

1950 CENSUS OF POPULATION

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FARM AND NONFARM POPULATION, BY STATES: 1950

(This is one of a series of reports presenting summary statistics on selected characteristics of the population for various types of areas. The figures presented here are based on advance tabulations and may differ slightly from final figures)

On April 1, 1950, the rural-farm population--about 23 million persons--constituted about 15 percent of the total population of the United States according to figures from the Seventeenth Decennial Census released today by Roy V. Peel, Director, Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. The rural-nonfarm population--about 31 million persons--represented about 21 percent of the total population; and the remaining 64 percent of the total population--about 96.5 million persons--lived in urban areas. About 48.6 percent of the total population of the South lived in urban areas, and the remaining rural population was about equally divided between farm and non-farm--25.2 and 26.2 percent, respectively. In contrast, almost four-fifths of the population of the Northeastern States lived in urban areas, and the rural-farm population constituted less than 5 percent of the total.

Among the States in which a majority of the population lived in rural areas, the proportions of the total in the rural-farm population were highest in Mississippi (50.4 percent), Arkansas (42.0 percent), and North Dakota (41.1 percent). In the most urbanized States--Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, and New Jersey--the proportions of the total population in urban areas ranged around 85 percent, and the rural-farm population in every instance comprised less than 5 percent of the total.

The rural-nonfarm population, that is, persons living in rural territory but not on farms, was the largest component of the population in two States--West Virginia in which it comprised 44.9 percent of the total and Vermont for which this percentage was 42.1.

The total farm population in 1950--23.3 million--represents a decrease of about 7 million, or 23.6 percent, from the 30.5 million in 1940. The farm population declined over the decade in every State.

Urban and rural residence.--According to the new definition that was adopted for use in the 1950 Census, the urban population comprises all persons living in (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, boroughs, and villages, (b) incorporated towns of 2,500 inhabitants or more except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin, where "towns" are simply minor civil divisions of counties, (c) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, around cities of 50,000 or more, and (d) unincorporated

places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside any urban fringe. The remaining population is classified as rural. According to the old definition, the urban population had been limited to all persons living in incorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more and in areas (usually minor civil divisions) classified as urban under special rules relating to population size and density.

The figures presented here are based on the new urban and rural definition, with the result that those for the urban and the rural-nonfarm population are not comparable with the corresponding 1940 figures based on the old definition.

Farm population--urban and rural.--The farm population for 1950, as for 1940 and 1930, includes all persons living on farms without regard to occupation. In determining farm and nonfarm residence in the 1950 Census, however, certain special groups were classified otherwise than in earlier censuses. In 1950, persons living on what might have been considered farm land were classified as nonfarm if they paid cash rent for their homes and yards only. Some persons in institutions, summer camps, "motels," and tourist camps were classified as farm residents in 1940, whereas in 1950 all such persons were classified as non-farm. For the United States as a whole, there is evidence from the Current Population Survey that the farm population in 1950 would have been reported as about 9 percent larger had the 1940 procedure been used.

Under the new urban-rural definition, the 1950 rural-farm population was only about 0.1 percent smaller than it would have been under the old definition. Thus comparability with 1940 figures on the rural-farm population is more seriously affected by the change in farm definition than by the change in the urban-rural definition.

Estimates of the population living on farms have been provided by the Current Population Survey in the years following the 1940 Census. The survey estimate for April 1950 was about 1 million higher than the 1950 Census figure. Much of this difference may be due to sampling variability in the estimates from the Current Population Survey. Differences in classification by two different sets of enumerators, however, may also have been a more important factor. These are now being analyzed by means of an examination of the returns for households enumerated both in the census and in the April 1950 survey.

