreed that a change in the definition of a farm was justified. With the concurrence of the Office of Management and Budget, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Commerce announced in simultaneous press releases on August 12, 1975, that the census definition of a farm, for purposes of publishing the 1974 census data, was any establishment which during the census year had or normally would have had sales of agricultural products of $1,000 or more.

In the next 10 months, Congress held four hearings on the appropriateness of changing the definition. During this time, Public Law 94-229, enacted March 15, 1976, included a provision requiring the statistical classification of farms in effect on January 1, 1975, to be continued in effect through June 30, 1976. It also required that any statistical report issued on or before June 30, 1976, should reflect such classification, but could also include additional classifications as deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Commerce.

Definition for preliminary reports—Publication of the preliminary county reports began in April 1976, while the definition clause imposed by Public Law 94-229 was in effect. These reports for all counties and States, the four regions, and the United States were tabulated and published in accordance with the same farm definition used for the 1959, 1964, and 1969 censuses.
Definition for final reports—For all final reports, the 1974 statistics are in accordance with the 1974 definition, which differs from the earlier definition in only two respects:

1. The criterion for number of “acres in place” has been deleted.
2. The criterion for minimum value of agricultural products sold has been changed to $1,000.

Thus for 1974, a farm was defined to include all land on which agricultural operations were conducted at any time in the census year under the day-to-day control of an individual management, and from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold during the census year. Control may have been exercised through ownership or management, or through a lease, rental, or cropping arrangement. Places having less than the minimum $1,000 sales in the census year were also counted as farms if they normally could be expected to produce agricultural products in sufficient quantity to meet the requirements of the definition. About 286,401 farms or 12.4 percent were retained as farms based on their potential to sell $1,000 or more of agricultural products in most years.

To provide users with measures of the effect of the change in definition, several special tabulations were made showing characteristics of farms for both the old and new definitions. Tables were published in volume I showing data for each State and its counties. Data are shown in this report for both the 1974 and 1959 definitions along with characteristics of places which would have qualified as farms in 1969 but were excluded under the 1974 definition. Table 6 shows data for both definitions by State, and table 7 presents characteristics of excluded places for the United States.

The 1974 “all farms” data shown in volumes I and II are for those agricultural operations with at least $1,000 in total (or potential) sales of farm products. Data shown for all farms for 1969 and earlier censuses reflect the definition in effect for those years. Tables limited to farms with sales of $2,500 or more are not affected by the change in definition and thus are historically comparable.

New Data Collected

A number of data inquiries were asked on the regular census report form for the first time in 1974, and several other items were modified by increasing the detail of the inquiries. Many of these items historically had been included in follow-on surveys in prior censuses. They were included in the 1974 census because of an urgent need for the data, and because the delay in planning for the census occasioned by the lack of appropriated funds precluded collecting data through follow-on surveys.

### Agricultural Operations Excluded by 1974 Farm Definition as a Percent of All Farms: 1974

(All Farms—County Unit Basis)

![Map showing percentages of excluded farms by county](image-url)
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS Continued

Although there were a number of other changes from 1969 to 1974, the major additions and modifications were in:

- Fuel storage.
- Grain storage.
- Futures market.
- Payroll and employment.
- Injuries and illnesses.
- Farm credit.
- Farm-related income and expenses.
- Family income from off-farm sources.

These additions represented only a small portion of the recommendations received by the Bureau for inclusion in the 1974 census and were added only after strong justification by data users and a thorough review by the Census Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics and Bureau officials.

In retrospect, it seems that the addition of these items to the census may have overburdened a sizable number of respondents and may have been partially responsible for the lower response rate for 1974 than for 1969. Besides lower overall response rate, there was also a higher degree of incompleteness in the reporting of individual items or sections, especially in the latter half of the report form.

Comparability of Data

The planning, collecting, and processing of the 1974 census was designed to provide data as comparable as possible to that of the 1969 census. However, the change in farm definition, differences in response rates, extent of followup efforts, and changes in statistical adjustments all affect comparability to some degree.

The change from personal interview to mail enumeration affects the comparability of some of the data for 1974 and 1969 with that for earlier censuses. Major differences between the mail and the enumerator censuses include differences in the date of enumeration, assignment of farms to geographic locations, and coverage of small farms.

Differences in Published Totals

A published total given in one table for an item may vary slightly from a total given in another table for the same item because of the rounding of fractions or the rounding to thousands.

Revisions of 1969 Data

Some 1969 data have been revised since publication and the revised data are shown in this volume. Data corrections were made in 14 counties and for four data items in a larger number of counties and States. The major county revisions were for:

- Cullman, Ala.—revised broilers sold and related data.
- Inyo, Calif.—revised land in farms and related data.
- Hawaii, Honolulu, Kauai, and Maui, Hawaii.—revised number of fattened cattle and related data.
- Spencer, Ind.—revised cattle and calves inventory.
- Harford, Md.—revised acreage of total cropland.
- Marshall, Minn.—revised acreage of land in farms.
- Dodge, Nebr.—revised number of milk cows and value of sales.
- Merrick, Nebr.—revised cattle and calves sold and related data.
- Rusk, Tex.—revised cattle and calves sold and related data.
- Hampshire and Jefferson, W. Va.—revised cattle and calves sold and related data.

The revisions to correct reporting and processing errors were made on:

- Acres and production of Irish potatoes harvested.
- Acres artificially drained.
- Total acreage fertilized.
- Acreage of land in orchards fertilized (only in Wisconsin).

Published Data

The goal of the publication program for the 1974 Census of Agriculture, like that for previous agriculture censuses, was to make the data available as soon as possible while maintaining the Bureau's standards of quality and comparability of the statistics issued. The final published results of the census are organized in four volumes.

Volume I. State and County Data.—A full description is shown in the acknowledgment page at the beginning of this report.

Volume II. Statistics by Subject—This report is presented in nine separate parts, with totals for the United States, geographic regions and divisions, and States. Data are shown for all farms based on the new definition and for farms with sales of $2,500 and over.


Part 3. Tenure, Type of Organization, Contracts, Operator Characteristics, Principal Occupation.


Part 5. Livestock, Poultry, Livestock and Poultry Products, Fish.


Part 7. Value of Products, Value of Sales Group, and Other Income.


