

Chapter 2

LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS

(9)

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LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS AND THE LOW-INCOME PROBLEM IN AGRICULTURE

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INTRODUCTION

Disparity in the distribution of gross agricultural income is one of the chief causes for concern over the welfare of a substantial part of the farm population. Over 3 million farms had gross farm sales that amounted to less than \$2,500 in 1949. This is 60 percent of the farms counted in the 1950 Census of Agriculture. (See table 1.) The relatively small sales of farm products, and the considerable amounts needed for cash operating expenses, raise doubt as to the adequacy of incomes available to many of the operator families on these farms. Low output per farm and per farm worker raise questions as to the efficiency with which resources are used on these farms compared with efficiency on other farms and in other sectors of the economy. Yet information necessary for a complete picture of either the magnitude of this problem or of the types of families affected has been lacking:

Use of over-all data on farm size and gross income distribution has often resulted in conflicting conclusions—partly because of the difficulty in defining a farm, partly because of traditional concepts of the farm as the major occupation of farm people. What was typical a few decades ago applies to a much smaller segment of farm people today. Better roads, automobiles, radios, and numerous other improvements in transportation and communication, have brought farm people closer to urban life. The expanding economy has demanded an increased quantity and variety of goods and services. Industry is becoming widely dispersed throughout many areas that were formerly rural. These developments have created new and varied job opportunities for farm

people. This has been part and parcel of the migration from agriculture and the over-all reduction in farm numbers.

Among those who took up nonfarm jobs were many who continued to live on the farm and carry on some agricultural operations. Also, city workers moved to the country, supplementing their incomes by farming while enjoying advantages of country living. The merging of farm and nonfarm sectors has raised problems of classification. Data on farm sales alone are inadequate to appraise problems of income distribution in agriculture, for many operator families depend largely upon earnings from off-farm jobs and businesses. For others, pensions, old-age assistance, and incomes from rents or other investments are of primary importance. Farm income does not reflect total income nor the productivity of these families. A primary need is knowledge of the degree of dependency upon agriculture.

The economic classification of farms has made substantial progress in clarifying the concept of a farm. The separation of commercial farms from part-time and residential farms is an important step forward. Commercial farms may be defined broadly as those operated as business units to provide the major source of income for the farm family. The proportion of commercial farms that reported other income exceeding farm sales are as follows: class I, 5 percent; class II, 4 percent; class III, 5 percent; class IV, 10 percent; class V, 21 percent; class VI, none. Further division of the commercial farms on the basis of value of farm products sold provides a good measure of the size of the farm business. In contrast, farming operations on part-time and residential farms are usually supplementary to the off-farm economic activity of the operator and members of his family. On

Table 1.—FARMS, VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, FAMILY INCOME, AND PERSONS IN FAMILIES OF FARM OPERATORS, BY ECONOMIC CLASS OF FARM, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Item	Total, all farms	Commercial farms						Other farms		
		Total	Classes I and II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	Class VI	Total	Part-time and abnormal	Residential
Farms.....number..	5,380,127	3,793,005	485,822	753,305	907,873	919,651	726,354	1,587,122	625,525	961,597
percent distribution..	100	71	9	14	17	17	14	29	12	18
Value of farm products sold.....dollars (000)...	22,481,713	21,945,822	11,149,903	5,317,502	3,335,828	1,638,427	504,162	535,891	463,129	72,762
Percent of total for all farms.....percent..	100	98	50	24	15	7	2	2	2	(1)
Average per farm.....dollars..	4,179	5,786	22,951	7,059	3,674	1,782	694	338	740	76
Farm operators by family income from all sources:										
Number reporting.....total..	4,856,417	3,408,016	438,230	693,476	822,741	829,035	624,534	1,448,401	591,960	856,441
Under \$500.....operators reporting..	656,570	11,019	11,019	22,060	69,327	119,428	221,008	213,728	52,788	160,940
\$500 to \$999.....operators reporting..	709,650	484,089	10,987	36,291	96,116	143,589	197,106	225,561	79,399	146,162
\$1,000 to \$1,999.....operators reporting..	1,206,055	852,139	47,613	143,157	241,586	274,260	145,523	353,916	172,342	181,574
\$2,000 to \$2,999.....operators reporting..	863,310	584,673	68,626	166,332	170,473	145,432	33,810	278,637	122,850	155,787
\$3,000 and over.....operators reporting..	1,420,832	1,044,273	299,985	325,636	245,239	146,326	27,087	376,559	164,581	211,978
Percent distribution:										
Number reporting.....percent..	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under \$500.....percent..	14	13	3	3	8	14	35	15	9	19
\$500 to \$999.....percent..	15	14	3	5	12	17	32	16	13	17
\$1,000 to \$1,999.....percent..	25	25	11	21	29	33	23	24	29	21
\$2,000 to \$2,999.....percent..	18	17	16	24	21	18	5	19	21	18
\$3,000 and over.....percent..	29	31	68	47	30	18	4	26	28	25
Families of farm operators.....number..	5,341,190	3,769,059	481,386	748,932	903,411	912,664	722,666	1,572,131	618,915	953,216
Persons in families, all ages.....persons..	21,573,540	15,180,403	1,944,628	3,046,019	3,745,993	3,727,250	2,716,513	6,393,137	2,516,460	3,876,677
Average per family.....persons..	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.1
Persons under 14.....persons..	6,661,833	4,659,337	586,151	937,983	1,171,669	1,171,589	791,945	2,002,496	772,345	1,230,151
Persons 14 and over.....persons..	14,911,707	10,521,066	1,358,477	2,108,036	2,574,324	2,555,661	1,924,568	4,390,641	1,744,115	2,646,526
Average per family.....persons..	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Persons in labor force.....persons..	8,104,014	5,900,602	792,672	1,227,749	1,444,425	1,433,382	1,002,374	2,203,412	939,189	1,264,223
Average per family.....persons..	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.3
Percent of persons 14 and over.....percent..	54	56	58	58	56	56	52	50	54	48
Unpaid family workers.....persons..	2,815,578	2,270,724	306,741	533,420	599,305	505,092	326,166	544,854	266,750	278,104
Percent of persons in labor force.....percent..	35	38	39	43	41	35	33	25	28	22
Size of family group:										
1 person.....operators reporting..	215,562	140,383	13,999	14,096	21,328	35,171	55,789	75,179	18,434	56,745
2 persons.....operators reporting..	1,217,528	854,577	83,325	148,385	201,528	211,709	209,630	362,951	140,290	227,661
3 or 4 persons.....operators reporting..	2,084,069	1,501,652	227,691	330,186	356,103	343,977	243,695	582,417	245,653	336,764
5 or more persons.....operators reporting..	1,824,031	1,272,447	156,371	256,265	324,452	321,807	213,552	551,584	214,538	337,046

¹Percent not shown when less than 0.5.

FARMS AND FARM PEOPLE

most of the part-time and residential farms the income from non-farm sources exceeded the value of farm sales. Low volume of farm sales and substantial amount of off-farm work indicate that for many of these operators the farm is largely a place to live and only incidentally a supplemental source of income.

The matching of data for the 1950 Censuses of Population, Housing, and Agriculture has provided needed information on family and income characteristics of farm-operator families. It has made possible the relating of total income of family members from all sources to the size of the farm business as measured by farm sales. This has facilitated an appraisal of the relationship between low agricultural production and low family income. Such information is basic to analysis of problems of income distribution in agriculture, and is necessary to an understanding of the kinds and sizes of farms in the United States.

An attempt has been made in this chapter to determine the extent of low farm-operator family incomes when farm and off-farm incomes of all family members are combined. In so doing, the economic classification of farms, specifically the separation of the commercial from part-time and residential farms, has been examined for its effectiveness in defining dependency upon agriculture.

