Those farms with cows are increasing in the size of their herds. From 1969 to 1974, there was a 33-percent increase in the number of farms having cow herds of 100 head or more. The inventory number of cows other than milk cows (beef cows) increased by 7 million in the 5-year period (table 14).

Farms selling cattle and calves decreased by 13 percent from 1969 to 1974, and the total number of cattle and calves sold decreased by 6.1 percent.

On farms with a value of sales of $2,500 and over, cattle sold, excluding calves sold, decreased by 2 percent. Most of this decrease was on farms from which less than 10 head were sold. These farms accounted for almost 16 percent of all cattle sold from farms with sales of $2,500 and over.

In 1969, both cattle and calves fattened on grain or concentrates for 30 days or more and sold for slaughter were counted; however in 1974, operators were asked to count as fattened cattle only those weighing 500 pounds or more and fattened on grain or concentrates for 30 days or more and sold for slaughter.

Farms fattening cattle on grains and concentrates for slaughter increased by 44 percent between 1969 and 1974. In 1969, 65 percent of fattened cattle were sold from farms selling 500 head or more. By 1974, the percentage of fattened cattle sold coming from these farms had increased to nearly 70 percent (table 15).

Milk
The U.S. milk cow inventory on Dec. 31, 1974, was 10.7 million cows—5 percent below 1969. Farms having milk cows numbered 404,000. Approximately 247,000 farms with sales of $2,500 and over had sales of dairy products. The value of dairy products sold from these farms was $8.2 billion and accounted for 21 percent of the total value of livestock, poultry, and their products sold from farms with sales of $2,500 and over in 1974 (table 16).

Milk production in the United States is largely concentrated in the Northeast and Great Lakes States and in California. These 16 States accounted for 64 percent of the total value of dairy products sold from farms with sales of $2,500 and over in 1974; they also accounted for 64 percent of the farms with sales of $2,500 and over reporting dairy products sold in the United States. Among these States, Wisconsin and California led with 2.5 million or 23.5 percent of these cows.

The Nation's milk supply is being produced by fewer but larger herds; small herds no longer play the important role in milk production they once did. The number of milk cows has also been...