Part 9. Irrigation and Drainage on Farms.

Volume III. Agricultural Services—A full description is shown in the acknowledgment page at the beginning of this report.

Volume IV. Special Reports—A full description is shown in the acknowledgment page at the beginning of this report.

Unpublished Data

Tabulations—Data collected and tabulated primarily to meet the needs of specific governmental users are assembled in a series of unpublished tables. The table headings and stubs of most of these tables have more frequent data intervals and size groupings than those published.
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS  Continued

in volume I. In some cases, the tables display the data in a format specified by certain data users. Most tables provide State level statistics.

The principal unpublished tabulations available are on:

- Farm contracts.
- Fuel storage capacity.
- Grain storage capacity.
- Grazing permits.
- Hired workers.
- Injuries and illnesses.
- Irrigated and nonirrigated crop yields.
- Utilization of the futures market.
- Selected farm characteristics by--
  - Standard Industrial classification.
  - Debt status.
  - Race or origin.
  - Age of farm operator.

In addition, some data were tabulated extending frequency distributions for already published items. These tabulations are in the same format as volume I State tables 28 through 33.

Listings are also available which show the 300 ranking counties for more than 80 data items for the United States. The top 100 counties are published in volume IV, part 1.

For information on the content and cost of the unpublished tabulations, write to the Chief, Agriculture Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

Computer Tapes (for data users)

Computer tapes containing data published in the volume I county tables are available from the Bureau of the Census. The data are organized into two files. File A corresponds to volume I; chapter IV; file B, to chapter III. File A tapes are available for groups of States in each of the nine geographic divisions of the United States; file B tapes are available for groups of geographic divisions. Data that might disclose information on the operations of individual farms have been suppressed or combined with adjacent cells. For more information on the computer tapes, write to the Chief, Data User Services, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233.

Microfiche (for data users)

All of volumes I, II, III, and IV will be available on microfiche, but the microfiche data are available only through the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Office, Springfield, Va. Census volumes usually are placed on microfiche within 12 months after the printed publication has been issued.

Data by Geographic Area

Geographic areas such as subdivisions of counties (minor civil divisions and census county divisions) were not identified in the tabulations of the 1974 Census of Agriculture. The county is the smallest geographic area for which data were tabulated and published. In most instances, data also have been published in recapitulations by States, by regions, by divisions, and for the United States. Data are published separately for the outlying areas (Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands).

Data were not shown separately for 25 of the 3,076 counties (groups of election districts in Alaska and parishes in Louisiana) that comprised the United States at the time the 1974 census was taken. For two of these, San Juan County, Colo., and New York County, N.Y., no farms were reported in the 1974 census. For the other 23 counties, each of which reported fewer than 10 farms, data were not published to avoid disclosing information for individual farms.

The distribution of published counties by number of farms reported is shown in table 9 for the United States and the geographic regions, divisions, and States.

Those counties for which the data were not published separately, with the number of farms reported for each county, are:

- **Alaska**
  - One area, consisting of Angoon, Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, outer Ketchikan, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway-Yakutat, and Wrangell-Petersburg, 7.

- **California**
  - Alpine 4, San Francisco 9.

- **Colorado**
  - Clear Creek 4, Gilpin 4.

- **Florida**
  - Franklin 6, Monroe 7.

- **Massachusetts**
  - Nantucket 6, Suffolk 6.

- **Michigan**
  - Crawford 8, Keweenaw 3.

- **Minnesota**
  - Cook 5.

- **Nebraska**
  - Storey 5.

- **New Jersey**
  - Hudson 3.

- **New Mexico**
  - Los Alamos 5.

- **New York**
  - Bronx 5, Hamilton 2, Kings 3.

- **North Carolina**
  - Dare 5.

- **Virginia**
  - Arlington 1.

- **West Virginia**
  - McDowell 8, Mingo 8.

- **Wisconsin**
  - Menominee 4.

Definitions and Explanations

A number of general definitions or explanations are presented here to aid users in understanding the data collection concepts and the statistical presentations in the nine parts of volume II. Detailed definitions or explanations are shown for individual data items in various parts of this report, especially those items in the tables followed by a "(See text)" notation.

Most of the terms and their explanations are taken from the instructions printed on the report forms or issued with the forms. For an exact wording of the questions on the two different report forms used in 1974 for the conterminous United States, and the instruction sheet which accompanied these forms, see the appendix.

Most definitions of items and terms are the same as used in 1969 and earlier censuses. In general, processing steps and procedures for 1974 were designed to develop a report as fully comparable as possible with reports of earlier censuses.

**Land area**—The approximate total land area of counties and States shown for 1974 represents the land area as determined by records and calculations...
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS Continued

updated as of January 1, 1970. These data are essentially the same as in 1969. Any differences between the land area in 1974 and 1969 would be due to new construction of reservoirs, change in number and size of reservoirs, lakes, streams, etc.

Land in farms—The acreage designated in the tables as "land in farms" consists primarily of agricultural land used for crops, pasture, or grazing. It also includes woodland and wasteland not actually under cultivation nor used for pasture or grazing, provided it was part of the farm operator's total operation. Large acreages of woodland or wasteland held for nonagricultural purposes were deleted from individual reports during the processing operations.

Land in farms is an operating unit concept and includes land owned and operated as well as land rented from others. Land used rent free was to be reported as land rented from others. Except for open range and grazing land used under government permits, all grazing land was included as "land in farms" provided the place was part of a farm or ranch. Grazing land operated by grazing associations was to be reported by the person chiefly responsible for conducting the business of the association. All land in Indian reservations used for growing crops or grazing livestock was to be included as land in farms. Land in Indian reservations not reported by individual Indians or non-Indians was to be reported in the name of the cooperative group which used the land. In some cases, an entire Indian reservation was reported as one farm.

Data on ownership of land, type of rental arrangements, and farms with grazing permits are shown in volume II, Part 3.