Gross farm sales are the total receipts from farm marketings. They are the basis of the economic classification of farms. But out of gross sales must be paid the cash expenses of the farm business. Gross farm sales are not to be confused with total family income. Total family income includes sales from the farm, after deduction of cash farm-operating expenses, as well as all other income of the operator and family members. Included in total family income are such items as net business receipts from the farm and other businesses, wages and salaries from off-farm jobs, pensions, allotments, and income from boarders or lodgers or from rents and investments.

But cash income of farm-operator families does not take into consideration the value of farm products produced and consumed in the home. Many of these families have home gardens, use farm-produced dairy and poultry products, or butcher meat animals for home use. Also, cash farm income does not include the value of the house occupied rent free by the operator's family. With respect to the content or level of living associated with a particular monetary income, the cash incomes reported by farm-operator families are not fully comparable with those reported by urban families.

Total cash income of farm-operator families amounted to less than \$1,000 on 1,366,000 farms in 1949, or a fourth of the farms in the United States. No attempt is made here to assess the relative amounts of cash income needed by operator families to maintain adequate levels of living. Income groups are used to isolate farm-operator family characteristics that appear to be related to income and as a basis for describing relative income levels.

Cash needs are probably dependent largely upon the size and age of the family. Needs of a young family with children, for example, may be greater than those of an elderly couple or one without children. The sizes and composition of operator families that reported less than \$1,000 income are as follows:

Family composition	United States		South	
	Commercial farms	Other farms	Commercial farms	Other farms
Average size of operator's family.....number of persons..	3.9	3.8	4.3	4.0
Total number of families (000).....	927	439	633	344
Percent distribution by family composition:				
Husband and wife with—				
No children under 18..percent..	37	38	33	37
1 or 2 children under 18.....percent..	25	21	26	22
3 or 4 children under 18.....percent..	13	12	15	14
All other units.....percent..	25	29	26	27

Size of family on these farms is somewhat smaller than the average for all farms; however, the average was nearly four persons per family for the United States and slightly more than four for the South. Families on the commercial farms tended to be slightly larger than those on the other farms, composed principally of part-time and residential units.

Two-fifths of the commercial farm operators with family incomes of less than \$1,000 had a wife and one or more children under 18 years of age. Children under 18 were reported by a third of the part-time and residential units. (See chapter 3 for a more detailed description of family composition by income groups and by economic class.)

The regional distribution of farms with operators having family income of less than \$1,000 by tenure and type is as follows:

Tenure and type of farm	United States		South	
	Commercial farms	Other farms	Commercial farms	Other farms
Total number of families (000).....	927	439	633	344
Percent of farms operated by—				
Owners and managers.....	57	75	46	71
All tenants.....	43	25	54	29
Croppers (South only).....			29	10
Percent distribution by type of farm:				
Cotton.....	34	.....	49	.....
All other field crops.....	24	.....	26	.....
Dairy, poultry, and other livestock..	31	.....	15	.....
General farms.....	10	.....	9	.....
Miscellaneous and unclassified.....	1	.....	1	.....

Approximately two-thirds of the families with incomes under \$1,000 were on commercial farms. Two-thirds of these were in the South. Over three-fourths of the families on noncommercial farms were in the South. There, low family incomes appear to be closely associated with cotton farming and the cropper system of management. Half of the families on commercial farms in the South were on cotton farms, and nearly a third were families of croppers. On the other hand, the operators of noncommercial farms were mostly owners. Less than a third were tenants and only 10 percent were croppers. The noncommercial farms were not classified by type.

LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS

This chapter deals principally with low-production farms—farms that had sales of farm products amounting to less than \$2,500 in 1949. These are grouped in the economic classification as class V and class VI commercial farms and as part-time and residential farms. Most (nearly 85 percent) of the operators with family income of less than \$1,000 were on these farms. Of all persons living in farm-operator households, about 60 percent were on low-production farms. Yet these farms produced only about a tenth of all products grown in the United States for sale. Average sales per farm were extremely low in comparison with those on larger commercial farms.

The term "low-production" farms, as used here, refers to the relatively small size of the farm business. It is not intended to reflect total productivity and incomes of operator families on these farms. However, the size of the farm business is usually too small to provide the operator family with full-time work on the farm. Cash income available to families on these farms appears to be dependent largely upon off-farm sources of income.

Separation of the operators of low-production farms for special study admittedly ignores characteristics of operators on some of the larger business units in agriculture who also reported low family incomes. Family incomes of under \$1,000 were reported by operator families on a fifth of the class IV commercial farms (those that reported gross farm sales of \$2,500 to \$4,999) and about 7 percent of those that reported \$5,000 or more sales of farm products.

Some of the farms with gross sales amounting to \$2,500 or more, yet reporting less than \$1,000 operator family income, represent cases in which farm sales were lower in 1949 than would normally be the case. Market output on the individual farm may

vary considerably from year to year even though cash expenditure items remain relatively fixed over a period of years. This may be because of variations in yields, due to weather or other production conditions, or because of larger or smaller sales out of livestock inventories in the particular year.

On the other hand, the volume of production on farms with sales significantly less than \$2,500 is so small that low cash income from farming may be a chronic problem. It is recognized that some of these families also represent farms that had abnormally low sales of farm products in 1949. When farms are classified by the amount of farm sales, farms with lower than normal yields or sales out of livestock inventories tend to be classified in lower value-of-sales groups than identical farms with normal yields or sales out of inventories in the particular year. Likewise, farms with higher than normal sales tend to be classified in larger value-of-sales groups.

Farm sales on the low-production farms range from less than \$250 on residential farms up to as much as \$2,500 on class V commercial farms. Many of the operator families on these farms have substantial off-farm income. This is particularly true of those on part-time and residential farms. Many others depend almost entirely upon income from the farm. But even when farm and nonfarm incomes are combined, the total family income available is in many cases extremely small. Nearly 40 percent of the operator families on these farms reported total family incomes of less than \$1,000.

Half of these, over a half a million, reported total incomes of less than \$500. Another 40 percent reported from \$1,000 to \$3,000. Only 20 percent reported incomes of \$3,000 or more.

Of the total number of low-production farms, about two-thirds are in the South, which contains slightly less than half of all farms. (See table 2.) In terms of operator total family income, even greater contrast is apparent between the South and the rest of the country. Total family incomes were under \$1,000 on nearly half of the low-production farms in the South compared with only a fourth in the North and West. However, when comparisons are made between white-operator families in the South and all-operator families in the North and West, levels of income are much closer. The comparisons are as follows:

Color of operator	Operators reporting total family income			
	Total	Under \$1,000	\$1,000-\$2,999	\$3,000 and over
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>
Low-production farms.....	2,900,233	39	42	19
North and West.....	1,050,004	24	45	31
South.....	1,850,229	47	41	12
White.....	1,409,502	39	46	15
Nonwhite.....	440,727	72	27	1