Land in two or more counties—With few exceptions, the land in each farm was tabulated as being in the operator's principal county and State. The principal county was defined as the one where the largest value of the agricultural products was raised or produced. It was usually where the operator reported all or the largest proportion of his total land. For a limited number of counties in the Western States, this procedure has resulted in more land in farms being counted within a county than there is land area. To minimize this distortion, some exceptions were developed from a survey of large-scale farms carried out prior to the mailing of the census forms. This survey identified about 1,600 operations as having more than one separately reportable farm unit. Other reports received showing land in noncontiguous counties were separated into two or more reports if the data would significantly affect the county totals. These reports were assigned to the appropriate counties during office processing.

Value of land and buildings—The respondents were asked to report their estimate of the current market value of land and buildings owned, rented or leased from others, and rented or leased to others. Market value refers to the respondent's estimate of what the land and buildings would sell for under present market conditions.

If the value of land and buildings was not reported, it was estimated during office processing by using the average value of farms having similar characteristics in the same area.

Farm operator—The term "farm operator" designates a person who operates a farm, either doing the work himself or directly supervising the work. He may be the owner, a member of the owner's household, a salaried manager, a tenant, a renter, or a sharecropper. If he rents land to others or has land worked on shares by others, he is considered the operator only of the land which he retains for his own operation. In the case of partnerships, only one partner is counted as an operator. For census purposes, the number of farm operators is the same as the number of farms. Respondents were asked to report the personal characteristics of the operator or person in charge of the operation or the senior partner in the case of a partnership. In some cases, the operator was not the individual named on the address label of the questionnaire, but another family member or a partner or hired manager who was actually in charge of the farm operations.

Farms or farms reporting—The term "farms" in the presentation of data denotes the number of farms reporting the item. For example, if there were 3,710 farms in a State and 842 of these farms had 27,381 cattle and calves, the data for those farms reporting cattle and calves would appear as:

Cattle and calves . . . farms . . . 842
number . . . 27,381

Farm operator characteristics—Operator characteristics such as race or origin, residence, age, occupation, and off-farm work, were collected for all farms with sales of under $2,500 and for farms with sales of $2,500 and over operated by individuals or partnerships. These data were not obtained for corporations and other types of organizations such as cooperatives, prison farms, grazing associations, and Indian reservations.

Family off-farm income—In the absence of a follow-on sample survey, such as was conducted for the last three censuses, five questions were added to the 1974 report form for farms with sales of $2,500 and over to obtain data on income from off-farm sources. These sources included income from the operation of a non-farm-related business or professional practice, cash wages, salaries, interest, dividends, royalties, pensions, etc. These data were included in the census to provide a better understanding of the present income distribution for farm operators and their families. Off-farm income data were not obtained for farms operated by corporations and other organizations. Similar data have been collected in 1960, 1965, and 1970 in sample surveys taken as part of those census programs.

Family income from other sources greater than agricultural sales—For farms with sales of $2,500 and over, this classification is based on a comparison of the sum
of farm-related and off-farm income sources with the value of agricultural sales. For farms with sales of under $2,500, the report form included a separate inquiry about the relationship of off-farm and other income sources to agricultural sales. The response to that inquiry was used as a basis for this classification.

For ease of reference to this classification in some tables, the term "off-farm income" applies to both farm-related and off-farm sources. A separate line is shown in most tables for farms not reporting or reporting no farm-related or off-farm income.

**Value of crops harvested**—This item represents the estimated value of all crops harvested during the 1974 crop year. Data for the value of crops harvested were obtained by multiplying the average estimated values per unit by the operators' reports of acres or quantities harvested. In instances where only acres harvested were reported, State estimates of value of production per acre were used. Generally, harvested units of production (pounds, bushels, bales, etc.) were multiplied by State estimates of price per unit. A combination of these two factors was used when only acres harvested were requested of small farms, but units of production were requested of larger farms. The State average prices used in these calculations were obtained in most part from publications by the Statistical Reporting Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). When USDA estimates were not available, Bureau of the Census statisticians made estimates using available sources such as data from adjacent States, respondents' report forms, and county extension agents and other persons knowledgeable about specific crops.

**Value of livestock on farms**—Data for value of livestock and poultry on farms were obtained by multiplying the number of livestock of each major age and sex group by the State average price. The State average prices for cattle, hogs, sheep, Angora goats, and hens and pullets were obtained primarily from data published by the Statistical Reporting Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Prices applied to other types of livestock were census-derived averages based primarily on reported value of sales for these types in the 1974 Census of Agriculture. The 1969 and 1964 data were developed in a similar manner.

**Value of agricultural products sold**—This item represents the gross market value before taxes and production expenditures of all agricultural products sold or removed from the place in 1974 regardless of who received the payment. It includes receipts by the operator as well as the value of any shares received by partners, landlords, contractors and others associated with the place.

The total value of agricultural products represents the sum of all crops including nursery products sold, forest products sold, and poultry and livestock and their products sold. It does not include income from farm-related sources such as agricultural services, government farm programs, or recreation and other related sources, or income from nonfarm sources.

The value of crops sold in 1974 does not necessarily represent sales from crops harvested in 1974. An examination of a sample of individual reports indicated extensive reporting of sales from crops produced in 1973. Some cash grain farms indicated that the 1974 grain crops were in storage and there were no sales from the 1974 crop. Likewise, some farms reported sales in 1974 from two different crop years.

Data for the value of agricultural products sold were obtained on both the regular and short forms directly from the respondents in the 1974 and 1969 Censuses of Agriculture. This procedure was a departure from the one used in previous censuses in which data on value of sales were obtained by enumeration for some products and were estimated for others. For cases in which the farm operator failed to report a value of sales, estimates were made based on the amount of crops harvested or the number of livestock sold. Although similar procedures were used in earlier censuses, the extent of sales estimation has increased in each of the recent censuses. Extensive estimation of market values was required for farms growing or producing products under contract.

Caution should be applied when comparing sales in 1974 with sales reported in earlier censuses due to the extreme ranges in per unit prices between census years. Reported values for 1974 varied greatly from farm to farm because of the month-to-month price per-unit variations within the 1974 census year.

**Total farm production expenditures**—This figure represents the total production expenditures, including depreciation, for the farm regardless of who paid the costs. It includes costs shared or paid by landlords and partners as well as estimated costs of production inputs and services furnished by contractors.

The quality and completeness of expenditures data reported by farm operators has decreased in recent censuses as the structure of agriculture becomes more complex. Reporting has been especially incomplete for farms producing crops, livestock, or poultry under contract. Most operators of those farms did not know and were unwilling to estimate the value of production inputs and services furnished by contractors.

Incomplete reporting has increasingly necessitated estimations of production expenses during office processing. These estimations on individual expenditures were based on the scope of related crop and livestock information in the report or, in some cases, on averages or ratios of expenditures reported by similar farms in the same geographic area.

The figures for total production expenditures for 1974 and 1969 are heavily weighted by the effect of reporting "all other production expenses." Some farmers may have misinterpreted the intent of this question and reported capital improvement expenditures, purchase of long-term assets, household expenses, and other personal expenditures; others may have failed to include all applicable items. Any calculations of net farm income based on this census figure should be used with caution.
Farm sales by commodity or commodity group—In an effort to conform more closely to the 1972 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC), a number of commodity groupings used to collect data on the value of sales were changed for 1974 from those used for 1969. For the most part, the changes only affect data shown for farms with sales of $2,500 and over. The next seven definitions reflect changes; that for forest products does not.

Other field crops—For 1974, this group includes the value of sales of peanuts, Irish potatoes, sweetpotatoes, sugar beets, sugarcane, popcorn, mint for oil, hops, etc. For 1969, the value of pineapples sold was included.

Fruits, nuts, and berries—For 1974, the value of pineapple sold is included in this group. For 1969, pineapple was considered a field crop.

Poultry and poultry products—For 1974, the value of poultry hatchery sales is included in this group. For 1969, these data were not collected in the census. More information on poultry hatcheries can be found in part 5 of this volume.

Sheep, lambs, and wool—For 1974, the value of sales of these items is shown separately. For 1969, this value was combined with that for hogs, goats, and mohair.

Hogs and pigs—For 1974, the value of hogs and pigs sold is shown separately. For 1969, this value was combined with that for sheep, lambs, wool, goats, and mohair.

Goats and mohair—For 1974, the value of goats and mohair sold is shown separately and in aggregation with the value of other livestock and livestock products. For 1969, this value was combined with that for sheep, lambs, wool, goats, and hogs.

Other livestock and livestock products—For 1974, the production of fish and laboratory animals was included in the agriculture census, whereas for 1969 it was not. The value of fish raised and sold and laboratory animals sold is included in the category “Other livestock and livestock products.” Separate data on fish production and sales are shown in volume II, part 5.

Forest products sold—As in previous censuses, the sales data shown for the 1974 census for this item relate only to forest products sold from farms. Commercial logging, timber, or other types of forest product operations or establishments are excluded, as are places selling only forest products. Such operations or establishments are excluded from being classified as agricultural production according to the Standard Industrial Classification, in which they are classified as Forestry-Major Group 08.

Land in vegetables—The total acres of land used for vegetables in 1974, shown in volume II, part 6, are not fully comparable to the acres published for 1969. For 1974, the data represent the land from which vegetables were harvested; for 1969 the acres shown are the sum of the acres of the individual crops harvested. In areas where more than one vegetable crop is grown on the same land during the season, comparability is affected.

Land in orchards—This includes land in bearing and nonbearing fruit trees, citrus, or other groves, vineyards, and nut trees of all ages, including land on which all fruit crops failed. Respondents were instructed not to report abandoned plantings and plantings of less than 20 fruit, citrus, or nut trees, or of grapevines.

Florida and Texas citrus—In recent censuses, because of the difficulty in identifying and enumerating nonresident grove owners and the increasing number of nonrespondent grove owners who have their groves managed by caretakers, a special enumeration procedure was used to enumerate a number of the larger caretakers to cover groves they managed.

In 1974, 115 citrus caretakers in Florida and 29 caretakers in Texas were identified and their total operations were enumerated shortly after the harvest completion of the 1973-74 citrus crop. These caretakers reported for about 7,500 grove owners in Florida and 1,500 in Texas. Caretakers were instructed to ask their grove owners to cross-reference any census reports they might receive to their caretakers’ report to avoid any duplication. To ensure no duplication, a search of census files was made during the processing to identify any owner report which had already been covered in a caretaker report.

As a result of this procedure of enumerating caretakers, the count of farms with citrus in these areas has been reduced by a number of grove owners accounted for by the caretakers. At the same time, coverage of citrus production has been improved and the reporting burden on grove owners has been greatly reduced.

Fish production—The raising of fish for sale was included as agricultural production by the 1972 SIC, and data for such operations are included in the agriculture census for the first time in 1974. Because commercial raising of fish is a relatively new and expanding industry, the census mailing register covering fish production may have been incomplete. Information on fish production and sales is shown in volume II, part 5.

Bees and honey—Bees and honey were enumerated and tabulated in the county and State in which the home farm was located (even though hives are often moved from farm to farm over a wide geographic area for pollination). Several factors affect the completeness and accuracy of these data: First, bee and honey sales were enumerated separately only for farms with sales of $2,500 and over. Many bee owners operate on a small scale, thus their sales are not identified separately in the statistics. Second, some bee operations may not have been on the mailing list. Third, some operators on the mailing list may not have considered beekeeping to be an agricultural operation, and therefore did not report.

Other agricultural chemicals—Detailed data showing the general purposes for
which chemicals were applied are published for farms with sales of $2,500 and over. Some farm operators reported their total acreage treated by sprays, dusts, fumigants, etc., but did not allocate acreage according to the various purposes of the treatment. It was not feasible to allocate misreported data properly, so these data were added to “Other chemicals.”

As a result, detailed data for insect, nematode, disease, and weed control are incompletely reported and the item “Other chemicals” actually includes a sizable amount of expenditures relating to these controls.

Grain storage capacity—A question on grain storage was asked for the first time in the 1974 Census. No attempt was made to supply missing data if a farm failed to report the presence or absence of this item; instead, the number of farms not reporting are shown. Data are shown in volume II, part 4.

Futures market—These data were collected to determine if the farm operator utilized the commodity futures market in 1974 to hedge sales of any farm commodities produced on the place. The data, which are presented in volume II, part 3, probably represent an overstatement of the actual number of farm operators using the futures market. Apparently, respondents were confused between futures market transactions and forward pricing agreements. Although obvious errors were corrected, the data should be used with caution.