Table 2.—FAMILY INCOME OF FARM OPERATORS OF LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS, BY ECONOMIC CLASS OF FARM AND AGE OF OPERATOR; FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Region, economic class of farm, and age of operator	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators by family income							
		Total reporting		Under \$1,000		\$1,000-\$2,999		\$3,000 and over	
		Number	Percent of all farm operators	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
UNITED STATES									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	3,230,725	2,900,233	90	1,120,420	39	1,231,052	42	548,761	19
By economic class:									
Class V.....number..	919,651	829,035	90	263,017	32	419,692	51	146,326	4
Class VI.....number..	726,354	624,534	86	418,114	67	179,333	29	27,087	8
Part-time.....number..	623,123	590,223	95	132,187	22	294,666	50	163,370	28
Residential.....number..	961,597	856,441	89	307,102	36	337,361	39	211,978	25
By age of operator:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	3,024,458	2,720,256	90	1,042,590	38	1,159,579	43	518,087	19
Under 55 years.....number..	1,060,944	1,713,980	92	553,704	32	793,607	46	366,669	21
55-64 years.....number..	602,354	535,404	89	222,427	42	216,731	40	96,246	18
65 years and over.....number..	553,160	470,872	85	266,459	57	149,241	32	55,172	12
By economic class and age of operator:									
Class V:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	847,681	782,850	90	244,608	31	398,510	51	139,732	18
Under 55 years.....number..	575,844	518,471	90	156,736	30	272,442	53	89,293	17
55 years and over.....number..	291,837	264,379	91	87,872	33	126,068	48	50,439	19
Class VI:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	677,426	580,872	86	388,136	67	168,279	29	24,457	4
Under 55 years.....number..	356,391	312,563	88	197,972	63	101,837	33	12,754	4
55 years and over.....number..	321,035	268,309	84	190,164	71	66,442	25	11,703	4
Part-time:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	585,867	556,129	95	125,891	23	276,467	50	153,771	28
Under 55 years.....number..	412,632	395,677	96	74,350	19	202,529	51	118,798	30
55 years and over.....number..	173,235	160,452	93	51,541	32	73,938	46	34,973	22
Residential:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	893,484	800,405	90	283,955	35	316,323	40	200,127	25
Under 55 years.....number..	524,077	487,269	93	124,646	26	216,799	44	145,824	30
55 years and over.....number..	369,407	313,136	85	159,309	51	99,524	32	54,303	17
NORTH AND WEST									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	1,174,365	1,050,004	89	256,850	24	469,958	45	323,196	31
By economic class:									
Class V.....number..	389,687	348,515	89	72,666	21	182,372	52	93,477	27
Class VI.....number..	189,430	158,249	84	86,528	56	58,043	37	11,678	7
Part-time.....number..	272,619	255,283	94	36,300	14	111,679	44	107,304	42
Residential.....number..	322,629	287,957	89	59,356	21	117,864	41	110,737	38
By age of operator:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	1,121,723	1,006,294	90	244,244	24	453,128	45	308,922	31
Under 55 years.....number..	643,824	589,110	92	82,159	14	288,708	49	218,243	37
55-64 years.....number..	243,373	219,184	90	65,153	30	90,181	41	63,850	29
65 years and over.....number..	234,526	198,000	84	96,932	49	74,239	37	26,829	14
SOUTH									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	2,056,360	1,850,229	90	863,570	47	761,094	41	225,565	12
By economic class:									
Class V.....number..	529,964	480,520	91	190,351	40	237,320	49	52,849	11
Class VI.....number..	536,924	466,285	87	329,586	71	121,290	26	15,409	3
Part-time.....number..	350,504	334,940	96	95,887	29	182,987	55	56,066	17
Residential.....number..	638,968	568,484	89	247,746	44	219,497	39	101,241	18
By age of operator:									
Operators reporting age.....number..	1,902,735	1,713,962	90	798,346	47	706,451	41	209,165	12
Under 55 years.....number..	1,225,120	1,124,870	92	471,545	42	504,899	45	148,426	13
55-64 years.....number..	358,981	316,220	88	157,274	50	126,550	40	32,396	10
65 years and over.....number..	318,634	272,872	86	169,527	62	75,002	27	28,343	10

FARMS AND FARM PEOPLE

About the same proportion of white-operator families in the South reported family incomes of less than \$1,000 as was the case for all operators of low-production farms. Two-fifths of the white-operator families in the South reported incomes below \$1,000 compared with nearly three-fourths of the nonwhite families. Nearly a third of the families on low-production farms in the North and West, only 15 percent of the white operators in the South, and almost none of the nonwhite operators reported incomes from all sources of \$3,000 or more.

THE ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION OF FARMS

In the economic classification, farms with sales of \$250 to \$1,199 were separated into two groups, class VI commercial farms and part-time farms. Separation was based on the amount of off-farm work reported by the farm operator and whether income from off-farm sources exceeded farm sales. These farms were classified as part-time if the operator worked off farm 100 days or more, or if family income from off-farm sources was greater than sales of farm products. Those on which the operator did not work off farms as much as 100 days, and income from off-farm sources was of less importance than farm sales, were classified as class VI commercial farms.

The low-income problem is found in its most acute form among operator families on class VI farms. Total family incomes of less than \$1,000 were reported by operators on two-thirds of these farms. More than a third reported total family incomes of less than \$500. Less than 10 percent reported as much as \$2,000.

Most (about three-fourths) of the class VI farms were located in the South. There, they appear to be concentrated in the general farming areas of the Appalachian and Ozark-Ouachita Mountains and plateaus, and throughout the cotton South. In the South, also, a higher proportion reported family incomes of under \$1,000. But wherever their location, incomes of operator families on most of the class VI farms were extremely low. The criteria employed in the farm classification resulted in segregating a group of farms upon which the operator families were dependent primarily upon gross farm sales of less than \$1,200. Of all farm-operator families in the United States with total family incomes of less than \$1,000, a third were on class VI commercial farms.

On the other hand, most (nearly 80 percent) of the operator families on part-time farms had incomes from all sources that exceeded \$1,000. Over a fourth reported incomes of \$3,000 or more. Only 10 percent of all farm-operator families with total incomes of less than \$1,000 were on part-time farms.

Over half of the part-time farms are found in the South. But of those with family incomes of less than \$1,000, nearly three-fourths were in the South. Less than 15 percent of the families on part-time farms in the North and West reported incomes of under \$1,000 compared with nearly 30 percent in the South.

The larger volume of farm production for sale on class V commercial farms ranging from \$1,200 to \$2,499, resulted in somewhat higher family incomes. But almost a third of the operator families on these farms, as well, reported total incomes of under \$1,000; nearly two-thirds reported less than \$2,000. Slightly less than 60 percent of the class V commercial farms were found in the South, but nearly three-fourths of those with operator-family incomes under \$1,000 and two-thirds of those with incomes under \$2,000 were found in the South. Two-fifths of the operator families on class V farms in the South reported incomes of less than \$1,000 as compared with a fifth in the North and West.

Farms with less than \$250 value of farm products sold were termed residential in the economic classification of farms. The size of the farm business on these farms was so small they were considered to be used primarily for residential purposes. A high proportion of the farm operators worked off the farm 100 days or more, and on most of these farms off-farm income exceeded income from farm sales. There is apparently considerable mixture as to the types of situations represented by operator families on these farms. Incomes cover a fairly broad range. A little more than a third reported incomes of less than \$1,000; nearly a fifth reported incomes of less than \$500. In contrast, a fourth reported in-

comes of \$3,000 and over. These variations reflect the varying range of amounts of off-farm income.

Of the approximately 1 million residential farms, two-thirds are in the South. Over two-fifths of the operator families on these farms in the South reported incomes of less than \$1,000 compared with only a fifth of those in the North and West. On the other hand, nearly two-fifths of the operator families on residential farms in the North and West reported incomes of \$3,000 or more compared with less than a fifth in the South. (See chapter 3 for a more complete discussion of farm-operator family income and averages per farm by economic class of farm.)

AGE OF OPERATOR

Operators of low-production farms were somewhat older on the average, than all farm operators. The average age for all farm operators in the country in 1950 was 48.3 years compared with an average age of 49.6 years for operators of low-production farms. But age of operator varied considerably among the economic classes of low-production farms. The average ages and proportions of operators in different age groups are shown below.

Economic class	Operators reporting age				Average age
	Total	Under 55	55 to 64	65 and over	
	<i>Number (ooo)</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Years</i>
All farms.....	5,051	66	19	15	48.3
Low-production farms.....	3,024	62	20	18	49.6
Class V.....	868	66	19	15	47.7
Class VI.....	677	52	23	25	51.6
Part-time....	586	71	17	12	47.8
Residential..	893	59	20	21	51.1

Although operators of class VI and residential farm operators were older than the average for all farm operators, operators of part-time farms and class V farms were somewhat younger. A fourth of the operators of class VI farms and a fifth of those on residential farms were 65 years of age or older. Only 12 percent of the operators of part-time farms were 65 or older.