Contracts—The data published in volume I and volume II, part 3 are shown essentially as reported, except for inconsistencies that were corrected. The published data are incompletely reported, partly because of the complex and varied nature of production and marketing contracts, and partly because of a lack of understanding or, more often, a lack of knowledge, on the part of the respondents, of all of the provisions of the contract. Some contracts were not reported at all, and for some reported contracts not all characteristics are given.

A “Not reported” line in most statistical tables indicates the extent of incompleteness of reporting on the contract characteristics. Data on the amount received from the contractor varied from the full market value for some marketing contracts to only fractional values for some production contracts. Detailed data for individual items produced under contract are included in volume II, part 3.

Payroll and employment—For 1974 more data were collected than in previous agriculture censuses to provide a more complete accounting and classification of hired labor involved in agriculture production. Data were collected on the number of workers by number of days worked, cash wages paid, and amount paid to contract workers and salaried corporation officers (see section 30 of the A1 report form in the appendix.)

Some respondents who had sizable numbers of seasonal workers during the year had difficulty reporting the number of workers by days worked, because their records were often not kept in such detail. Totals shown for the number of seasonal workers give a sizable overcount for the number of hired workers actually involved in agriculture because many of them worked on more than one farm during the year and thus may have been counted more than once. Therefore, these data should be used with some caution.

Caution is also necessary with the data on contract labor. Some farm operators may not have distinguished clearly between hired labor and contract labor, i.e., workers hired through a labor contractor or crew leader. This has resulted in a possible overstatement of the number of farms using contract labor, although the dollar amounts involved are generally small.

Likewise, salaries paid to corporate officers may include some worktime spent on nonfarm activities. For a more detailed review of employment data, see volume II, part 4.

Injuries and illnesses—Information on injuries and illnesses was collected for the first time in the 1974 census. Data were obtained on the number of injuries and illnesses of hired workers, paid members of the operator’s family, unpaid family members, and operators of farms with sales of $2,500 or more. No data were shown in volume I; however, several unpublished tabulations were made at the State level and copies are available for purchase upon request (see section on Unpublished Data). The unpublished data were tabulated as reported; no attempt was made to estimate for possible missing or underreported data. A portion of these data are shown in volume II, part 4.

Farm credit—The census of agriculture has collected varying amounts of data relating to credit since 1890. Continuing changes in technology and agricultural practices have increased the amount of money and credit required for efficient farm operation. In lieu of the traditional separate finance survey, section 33 was added to the report form for farms with sales of $2,500 or over to obtain information from farm operators on debts secured and not secured by real estate.

Debt secured by real estate relates to debt owed by the farm operator and secured by land owned and operated. Debt on land owned by the operator but rented to others was to be excluded. Data for debts secured by real estate pertain only to debt owed by the operator and exclude debts owed by landlords, contractors, etc. Debt totals from the census, when compared to other independent debt estimates, indicate that the census figures are significantly incomplete and therefore debt totals should be used with caution. More detailed information on farm credit is included in volume II, part 2.

Farm fuel storage capacity—Questions were asked for the first time in the 1974 Census on the on-farm storage capacity for gasoline, diesel fuel, LP gas, butane, and propane used for the farm business. However, a significant number of respondents failed to answer these questions or answered them incorrectly; for instance, many operators reported the total gallons purchased during the year instead of the fuel storage capacity. Such
obvious errors were deleted, but since acceptable data were not obtained for a substantial number of farms, no data were shown in the volume I State reports. Several tabulations were made however, and some data are shown in volume II, part 4. Other unpublished data are available for purchase upon request (see section on Unpublished Data).

Income and expenses from farm-related sources—An expanded series of questions on farm-related income and expenses was asked of all farms in the 1974 census to obtain a more complete picture of the total income of farm operators from all sources. These sources include income and expenses associated with customwork and other agricultural services provided for farmers and others, recreational services, participation in government programs, renting out land and other activity conducted on the farm or closely related to the farm. As a general rule, these other income sources are included if they are closely related, even though supplemental to the farm operation. However, if they constitute a separate establishment or were conducted from another location, they are not included. For example, if a farm operation owned a company which furnished custom services to other farms, and that company and its income were reported in the 1974 Survey of Agricultural Services as a separate establishment, the income is not included in the data for this category. Also deleted were reported sales of capital assets such as land, buildings, and machinery. Examples of income from other farm-related sources that are included are gas tax refunds, patronage dividends, expenditure rebates, farm machine and building rentals, and farm by-products sales, such as straw and manure.

In addition to those operating expenses associated with customwork, recreational services, government programs, renting of farmland, etc., expenses include depreciation, taxes, interest, insurance, etc., related to the farm-related activities. However, the data shown for this item do not represent the total expenditures associated with farm-related income. The respondent was requested, if separate records were available, to report farm-related income expenses separately from farm production expenses. If the respondent did not report farm-related expenses separately, any such expenses incurred are assumed to be included in farm production expenses.

Farms were classified by size, tenure of operator, type of organization, principal occupation, age of operator, value of products sold, and standard industrial classification (SIC). In addition, a number of cross-tabulations of detailed characteristics by the major classifications, and farm counts of the classifications including frequency distributions of farms by the value of sales for each of the principal SIC's are in the various parts of this volume. A description of the major classifications follows.

Farms by size—All farms were classified by size according to the total land area established for each farm (acres in this place). Detailed characteristics of farms with sales of $2,500 and over by 12 size-of-farm groups are presented in volume II, part 2. The same classification was used for all States. By definition, a farm was an operating unit, not an ownership tract.

In the case of a landlord with land assigned to tenants, the land assigned to each tenant was considered as all (or part) of the tenant's farm even though the landlord may have considered the entire landholding as one unit in respect to supervision, equipment, rotation practice, purchase of supplies, or sale of products.

Farms by tenure of operator—The classifications of tenure as used for both the 1974 and 1969 censuses are:

1. Full owners, who operate only land they own;
2. Part owners, who operate land they own and also land they rent from others; and
3. Tenants, who operate only land they rent from others or work on shares for others.

Detailed data by tenure of operator and type of organization are shown in part 3 of this volume. For the 1964 census and earlier censuses, a separate classification was used for hired managers, full owners, part owners, and tenants. The manager classification was discontinued because managed farms became increasingly difficult to define and identify, especially with the mail enumeration. Farms which may be operated by hired managers for 1969 and 1974 are distributed among full owners, part owners, and tenants according to the reported ownership of the land in the place.

Farms by type of organization—This was the second census of agriculture (the first being for 1969) for which farms with sales of $2,500 and over were classified by type of organization. The respondent classified his own organizational status by marking a box opposite the type of organization which best described the way the place was operated in 1974. The classifications were:

a. Individual or family operation (sole proprietorship), excluding partnership and corporation.
b. Partnership operation, including family partnership.
c. Corporation, including family corporation.
d. Other, such as cooperative, estate or trust, prison farm, grazing association, Indian reservation, etc.

The farms were classified according to the information provided in section 37 of the regular (A1) report form. Many of the reports which showed "other" as the type of organization came from institutional farms, Indian reservations, or other operations classified as "abnormal." Abnormal farms, regardless of value of sales, were not included in the tabulations for farms with sales of $2,500 and over.

Some caution should be taken when comparing 1974 data for corporations with 1969 data. A followup study of the 1969 data indicated that a sizable number of farms were wrongly reported as corporate, especially in the Southern States. These errors in the 1969 data have not
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS Continued

been corrected and are shown as originally published.

More detailed data obtained from a special survey of farms operated by corporations are included in volume IV, part 5, of the 1974 Census of Agriculture. This report includes characteristics of the structure of corporations as well as the degree of nonfarm relationship. A minimum amount of data from this separate survey are shown in volume II, part 3.

Farms by age of operator—Age of the farm operator was obtained for all farms with sales under $2,500 and for individual, family or partnership operated farms having sales of $2,500 and over. Characteristics of farms by two age-of-operator groups in combination with occupation information are shown in part 3 of this volume for farms with sales of under $2,500 and by six age groups for farms with sales of $2,500 and over.

Racial and ethnic groups—These data were collected and tabulated for all farm operators with sales under $2,500 and for those operators with sales of $2,500 and over if they operated the farm as an individual or family or partnership. Each operator, except in Hawaii, was asked to classify himself or herself into one of six racial or ethnic groups. For Hawaii, nine categories were provided.

For 1974, data are shown for “Black and other races”; “other races” includes American Indians, Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans, and any other separate racial group. The comparable data shown in some tables for 1969 are for Black-operated farms only. The farm operators reporting themselves to be of Spanish origin were included with the White race wherever separate data for “White” were shown. Counts of farm operators for each of the enumerated racial or ethnic groups along with some farm characteristics are shown in volume II, part 3.

Farms by value of sales—In earlier agricultural censuses, data were classified in nine groups referred to as “economic classes.” The use of this term was discontinued for 1974; however, for farms with sales of $2,500 and over, the value-of-products-sold classifications are the same in 1974 as the value ranges for economic classes 1 through 5 in prior censuses and are therefore comparable. Some caution should be used in such comparisons, however, due to the substantial increase in prices received by farmers between the census periods.

Value of sales classes 1-5 for the 1969 censuses and their equivalent for the 1974 censuses are defined as follows:

Class 1—$40,000 and over of farm product sales.

Class 1a—$100,000 and over of farm product sales. Farms in 1974 with sales of $100,000 and over have been further classified by State into three groups: $100,000 to $199,999, $200,000 to $499,999, and $500,000 and over. Data are shown for each State in volume I. Farms with a value of farm products sold of $100,000 and over have been designated large-scale farms. Data for these farms have been further classified into categories up to $10,000,000 and over in sales and are presented in volume II, part 7.

Class 1b—$40,000 to $99,999 of farm product sales.

Class 2—$20,000 to $39,999 of farm product sales.

Class 3—$10,000 to $19,999 of farm product sales.

Class 4—$5,000 to $9,999 of farm product sales.

Class 5—$2,500 to $4,999 of farm product sales or having a value of products sold of under $2,500 provided they had the acreage and livestock operations which normally would have had sales in excess of $2,500, e.g., new farms, farms having crop failure, and farms with large inventories and small 1974 sales.

Data for farms with sales of under $2,500, classified in earlier censuses as "economic class 6, part-time, and part-retirement", are not directly comparable to the 1974 value classes because of the change in farm definition and modifications in farm classification. For 1969, farms with sales of under $2,500 were classified as:

Class 6—$50 to $2,499 of farm product sales and a farm operator who is under 65 years of age and did not work off the farm 100 days or more in the census year.

Part-time—$50 to $2,499 of farm product sales and a farm operator who is under 65 years of age and worked off the farm 100 days or more in the census year.

Part-retirement—$50 to $2,499 of farm product sales and a farm operator who is 65 years and over.

If 1974 data shown in part 7 of this volume are combined, limited comparisons between 1969 and 1974 can be made as follows:

Compare 1969 class 6 farms with 1974 farms with sales of less than $2,500 whose operators were under 65 years old and devoting 50 percent or more of their worktime to farming. Compare 1969 part-time farms with 1974 farms with sales of less than $2,500 whose operators were under 65 years old and devoting less than 50 percent of their worktime to farming. Compare 1969 part-retirement farms with 1974 farms with sales of less than $2,500 whose operators were 65 years old and over regardless of occupation. More detailed information for farms by value of sales are included in volume II, part 7.

Abnormal farms—This category includes institutional farms, experimental and research farms, and Indian reservations. Institutional farms include those operated by hospitals, penitentiaries, schools, grazing associations, government agencies, etc. Data for abnormal farms were included in totals for all farms, but were excluded from data for farms with sales of $2,500 or more. Characteristics of abnormal farms are shown in volume II, part 7. The abnormal farms are comparable to abnormal farms of earlier censuses.

New classification of farms—A new classification series was used to present the
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS  Continued

data for all farms for the 1974 census. It was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census to better describe today’s agriculture and its complex relationships with other sectors of the economy. The major classifications are:

**Primary farm**—A farm operated by an individual or family or partnership where the operator spends 50 percent or more of his worktime on the farm (considers farming to be the principal occupation) or a farm operated under a corporate structure which received 50 percent or more of its gross business (farm and nonfarm) from the sale of agricultural products.

**Part-time farm**—A farm operated by an individual or partnership where the operator spends less than 50 percent of his worktime on the farm (does not consider farming to be the principal occupation).