The proportion of the operators of low-production farms who were 65 years old and over was slightly higher in the North and West than in the South--about 20 percent in the North and West compared with 17 percent in the South. In the South about two-thirds and in the North and West about three-fifths of the operators of low-production farms were under 55 years old.

Total income of operator families was closely associated with the age of the operator. The older operators reported smaller incomes. The age of operators of low-production farms by income groups were as follows:

Operator family income from all sources	Operators reporting age			
	Total	Under 55	55 to 64	65 and over
Low-production farms:	<i>Number (ooo)</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>	<i>Percent of total</i>
Operators reporting income.....	2,720	63	20	17
Under \$1,000.....	1,042	53	21	26
\$1,000 to \$2,999.....	1,160	68	19	13
\$3,000 and over.....	518	71	18	11

Of the operators of low-production farms that reported incomes of less than \$1,000, more than a fourth were 65 years of age or older. Operators in this age group comprised only a tenth of those reporting family incomes of \$3,000 or more. In contrast, the proportion of operators under 55 increased from slightly over half of the lower income group to nearly three-fourths of the group reporting incomes of \$3,000 or more.

Altogether, more than half of the operators of low-production farms over 65 years of age reported family incomes of less than

\$1,000; only about 10 percent reported as much as \$3,000 family income. In contrast, two-thirds of the operators under 55 had incomes in excess of \$1,000. Over a fifth reported as much as \$3,000 total family income. Nevertheless, over half a million operators on low-production farms under 55 years of age, reported family incomes from all sources of less than \$1,000.

OFF-FARM WORK

Lower family incomes reported by the older operators is explained, in part, by the relatively limited amount of off-farm work done by these operators. A little over 10 percent reported 100 or more days of off-farm work. (See table 3.) In contrast, 100 or more days of off-farm work was reported by over two-fifths of the operators under 55 years of age.

The extent of the operator's off-farm work was closely associated with total family income. Of the operators with family incomes under \$1,000, only 10 percent reported 100 or more days off-farm work. Over 70 percent of those with incomes of \$3,000 or more reported off-farm work of 100 days or more. Most (about 85 percent) of the operators who reported 100 or more days work off farm reported total family incomes in excess of \$1,000. Less than half of those who worked off farm less than 100 days reported as much as \$1,000 family income.

Fewer operators of low-production farms in the South than in the North and West worked off farm 100 or more days—only 28 percent of those in the South as compared with 45 percent in the North and West combined. (See table 4.) Of those working 100 or more days in the North and West, 95 percent had incomes in excess of \$1,000 and 50 percent had incomes of \$3,000 or over. In the South about 80 percent of those working off farm 100 or more days reported family incomes of \$1,000 or more, but only a little over a fourth reported as much as \$3,000 family income.

However, total family incomes of operators in the North and West were not as dependent upon off-farm work of the operator as were those in the South. Of the operators who did not work off farm as much as 100 days, three-fifths of those in the North and West reported incomes in excess of \$1,000 compared with two-fifths in the South. About 14 percent of those in the North reported family incomes of \$3,000 or more compared with 6 percent in the South.

OCCUPATION OF FARM OPERATOR

Most of the farm operators who did not work off farm as much as 100 days reported their occupation as farmer. The Census question on occupation related to the work performed the week preceding the enumeration. In case the operator worked both on the farm and at an off-farm occupation, the occupation reported was that which the farm operator considered as his major occupation. Therefore, most of those who worked off farm less than 100 days,

and those whose income from off-farm work was of less importance than income from the farm business, were likely to be classified as farmers. About 90 percent of the operators working off farm less than 100 days reported their occupation as farmer.

Most (about three-fourths) of the operators who worked off farm 100 or more days reported their off-farm occupation. Nearly all of these reported a nonfarm occupation. Farm labor on other farms was reported by only 2 percent of the operators who worked off farm 100 or more days. However, the proportion reporting the major occupation as farm labor on other farms was slightly higher among the operators with total family income of under \$1,000.

The occupation reported varied considerably by family income. Among the operators that reported family income of less than \$1,000, farming was the most frequently reported occupation regardless of the amount of off-farm work. Where the reported family income was \$3,000 or more, more than two-thirds of the operators reported a nonfarm occupation.

By age groups, more of the older operators reported their occupation as farmers and farm managers. Occupations reported by operators of low-production farms by age groups were as follows:

Economic class and age	Operators reporting occupation			
	Total	Farm owners and managers	Farm laborers and foremen	Nonfarm occupations
Low-production farms:	Number	Percent of total	Percent of total	Percent of total
Class V commercial.....	864,091	86	2	12
Class VI commercial.....	647,675	91	3	5
Part-time.....	561,082	48	3	49
Residential.....	768,910	39	4	57
Operators reporting age.....	2,670,324	67	3	30
Under 55.....	1,775,694	62	3	35
55 to 64.....	516,141	70	2	28
65 and over.....	378,489	86	3	11

The larger proportion of older operators reporting their occupation as farmers is to be expected since fewer of them worked off farm 100 or more days. Only 11 percent reported a nonfarm occupation—about the same proportion that reported 100 or more days of off-farm work and that reported total family incomes of \$3,000 or more. Over a third of the operators under 55 years of age reported a nonfarm occupation. This is consistent with the greater amounts of off-farm work reported by these operators.

Nearly 90 percent of the small commercial farm operators reported their occupation as farmer. In the other 10 percent, two-thirds reported a nonfarm occupation and a third reported the major occupation as farm labor on other farms. In contrast,

Table 3.—FAMILY INCOME OF FARM OPERATORS OF LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS, BY DAYS OF OFF-FARM WORK BY FARM OPERATORS, BY AGE OF OPERATOR; FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Days of off-farm work and age of operator	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators by family income							
		Total		Under \$1,000		\$1,000-\$2,999		\$3,000 and over	
		Number	Percent of all farm operators	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
Low-production farms, total.....number..	3,230,725	2,907,233	90	1,120,420	39	1,231,052	42	548,761	19
By days farm operator worked off farm in 1949 and age of operator:									
Operators reporting days worked.....number..	3,146,896	2,828,521	90	1,093,585	39	1,203,145	43	531,791	19
Under 100 days.....operators reporting..	2,095,892	1,841,411	88	960,348	52	728,850	40	152,213	8
Reporting age.....operators reporting..	1,961,951	1,723,240	88	896,193	52	682,118	40	144,929	8
Under 55 years.....operators reporting..	1,048,103	939,402	90	456,742	49	418,453	45	64,207	7
55-64 years.....operators reporting..	423,444	368,216	87	190,358	52	140,730	38	37,128	10
65 years and over.....operators reporting..	490,404	415,622	85	249,093	60	122,935	30	43,594	10
Not reporting age.....number of operators..	133,941	118,171	88	64,155	54	46,732	40	7,284	6
100 days or more.....operators reporting..	1,051,004	987,110	94	133,237	13	474,295	48	379,578	38
Reporting age.....operators reporting..	995,137	937,030	94	124,298	13	452,186	48	360,546	38
Under 55 years.....operators reporting..	787,134	744,561	95	90,646	12	357,779	48	296,136	40
55 years and over.....operators reporting..	208,003	192,469	93	33,652	17	94,407	49	64,410	33
Not reporting age.....number of operators..	55,867	50,080	90	6,939	16	22,109	44	19,032	38
Operators not reporting days worked.....number..	83,829	71,712	86	26,835	37	27,907	39	16,970	24