**Business-associated farm**—A farm operated under a corporate structure which received less than 50 percent of its gross business income (farm and nonfarm) from the sale of agricultural products.

**Abnormal farm**—An institutional, experimental, or research farm, or an Indian reservation. An institutional farm is one operated by a hospital, penitentiary, school, grazing association, government agency, etc.

Only part of the new classification was shown in volume I. Data necessary to classify corporations as primary or business-associated were collected in a separate survey. Limited data from this survey will be published in volume II, part 3, along with detailed data for individual or family operated farms and partnership farms. Detailed data will be shown for corporations in volume IV, part 5. The classifications for individual or family operated farms, for partnerships, and for abnormal farms are described in the following discussion of data presented by principal occupation of the farm operator.

**Farms by principal occupation**—Information was obtained on the occupation of the farm operator in 1974 to provide the basis for the new farm classification. Data on occupation were not obtained in 1969. The principal occupation classification for farms with sales of $2,500 and over relates only to farms operated by individuals or families (sole proprietorships) and partnerships. Farm characteristics are shown by age and occupation of the operator for farms with sales of under $2,500 and for farms with sales of $2,500 and over in volume II, parts 3 and 7.

The classifications used for 1974 were:

1. Farming—The principal occupation of the operator if he spent 50 percent or more of his worktime in farming.
2. Other—The principal occupation of the operator if he spent 50 percent or more of his worktime in occupations other than farming. Some operators engaged in ranching marked “other” as their principal occupation. Most such obvious errors were corrected during the processing operation.

Farms operated by persons who consider themselves farmers by occupation would be classified as primary farms under the new classification. Likewise, those farms operated by persons who consider themselves as having occupations other than farming would be classified as part-time farms.

**Farms by type**—Data from the 1974 Census are being published in accordance with the expanded classification system for agricultural production published in the 1972 edition of the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Manual. In general, the SIC classifications published for 1974 are comparable to the historical type-of-farm classifications used for 1969 and a number of earlier censuses except that the expanded SIC provides the potential for a more detailed classification.

**Farms by standard industrial classification**—A standard classification for agricultural production establishments (farms, ranches, nurseries, greenhouses, etc.) has been evolving over the entire lifetime of the SIC system, but at a less rapid rate than in other producing sectors of the economy, primarily because of the diversity of production typical of most farms. In recent years, increasing specialization by agricultural producers has encouraged the creation of a more detailed set of classifications. These classifications, found in the 1972 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Manual, are intended to promote uniformity and comparability in the presentation of statistical data collected by various governmental agencies.

An establishment primarily engaged in crop production (major group 01) or livestock production (major group 02) is classified in the 3- or 4-digit industry group which accounts for 50 percent or more of the total value of sales of its agricultural production. If the total value of sales of agricultural products of an establishment was less than 50 percent from a single 4-digit industry, but 50 percent or more from the products of two or more 4-digit industries within the same 3-digit industry group, the establishment is classified in the miscellaneous industry of that industry group; otherwise, it is classified as a general crop farm in industry 0191 or a general livestock farm in industry 0291.

A full description of the SIC classification system used for the 1974 agricultural census for farms with sales of $2,500 or more, along with data showing detailed characteristics of farms with sales of $2,500 or more for selected SIC groupings are shown in volume II, part 8. Limited data are shown also for each of the 36 4-digit industry groups at the national level.

Some farms included in the 1974 Census of Agriculture did not meet the official specifications of the standard industrial classification for agricultural activities. Sales of forest products on places which otherwise met the minimum farm definition historically have been included in the total value of farm products sold, but are not included in agricultural income by the SIC system.
Therefore, farms having more than one-half of their sales from forest products are excluded from the SIC. In addition, those farms having a significant proportion (but less than half) of their sales from forest products and not meeting the definition of one of the two categories of general farms are also excluded from the SIC.

Quality of the Data

Every census or survey has some errors. These can arise from such sources as incorrect or incomplete reporting, processing errors, and the inability to obtain a response from all farms. Since limited sampling was involved in this census, most of the error is of the nonsampling type.

Reported data may be incorrect due to memory bias, misunderstanding of questions, or the use of rough estimates in reporting. Also, respondents may have failed to provide all of the information requested. In some cases, the respondent may have indicated the presence of an item but not the amount. Imputations were made for missing data on the quantities and sales values of crops and livestock, but no imputations were made for missing or incomplete data for such items as forest products sold, injuries and illnesses, and farm credit. Adjustments were made to data items which were inconsistent with other items.

Memory bias by respondents has some effect on data items, especially those which are related to a December 31, 1974, inventory reference date. Items such as poultry and livestock inventories were most subject to memory bias since a substantial number of the reports were completed well after the first of the year (average date was January 22). A special study of a sample of census reports indicated that some of the livestock inventories may represent inventories at the time when the respondent filled out the report. Because of several definitional and conceptual problems, the study did not provide data of publication quality; therefore, estimates of the differences will not be published.

An adjustment was made for agricultural operations on the mailing list which did not respond to the census. This adjustment employed sampling, and variation from the adjustment is measured in sampling errors; however, any systematic bias is not measured. The methodology for this adjustment is described below under Statistical Adjustments.

There was considerable undercoverage of smaller farms because a large number of these places were not represented in any of the administrative records of places associated with agricultural operations and, consequently, were not on the final mailing list. On the other hand, some names were on the mailing list more than once. Such duplication was eliminated in the collection and processing to a large extent, but some remains, particularly for farms whose operation changed hands, in whole or in part, while the list was being developed.

Census Coverage

Although a complete and fully accurate count of farms, farmland, and farm production is the aim of each nationwide census of agriculture, the complex structure of America's agriculture makes this aim difficult to achieve. Among the complexities are the many places to be enumerated, the variety of arrangements under which farms are operated, the continuing changes in the relationship of farm operators to the land operated, the expiration of leases and the initiation or renewal of leases, the problem of obtaining a complete listing of all agricultural operators, the difficulty in communicating census definitions and concepts, the operator's absence from his farm during mail effort and followup procedures, and the operator's opinion that some or all of his operations do not qualify as agricultural and should not be included in the census.

An evaluation of the coverage has been conducted for each census of agriculture since 1945. Although its primary purpose is to pinpoint problem areas and supply evidence upon which to base improvements, the coverage check also provides users of census data with estimates of the completeness of census counts.

The coverage evaluation survey for the 1974 Census of Agriculture was planned to accomplish several objectives. The primary ones were to:

1. Measure the completeness of the census farm count and selected farm characteristics at the State level.
2. Evaluate the contribution of each administrative source list to the farm count and uncover overlaps in source lists.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the record linkage system and identify record duplications.
4. Provide information on factors associated with farms found not to be included in the census.

The measurement base used for both the 1969 and 1974 census coverage evaluations was the area sample of farms from the June enumerative survey conducted by the Statistical Reporting Service (SRS), USDA. The use of the June survey was based upon a cooperative agreement between SRS and the Bureau of the Census. The type of survey information to be provided to the Census Bureau and the conditions for use of the information were specified in the agreement. The agreement provided a considerable saving of costs as well as reducing respondent burden through cooperative data use.

The June enumerative survey sample is a stratified, general-purpose area sample covering the 48 conterminous States. The stratification is geographical, based upon the intensity of agriculture, and includes urban as well as rural areas. The sample consists of about 16,200 area segments with about 60,000 segment-associated farm operators. The number of segments in each State ranges from about 100 in Nevada to 1,000 in California. The average size of the area segments ranges from about 300 acres in areas where most of the land is under cultivation to about 4,000 acres in the range or grazing areas. Information for the June survey is collected in personal
DESCRIPTION OF THE CENSUS
Continued

The measurement base used for the 1974 census coverage evaluation did not include the entire June survey sample. It included only the sample of approximately 22,000 farm operators living inside the segments for which whole farm data were available, plus approximately 3,000 nonfarm persons living in all the segments. The information furnished for the 22,000 resident farm operators included name and address, name of farm or ranch, county, telephone number, total acres in place, acres by tenure, and sales class interval based on total value of agricultural products sold in 1973. Only name and address and limited acreage data were obtained for the nonfarm part of the sample.

In table 3 are estimates of census coverage for the conterminous United States in the last three censuses. Estimates for 1974 make use of both the 1974 and previous census farm definitions.

Census coverage varied by region from a high of 93.7 percent in the North Central to a low of 83.5 percent in the Northeast (table 4). Coverage of farms with sales of $2,500 and over ranges from 96.9 percent for the North Central to 92.6 percent for the South. Coverage of farms with sales of under $2,500 was much lower than that for the larger farms; coverage in the Northeast was less than 65 percent.

The coverage study provided estimates of the characteristics of farms not enumerated. Missed farms tended to be smaller than average in size, production, and sales. Three-fifths of them had sales of under $2,500; their average size was 169 acres; and their average value of farm products sold was $7,667 (table 5). More detailed information, on coverage estimates by size and type of farm and geographic area are included in volume IV, part 3.

Statistical Adjustments

Report forms were obtained and tabulated for all the identified larger farms (in general, those with expected sales of $40,000 and over). In the few instances where the operator did not supply the required information, data were obtained from secondary sources. By means of detailed programmed edit specifications, adjustments or corrections were made during the computer-edit operations for internally incomplete or inconsistent data. The manual review procedures provided for computer printouts of edit changes to an item that exceeded specified limits. These changes were then reviewed for reasonableness by members of the processing staff and necessary corrections made.

Nonresponse

The statistics for each State and county were adjusted to account for smaller operations which did not respond in the census. A sample of addresses which did not respond during the regular census followup period was selected and surveyed to estimate the number of farms by size for which adjustment should be made. The adjustment for these nonrespondent farms was made by selecting a stratified sample of farms which did respond during the census and expanding their figures to represent the nonrespondents. The expanded data were included in census totals.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Farm Sales</th>
<th>Percentage Included in Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>$2,500 or over</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>$2,500 to $5,000</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>$5,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Percentage of Farms Included in the Census by Value of Sales: 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Farm Sales</th>
<th>Percentage Included in Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$2,500 or over</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>$2,500 to $5,000</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>$5,000 to $10,000</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Characteristics of Farms Missed in the Census: 1974

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average per Farm</th>
<th>Value of Sales (dollars)</th>
<th>Percentage Distribution by Value of Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales Acre</td>
<td>Total $2,500 $5,000 $10,000 $25,000 $50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>159 7,667</td>
<td>100 61 12 8 1 16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>105 8,380</td>
<td>100 70 12 8 2 18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>217 10,274</td>
<td>100 68 16 8 2 25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>337 11,661</td>
<td>100 59 10 5 2 21.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Alaska and Hawaii not included.

2 Using 1974 farm definition.

3 Using 1959 farm definition.
percentage of the total represented by the nonrespondent adjustment increases.

Sampling

During the construction of the mailing list for the census, names obtained from various sources were matched to eliminate duplicates. Names that only appeared on the list provided by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) were randomly sampled at a rate varying by State from 100 to 10 percent, and only those drawn in the sample were asked to complete census reports. The census reports obtained from this sample were expanded to estimate the totals for all the farms on the “ASCS only” list. The farms in the sample generally were small in size, but occasionally they included some larger farms. The States sampled at a 100-percent rate (all ASCS only names included in the mailing register) were Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, and West Virginia.

Reliability of Adjustments for Nonresponse and Sampling

Table 11 shows estimates of reliability of the published totals for selected data items for the United States. These estimates include the variability from sampling the “ASCS only” list and the variability from using the random selection of respondent farms weighted by expansion factors to represent nonrespondent farms. For computing the estimates of variability due to weighting for nonresponse, the farms selected for weighting were considered to be a random sample of all farms in the stratum from which they were selected. The variances from the two sources—the ASCS only and the nonresponse adjustment—were combined in the usual manner to provide the estimates of reliability.

There is approximately 67-percent confidence that the difference between the published estimate and the figure that would have been obtained if there were no variability involved is not more than the percentage presented in the table for a specific item. There is approximately 95-percent confidence that the difference is less than twice the percentage given.

The standard error measures the effect of certain nonsampling errors, but does not measure any systematic biases in the data arising from incorrect reporting by respondents, adjustments for nonresponse, or incompleteness of the mailing list.