FARMS AND FARM PEOPLE

Table 4.—FAMILY INCOME OF FARM OPERATORS OF LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS, BY OCCUPATION AND DAYS OF WORK OFF THE FARM BY FARM OPERATORS, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS; AND BY ECONOMIC CLASS OF FARM, FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Region, economic class, days of off-farm work, and occupation of operator	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators by family income							
		Total reporting		Under \$1,000		\$1,000-\$2,999		\$3,000 and over	
		Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
UNITED STATES									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	3,230,725	2,900,233	90	1,120,420	39	1,231,052	42	548,761	19
By occupation of operator:									
Operators reporting occupation.....number..	2,838,360	2,610,529	92	956,160	37	1,138,145	44	516,224	20
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	1,903,913	1,726,708	91	826,128	48	737,773	43	162,807	9
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	80,562	70,059	87	35,779	51	27,455	39	6,825	10
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	853,885	813,762	95	94,253	12	372,917	46	346,592	43
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	392,365	289,704	74	164,260	57	92,907	32	32,537	11
By days farm operators worked off farm in 1949 and occupation:									
Operators reporting work off farm.....number..	3,146,896	2,828,521	90	1,093,585	39	1,203,145	43	531,791	19
Under 100 days.....number..	2,095,892	1,841,411	88	960,348	52	728,850	40	152,213	8
Reporting occupation.....number..	1,773,114	1,595,380	90	810,318	51	655,922	41	129,140	8
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	1,608,392	1,448,020	90	741,973	51	596,911	41	109,136	8
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	56,439	46,981	83	28,420	60	14,871	32	3,690	8
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	108,283	100,379	93	39,925	40	44,140	44	16,314	16
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	322,778	246,031	76	150,030	61	72,928	30	23,073	9
100 days or more.....number..	1,051,004	987,110	94	133,237	13	474,295	48	379,578	38
Reporting occupation.....number..	999,841	955,544	96	125,333	13	456,946	48	373,265	39
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	253,438	239,769	95	67,853	28	122,441	51	49,475	21
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	22,543	21,498	95	6,305	29	12,058	56	3,135	15
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	723,860	694,277	96	51,175	7	322,447	46	320,655	46
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	51,163	31,566	62	7,904	25	17,349	55	6,313	20
Classes V and VI farms.....number..	1,646,005	1,453,569	88	681,131	47	599,025	41	173,413	12
By occupation of operator:									
Operators reporting occupation.....number..	1,511,897	1,361,025	90	625,202	46	568,356	42	167,467	12
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	1,333,315	1,199,918	90	587,156	49	508,936	42	103,826	9
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	39,451	32,618	83	18,420	56	11,045	34	3,153	10
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	139,131	128,489	92	19,626	15	48,375	38	60,488	47
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	134,108	92,544	69	55,929	60	30,669	33	5,946	6
By days farm operator worked off farm in 1949:									
Operators reporting work off farm.....number..	1,599,169	1,413,065	88	665,862	47	581,126	41	166,077	12
Under 100 days.....number..	1,439,299	1,266,981	88	650,965	51	517,356	41	98,660	8
100 days or more.....number..	159,870	146,084	91	14,897	10	63,770	44	67,417	46
Part-time and residential farms.....number..	1,584,720	1,446,664	91	439,289	30	632,027	44	375,348	26
By occupation of operator:									
Operators reporting occupation.....number..	1,326,463	1,249,504	94	330,958	26	569,789	46	348,757	28
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	570,598	526,790	92	238,972	45	228,837	43	58,981	11
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	41,111	37,441	91	17,359	46	16,410	44	3,672	10
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	714,754	685,273	96	74,627	11	324,542	47	286,104	42
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	258,257	197,160	76	108,331	55	62,238	32	26,591	13
By days farm operator worked off farm in 1949:									
Operators reporting work off farm.....number..	1,547,727	1,415,456	91	427,723	30	622,019	44	365,714	26
Under 100 days.....number..	656,593	574,430	87	309,383	54	211,494	37	53,553	9
100 days or more.....number..	891,134	841,026	94	118,340	14	410,525	49	312,161	37
NORTH AND WEST									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	1,174,365	1,050,004	89	256,850	24	469,958	45	323,196	31
By occupation of operator:									
Operators reporting occupation.....number..	1,046,611	963,214	92	215,303	22	438,377	46	309,534	32
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	603,852	546,359	90	189,574	35	267,867	49	88,918	16
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	25,332	21,141	83	5,797	27	10,097	48	5,247	25
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	417,427	395,714	95	19,932	5	160,413	41	215,369	54
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	127,754	86,790	68	41,547	48	31,581	36	13,662	16
By days farm operator worked off farm in 1949:									
Operators reporting work off farm.....number..	1,134,875	1,018,423	90	245,795	24	459,409	45	313,219	31
Under 100 days.....number..	627,788	547,723	87	221,595	40	250,373	46	75,755	14
100 days or more.....number..	507,087	470,700	93	24,200	5	209,036	44	237,464	50
SOUTH									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	2,056,360	1,850,229	90	863,570	47	761,094	41	225,565	12
By occupation of operator:									
Operators reporting occupation.....number..	1,791,749	1,647,315	92	740,857	45	699,768	42	206,690	13
Farmers and farm managers.....number..	1,300,061	1,180,349	91	636,554	54	469,906	40	73,889	6
Farm laborers and foremen.....number..	55,230	48,918	89	29,982	61	17,358	35	1,578	3
Nonfarm occupation.....number..	436,458	418,048	96	74,321	18	212,504	51	131,223	31
Operators not reporting occupation.....number..	264,611	202,914	77	122,713	60	61,326	30	18,875	9
By days farm operator worked off farm in 1949:									
Operators reporting work off farm.....number..	2,012,021	1,810,098	90	847,790	47	743,736	41	218,572	12
Under 100 days.....number..	1,468,104	1,293,688	88	738,753	57	478,477	37	76,458	6
100 days or more.....number..	543,917	516,410	95	109,037	21	265,259	51	142,114	28

over half of the operators of part-time and residential farms reported an occupation other than farmer. Less than 3 percent reported their occupation as farm laborer.

TENURE OF FARM OPERATOR

Most of the low-production farms were owner-operated. Of all farms that produced products for sale valued at less than \$2,500, three-fourths were operated by owners, part-owners, or managers. Only a fourth were tenant-operated. The proportion of tenancy was higher among the small commercial farms. For the country as a whole, a third of the operators of small commercial farms were tenants; but only 15 percent of the operators of part-time and residential farms were tenants. (See table 5.)

In the South a third of the low-production farms were tenant-operated compared with 10 percent in the North and West. Half of the small commercial farms and almost a fourth of the part-time and residential farms in the South were tenant-operated. In contrast, 15 percent of the small commercial and less than 10 percent of the part-time and residential farms in the North and West were tenant-operated.

There was a close association of tenancy with low family income. Over half of the tenant operators reported family incomes of less than \$1,000 as compared with about a third of the owner operators. Only 7 percent of the tenant operators reported incomes of \$3,000 or more compared with a fourth of the owner operators.

In comparing family incomes of owner operators with those of tenant operators it must be kept in mind that somewhat different types of farm income are represented. The tenant pays rent to a landlord for use of land and buildings. For him, income from the farm is largely a return for management and labor. Represented in the farm income of the owner operator, on the other hand, is the return on capital invested in land and buildings after such fixed costs as depreciation, taxes, and insurance have been taken into account.

Three-fourths of the operators of low-production farms in the South were white. The percentage of white operators varied by tenure from 87 percent among owners to 53 percent among tenant operators. More than 85 percent of the operators of part-time farms were white, and only slightly less of the operators of residential farms. Many more of the operators of small commercial farms—a fourth of the operators of class V farms and over a third of the operators of class VI farms—were nonwhite. Nearly half of all tenants in the South were nonwhite compared with a little over 10 percent of the owners, part-owners, and managers.

FACTORS AFFECTING OFF-FARM WORK

Adequacy of family incomes on small farms is dependent largely upon off-farm income. Off-farm work of the operator appears to be the most important source. Nearly 90 percent of the operators of low-production farms who worked off farm 100 or more days reported family incomes in excess of \$1,000, and almost two-fifths reported \$3,000 or more. Of the operators not working off farms as much as 100 days, over half reported total family incomes amounting to less than \$1,000; only 8 percent reported as much as \$3,000.

Capabilities for off-farm work are influenced by many factors. Few are measurable in quantitative terms. Migration from farms to nonfarm areas or to areas where off-farm jobs are available is a highly selective process. Individual attributes such as special skills, health, or initiative are undoubtedly important.

It is shown in this report that age is an important factor relative to the operator working off farm. Most of the operators who worked off farm 100 or more days were under 55 years of age. Very few operators 65 years or older worked off farm and only about a fourth of those 55 to 64 reported as much as 100 days work off farm. The limitations imposed by age upon capabilities for many kinds of work are generally recognized. For older operators, a change of occupation or the movement to

areas of better employment would probably be more difficult. Also, many of the older operators may be partially retired and not looking for work.

However, when off-farm work of other family members is taken into consideration, there is an interesting counterpart. About the same proportion of operators 65 years and over reported family members working off farm as was reported by younger operators. (See table 6.) Data are not available on the comparative amounts of work involved. Lower family incomes of many older operators would indicate that off-farm work of both operator and family members is likely to be limited to fewer days and consequently provide less income.

A substantially higher proportion of older operators reported other income (income in addition to that received from the sale of farm products). Over a third of the operators 65 and over reported other sources of income compared with slightly less than a fourth of all operators and a little over a fifth of the operators under 55. And in the South, over two-fifths of the older operators reported other income. This probably indicates the greater degree of dependency of the older operators upon pensions, allotments, and incomes from rents and other investments. From data on total family income it appears, however, that amounts received were in many cases small.

For the United States as a whole, a third of the operators 65 and older reported other income exceeding farm sales; the proportion was less for the younger operators. In the South nearly two-fifths of the operators 65 and over reported other income exceeding farm sales. In the North and West only a fourth of the operators reported other income exceeding income from farming and there was little variation by age groups.

EDUCATION OF FARM OPERATOR

Nearly all farm operators (98 percent) reported that they had attended school. Completion of elementary grades was reported by three-fourths, an additional fifth completed high school, and about 1 out of 20 attended college.

Work off farm appeared to be associated with education. Only a fifth of the farm operators in the United States that did not complete the elementary grades in school worked off farm 100 or more days. (See table 7.) In comparison, a fourth of those reporting completion of elementary grades and a third of those completing high school reported 100 or more days of off-farm work.

The relationship between education and the amount of work off-farm is even more pronounced for operators of part-time and residential farms than for all farm operators. The comparative data for part-time and residential farms are given below:

Education of operator	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators reporting as to work off farm			
		Total	By days of off-farm work		
			None	Under 100 days	100 or more days
Part-time and residential farms.....number..	1,584,720	1,547,727	Percent of total 31	Percent of total 11	Percent of total 58
Operators reporting—					
Years of schooling....	1,548,701	1,513,807	31	11	58
Not completing school.....	746,292	732,604	39	15	46
Completing elementary school, but not high school...	583,691	570,002	26	9	65
Completing high school or more....	218,718	211,201	17	3	80

In relating the off-farm work and educational characteristics of operators of part-time and residential farms, two points deserve emphasis. First, operators who have completed more years of schooling are more likely to work at off-farm jobs. Over 80 percent of those that reported the completion of high school reported off-farm work as compared with about 60 percent

FARMS AND FARM PEOPLE

Table 5.—FAMILY INCOME OF FARM OPERATORS OF LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS, BY TENURE OF FARM OPERATOR BY ECONOMIC CLASS OF FARM; FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Region, economic class, and color or tenure of operator	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators by family income							
		Total reporting		Under \$1,000		\$1,000-\$2,999		\$3,000 and over	
		Number	Percent of all farm operators	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
UNITED STATES									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	3,230,725	2,900,233	90	1,120,420	39	1,231,052	42	546,761	19
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	2,424,011	2,171,371	90	715,531	33	954,659	44	501,181	23
All tenants.....number..	806,714	728,862	90	404,889	56	276,393	38	47,580	7
Classes V and VI farms.....number..	1,646,005	1,453,569	88	681,131	47	599,025	41	173,413	12
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	1,097,728	967,367	88	386,360	40	434,689	45	146,318	15
All tenants.....number..	548,277	486,202	89	294,771	61	164,336	34	27,095	6
Class V farms.....number..	919,651	829,035	90	419,692	32	419,692	51	146,326	18
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	617,692	552,849	90	129,742	23	300,062	54	123,045	22
All tenants.....number..	301,959	276,186	91	133,275	48	119,630	43	23,281	8
Class VI farms.....number..	726,354	624,534	86	418,114	67	179,333	29	27,087	4
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	480,036	414,518	86	256,618	62	134,627	32	23,273	6
All tenants.....number..	246,318	210,016	85	161,496	77	44,706	21	3,814	2
Part-time and residential farms.....number..	1,584,720	1,446,664	91	439,289	30	632,027	44	375,348	26
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	1,326,283	1,204,004	91	329,171	27	519,970	43	354,863	29
All tenants.....number..	258,437	242,660	94	110,118	45	112,057	46	20,485	8
Part-time farms.....number..	623,123	590,223	95	132,187	22	294,666	50	163,370	28
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	514,573	485,359	94	95,726	20	235,718	49	153,915	32
All tenants.....number..	108,550	104,864	97	36,461	35	58,948	56	9,455	9
Residential farms.....number..	961,597	856,441	89	307,102	36	337,361	39	211,978	25
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	811,710	718,645	89	233,445	32	284,252	40	200,948	28
All tenants.....number..	149,887	137,796	92	73,657	53	53,109	39	11,030	8
NORTH AND WEST									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	1,174,365	1,050,004	89	256,850	24	469,958	45	323,196	31
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	1,053,494	935,975	89	225,731	24	412,010	44	298,234	32
All tenants.....number..	120,871	114,029	94	31,119	27	57,948	51	24,962	22
Classes V and VI farms.....number..	579,117	506,764	88	161,194	32	240,415	47	105,155	21
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	502,972	435,360	87	140,624	32	201,948	46	92,788	21
All tenants.....number..	76,145	71,404	94	20,570	29	38,467	54	12,367	17
Part-time and residential farms.....number..	595,248	543,240	91	95,656	18	229,543	42	218,041	40
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	550,522	500,615	91	85,107	17	210,062	42	205,446	41
All tenants.....number..	44,726	42,625	95	10,549	25	19,481	46	12,595	30
SOUTH									
Low-production farms, total.....number..	2,056,360	1,850,229	90	863,570	47	761,094	41	225,565	12
By color of operator:									
White operators.....number..	1,557,773	1,409,502	90	547,660	39	642,589	46	219,253	16
Nonwhite operators.....number..	498,587	440,727	88	315,910	72	118,505	27	6,312	1
By color and tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	1,370,517	1,235,396	90	489,800	40	542,649	44	202,947	16
White.....number..	1,193,471	1,077,812	90	384,971	36	494,102	46	198,739	18
Nonwhite.....number..	177,046	157,584	89	104,829	67	48,547	31	4,208	3
All tenants.....number..	685,843	614,833	90	373,770	61	218,445	36	22,618	4
White.....number..	364,302	331,690	91	162,689	49	148,487	45	20,514	6
Nonwhite.....number..	321,541	283,143	88	211,081	75	69,958	25	2,104	1
Classes V and VI farms.....number..	1,066,888	946,805	89	519,937	55	358,610	38	68,258	7
By color of operator:									
White operators.....number..	737,302	659,825	89	302,544	46	291,127	44	66,154	10
Nonwhite operators.....number..	329,586	286,980	87	217,393	76	67,483	24	2,104	1
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	594,756	532,007	89	245,736	46	232,741	44	53,530	10
All tenants.....number..	472,132	414,798	88	274,201	66	125,869	30	14,728	4
Part-time and residential farms.....number..	989,472	903,424	91	343,633	38	402,484	45	157,307	17
By color of operator:									
White operators.....number..	820,471	749,677	91	245,116	33	351,462	47	153,099	20
Nonwhite operators.....number..	169,001	153,747	91	98,517	64	51,022	33	4,208	3
By tenure of operator:									
Owners, part owners, and managers.....number..	775,761	703,389	91	244,064	35	309,908	44	149,417	21
All tenants.....number..	213,711	200,035	94	99,569	50	92,576	46	7,890	4

LOW-PRODUCTION FARMS

Table 6.—FARM OPERATORS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO OTHER MEMBERS OF FAMILY HAVING OTHER INCOME, INCOME OTHER THAN FROM THE FARM OPERATED, AND RELATIONSHIP OF OTHER INCOME OF FAMILY TO VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, BY AGE OF FARM OPERATOR, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Region and item	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators reporting age						
		Total	Under 55 years		55-64 years		65 years and over	
			Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
UNITED STATES								
Total number of farm operators.....	5,380,127	5,051,337	3,355,432	66	951,266	19	744,639	15
With other members of family with nonfarm job or business or working on other farms in 1949.....								
operators reporting..	985,558	929,504	574,418	62	216,694	23	138,392	15
operators reporting none..	4,162,830	3,926,818	2,670,652	68	685,469	17	570,697	15
operators not reporting..	231,739	195,015	110,362	57	49,103	25	35,550	18
With any income other than from farm operated.....								
operators reporting..	1,305,947	1,233,563	741,194	60	226,040	18	266,329	22
operators reporting none..	3,851,036	3,626,111	2,497,521	69	678,482	19	450,108	12
operators not reporting..	223,144	191,663	116,717	61	46,744	24	28,202	15
With other income exceeding value of farm products sold.....								
operators reporting..	1,520,728	1,432,014	951,327	66	265,245	19	215,442	15
With value of farm products sold greater than other income.....								
operators reporting..	1,859,497	1,756,453	1,177,330	67	310,647	18	268,476	15
With relationship of other income to value of farm products not reported.....								
number of operators..	1,999,902	1,862,870	1,226,775	66	375,374	20	260,721	14
NORTH AND WEST								
Total number of farm operators.....	2,728,910	2,597,098	1,715,766	66	498,680	19	382,652	15
With other members of family with nonfarm job or business or working on other farms in 1949.....								
operators reporting..	484,951	460,180	280,534	61	124,240	27	55,406	12
operators reporting none..	2,108,478	2,016,595	1,368,528	68	342,695	17	305,372	15
operators not reporting..	135,481	120,323	66,704	55	31,745	26	21,874	18
With any income other than from farm operated.....								
operators reporting..	595,301	572,859	349,746	61	112,668	20	110,445	19
operators reporting none..	1,999,453	1,902,473	1,295,375	68	355,203	19	251,895	13
operators not reporting..	134,156	121,766	70,645	58	30,809	25	20,312	17
With other income exceeding value of farm products sold.....								
operators reporting..	659,130	629,887	423,373	67	126,348	20	80,166	13
With value of farm products sold greater than other income.....								
operators reporting..	999,617	953,724	628,974	66	177,597	19	147,153	15
With relationship of other income to value of farm products not reported.....								
number of operators..	1,070,163	1,013,487	663,419	65	194,735	19	155,333	15
SOUTH								
Total number of farm operators.....	2,651,217	2,454,239	1,639,666	67	452,586	18	361,987	15
With other members of family with nonfarm job or business or working on other farms in 1949.....								
operators reporting..	500,607	469,324	293,884	63	92,454	20	82,986	18
operators reporting none..	2,054,352	1,910,223	1,302,124	68	342,774	18	265,325	14
operators not reporting..	96,258	74,692	43,658	58	17,358	23	13,676	18
With any income other than from farm operated.....								
operators reporting..	710,646	660,704	391,448	59	113,372	17	155,884	24
operators reporting none..	1,851,583	1,723,638	1,202,146	70	323,279	19	198,213	11
operators not reporting..	88,988	69,897	46,072	66	15,935	23	7,890	11
With other income exceeding value of farm products sold.....								
operators reporting..	861,598	802,127	527,954	66	138,897	17	135,276	17
With value of farm products sold greater than other income.....								
operators reporting..	859,880	802,729	548,356	68	133,050	17	121,323	15
With relationship of other income to value of farm products not reported.....								
number of operators..	929,739	849,383	563,356	66	180,639	21	105,388	12

of those that did not complete the elementary grades in school. Second, operators with more schooling are likely to work a greater number of days off the farm. Of the operators who worked off farm, nearly all of those who completed high school worked 100 or more days. Of those who did not complete the elementary grades, only about 3 out of 4 worked as much as 100 days.

Those who worked off farm 100 or more days usually had a year-round job. Most of the operators working off farm 100 or more days worked 200 days or more. In contrast, work off farm less than 100 days is likely to represent seasonal jobs, frequently of a less skilled nature. The greater amounts of off-farm work reported by operators with more years of schooling probably represents the somewhat higher skills expected to be found among these operators. But education is also related to age. The younger farm operators have had more years of schooling. And more of the younger operators worked at off-farm jobs.

Age and education would seem to have a joint influence upon amount of off-farm work.

While educational levels of farm operators were somewhat higher in the North and West than in the South, the relationship between education and off-farm work of the operator in each region was about the same as for the United States as a whole.

KIND OF ROAD AND DISTANCE TO TRADING CENTER

The kind of road on which the farm was located and the distance to the trading center most frequently used were apparently related to the amount the operator worked off the farm. More of the operators living on hard-surfaced roads worked off farm than those living on gravel or dirt roads—44 percent of those living on hard-surfaced roads compared with 37 percent of those on other types of roads. Nearly a third of those living on hard-surfaced roads worked off farm 100 or

FARMS AND FARM PEOPLE

Table 7.—SCHOOLING OF FARM OPERATORS, KIND OF ROAD ON WHICH FARM IS LOCATED, AND DISTANCE TO TRADING CENTER, BY NUMBER OF DAYS OF WORK OFF FARM BY THE FARM OPERATOR, FOR THE UNITED STATES AND REGIONS: 1950

[Data are based upon a sample. For a description of the sample and a statement of reliability of data, see page 3]

Region and item	Total, all farm operators	Farm operators reporting as to work off the farm							
		Total		By days of off-farm work					
		Number	Percent of all farm operators	None		Under 100 days		100 days or more	
				Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
UNITED STATES									
All farm operators.....number..	5,380,127	5,252,761	98	3,176,468	60	859,521	16	1,216,772	23
Years of schooling.....operators reporting..	5,281,934	5,159,970	98	3,119,950	60	848,693	16	1,191,327	23
Not completing elementary school.....operators reporting..	2,227,352	2,182,816	98	1,394,303	64	370,159	17	418,354	19
Completing elementary school									
but not high school.....operators reporting..	2,178,460	2,127,382	98	1,279,903	60	343,805	16	503,674	24
Completing high school or more.....operators reporting..	876,122	849,772	97	445,744	52	134,729	16	269,299	32
Kind of road on which farm is located.....operators reporting..	5,131,627	5,027,720	98	3,044,490	61	830,236	17	1,152,994	23
Hard surface.....operators reporting..	1,638,355	1,596,484	97	892,132	56	225,685	14	478,667	30
Gravel, shell, or shale.....operators reporting..	1,785,375	1,751,896	98	1,099,001	63	305,411	17	347,484	20
Dirt or unimproved.....operators reporting..	1,707,897	1,679,340	98	1,053,357	63	299,140	18	326,843	19
Distance to trading center visited									
most frequently.....operators reporting..	5,230,510	5,122,900	98	3,102,915	61	845,122	16	1,174,863	23
Under 1 mile.....operators reporting..	390,644	386,426	99	199,675	52	60,067	16	126,684	33
1 to 4 miles.....operators reporting..	2,034,838	1,993,339	98	1,183,940	59	327,140	16	482,259	24
5 miles and over.....operators reporting..	2,805,028	2,743,135	98	1,719,300	63	457,915	17	565,920	21
NORTH AND WEST									
All farm operators.....number..	2,728,910	2,653,557	97	1,605,144	60	427,515	16	620,898	23
Years of schooling.....operators reporting..	2,680,382	2,608,853	97	1,579,848	61	422,257	16	606,748	23
Not completing elementary school.....operators reporting..	634,769	619,318	98	411,913	67	84,231	14	123,174	20
Completing elementary school									
but not high school.....operators reporting..	1,421,592	1,386,820	98	845,910	61	236,778	17	304,132	22
Completing high school or more.....operators reporting..	624,021	602,715	97	322,025	53	101,248	17	179,442	30
Kind of road on which farm is located.....operators reporting..	2,603,344	2,543,405	98	1,539,940	61	418,838	16	584,627	23
Hard surface.....operators reporting..	938,290	909,879	97	503,807	55	126,703	14	279,369	31
Gravel, shell, or shale.....operators reporting..	1,089,157	1,067,250	98	677,078	63	191,330	18	198,842	19
Dirt or unimproved.....operators reporting..	575,897	566,276	98	359,055	63	100,805	18	106,416	19
Distance to trading center visited									
most frequently.....operators reporting..	2,649,378	2,586,788	98	1,568,444	61	422,523	16	595,821	23
Under 1 mile.....operators reporting..	174,392	171,752	98	77,826	45	26,774	16	67,152	39
1 to 4 miles.....operators reporting..	1,025,373	1,003,491	98	593,143	59	161,976	16	248,372	25
5 miles and over.....operators reporting..	1,449,613	1,411,545	97	897,475	64	233,773	17	280,297	20
SOUTH									
All farm operators.....number..	2,651,217	2,599,204	98	1,571,324	60	432,006	17	595,874	23
Years of schooling.....operators reporting..	2,601,552	2,551,117	98	1,540,102	60	426,436	17	584,579	23
Not completing elementary school.....operators reporting..	1,592,583	1,563,498	98	982,390	63	285,928	18	295,180	19
Completing elementary school									
but not high school.....operators reporting..	756,868	740,562	98	433,993	59	107,027	14	199,542	27
Completing high school or more.....operators reporting..	252,101	247,057	98	123,719	50	33,481	14	89,857	36
Kind of road on which farm is located.....operators reporting..	2,528,283	2,484,315	98	1,504,550	61	411,398	17	568,367	23
Hard surface.....operators reporting..	700,065	686,605	98	388,325	57	98,982	14	199,298	29
Gravel, shell, or shale.....operators reporting..	696,218	684,646	98	421,923	62	114,081	17	148,642	22
Dirt or unimproved.....operators reporting..	1,132,000	1,113,064	98	694,302	62	198,335	18	220,427	20
Distance to trading center visited									
most frequently.....operators reporting..	2,581,132	2,536,112	98	1,534,471	61	422,599	17	579,042	23
Under 1 mile.....operators reporting..	216,252	214,674	99	121,849	57	33,293	16	59,532	28
1 to 4 miles.....operators reporting..	1,009,465	989,848	98	590,797	60	165,164	17	233,887	24
5 miles and over.....operators reporting..	1,355,415	1,331,590	98	821,825	62	224,142	17	285,623	21

more days compared with only a fifth of those living on gravel or dirt roads.

Distance to the trading center most frequently used is not always a good measure of the farm's proximity to town or to a place of nonfarm employment. The trading center may be a nearby general store, or, in some cases, it may not be the town or city nearest the farm. However, distance to trading center probably provides a general indication of the distance to nonfarm business activity.

A third of the operators living less than 1 mile from the trading center worked off farm 100 or more days. Off-farm work of operators living greater distances from the trading center amounted to fewer days out of the year. Only a fourth of those living 1 to 4 miles and a fifth of those living 5 or more miles from the trading center reported 100 or more days of off-farm work.

The off-farm work of both the operator and family members is likely to be conditioned by the relative convenience in commuting to places of nonfarm employment. All-weather roads and nearness to the job are important. However, in analyzing the relationships shown above, it would be well to take into consideration some of the selective factors involved. Operators who

work off farm tend to be concentrated in areas of industrial development and near towns and cities. In these localities, more of the rural roads are likely to be hard-surfaced. Also the operators who work off farm include some who moved into the particular area because of better job opportunities. Many of these are likely to have selected a farm largely on the basis of convenience in commuting to an off-farm job.

SUMMARY

Low family incomes appear to be a chronic problem among many operator-families on small farms. Three-fifths, or over 3 million, of the farms in the United States in 1949 produced farm products for sale valued at less than \$2,500. Many of the operator families on these low-production farms were dependent entirely upon this income for family living expenses, after the deduction of cash farm-operating costs. For others, the farm is largely a place to live and provides only a supplementary source of income. They depend largely upon off-farm sources of income. But even when farm and off-farm incomes of operator and family members are combined, total cash income in 1949 was often small. Two-fifths reported a family income of less than \$1,000; more than 80 percent reported less than \$3,000.

Altogether, nearly 1.4 million farm-operator families in the United States reported total income from all sources amounting to less than \$1,000 in 1949. Nearly 85 percent of these were on low-production farms; nearly three-fourths were in the South.

The operators who reported family incomes of less than \$1,000 were somewhat older than all farm operators. In more than a fourth of the cases the operator was 65 years or older. However, three-fourths of a million were under 65, and most of these were under 55 years old. The operator families were slightly smaller, on the average, than those reporting larger incomes. Also, fewer families reported children under 18. However, children under 18 were reported by nearly two-fifths of these families. A fairly high proportion of the operators reporting family incomes of less than \$1,000 were tenants and, in the South, nearly two-fifths were nonwhite. More than 85 percent gave their occupation as farmers. Only a tenth worked off farm as much as 100 days.

The economic classification of farms provides a useful framework for analysis of problems of income distribution in agriculture. It clarifies the concept of a farm and provides a good measure of the size of farm business. It is particularly useful in the separation of commercial farms from part-time and residential units.

The low-income problem is found in its most acute form among operator families on class VI commercial farms. Operator families on these farms were, by Census definition, dependent primarily upon sales of farm products that amounted to less than \$1,200. Total family income from all sources amounted to less

than \$1,000 on two-thirds of these farms. On class V commercial farms, families were also dependent primarily upon farm income. Operator-family incomes were somewhat higher because of the larger size of farm business, but almost a third reported total incomes of less than \$1,000.

In contrast, operator families on part-time farms were dependent largely upon off-farm sources of income. While the size of the farm business was about the same as that of class VI commercial farms, families of operators of part-time farms depended largely upon off-farm work or other non-farm income. Nearly 80 percent reported family incomes in excess of \$1,000. Over a fourth had incomes of \$3,000 or more.

A substantial proportion of the operator families on residential farms reported low cash incomes. Because of the small size of the farm business on these farms (gross farm sales amounting to less than \$250) problems confronting such operator families are probably quite different from those of families on small commercial farms. Families on these residential farms are affected less by agricultural price levels and policies, perhaps, than by conditions of nonfarm employment.

Although off-farm work of the operator appears to be a major factor affecting differences in income available to operator families on low-production farms, it is recognized that capabilities for off-farm work are conditioned by many factors. More of the younger operators and more of those with more years of schooling worked off farm 100 or more days. Also, the kind of road the farm was located on and the nearness to nonfarm business activity appeared to be influential.