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Price 5 cents

(Minus sign (-) denotes decrease. Classification by urban and rural residence is in accordance with new urban-rural definition)

Region, division, and State	Total population, 1950							Farm population			
	Total	Urban		Rural nonfarm		Rural farm		Total, 1950	Urban, 1950	Total, 1940	Per- cent change, 1940 to 1950
		Number	Per- cent of total	Number	Per- cent of total	Number	Per- cent of total				
United States.....	150,697,361	96,467,686	64.0	31,181,325	20.7	23,048,350	15.3	23,331,738	283,388	30,546,911	-23.6
REGIONS:											
Northeastern States....	39,477,986	31,373,200	79.5	6,313,525	16.0	1,791,261	4.5	1,867,115	75,854	2,410,931	-22.6
North Central States...	44,460,762	28,490,932	64.1	8,537,265	19.2	7,432,565	16.7	7,500,950	68,385	9,348,997	-19.8
The South.....	47,197,088	22,955,762	48.6	12,345,641	26.2	11,895,685	25.2	11,958,144	62,459	16,399,696	-27.1
The West.....	19,561,525	13,647,792	69.8	3,984,894	20.4	1,928,839	9.9	2,005,529	76,690	2,387,287	-16.0
NORTHEASTERN STATES:											
New England.....	9,314,453	7,101,511	76.2	1,809,842	19.4	403,100	4.3	440,402	37,302	622,621	-29.3
Middle Atlantic.....	30,163,533	24,271,689	80.5	4,503,683	14.9	1,388,161	4.6	1,426,713	38,552	1,788,310	-20.2
NORTH CENTRAL STATES:											
East North Central.....	30,399,368	21,185,713	69.7	5,510,241	18.1	3,703,414	12.2	3,748,629	45,215	4,637,740	-19.2
West North Central.....	14,061,394	7,305,219	52.0	3,027,024	21.5	3,729,151	26.5	3,752,321	23,170	4,711,257	-20.4
THE SOUTH:											
South Atlantic.....	21,182,335	10,391,163	49.1	6,158,176	29.1	4,632,996	21.9	4,657,935	24,939	6,059,841	-23.1
East South Central.....	11,477,181	4,484,771	39.1	2,944,336	25.7	4,048,074	35.3	4,065,326	17,252	5,282,844	-23.0
West South Central.....	14,537,572	8,079,828	55.6	3,243,129	22.3	3,214,615	22.1	3,234,883	20,268	5,057,011	-36.0
THE WEST:											
Mountain.....	5,074,998	2,785,888	54.9	1,430,508	28.2	858,602	16.9	876,952	18,350	1,117,708	-21.5
Pacific.....	14,486,527	10,861,904	75.0	2,554,386	17.6	1,070,237	7.4	1,128,577	58,340	1,269,579	-11.1
NEW ENGLAND:											
Maine.....	913,774	472,000	51.7	319,946	35.0	121,828	13.3	132,291	10,463	176,273	-25.0
New Hampshire.....	533,242	306,806	57.5	179,266	33.6	47,170	8.8	52,834	5,664	70,484	-25.0
Vermont.....	377,747	137,612	36.4	159,003	42.1	81,132	21.5	81,968	836	106,532	-23.1
Massachusetts.....	4,690,514	3,959,239	84.4	651,299	13.9	79,976	1.7	92,249	12,273	147,214	-37.3
Rhode Island.....	791,896	667,212	84.3	114,346	14.4	10,338	1.3	12,060	1,722	17,308	-30.3
Connecticut.....	2,007,280	1,558,642	77.6	385,982	19.2	62,656	3.1	69,000	6,344	104,810	-34.2
MIDDLE ATLANTIC:											
New York.....	14,830,192	12,682,446	85.5	1,570,092	10.6	577,654	3.9	590,796	13,142	730,453	-19.1
New Jersey.....	4,835,329	4,186,207	86.6	543,822	11.2	105,300	2.2	120,327	15,027	143,058	-15.9
Pennsylvania.....	10,498,012	7,403,036	70.5	2,389,769	22.8	705,207	6.7	715,590	10,383	914,799	-21.8
EAST NORTH CENTRAL:											
Ohio.....	7,946,627	5,578,274	70.2	1,515,265	19.1	853,088	10.7	869,865	16,777	1,088,655	-20.1
Indiana.....	3,934,224	2,357,196	59.9	909,874	23.1	667,154	17.0	670,518	3,364	816,408	-17.9
Illinois.....	8,712,176	6,759,271	77.6	1,189,709	13.7	763,196	8.8	772,521	9,325	978,907	-21.1
Michigan.....	6,371,766	4,503,084	70.7	1,173,940	18.4	694,742	10.9	703,127	8,385	870,832	-19.3
Wisconsin.....	3,434,575	1,987,888	57.9	721,453	21.0	725,234	21.1	732,598	7,364	882,938	-17.0
WEST NORTH CENTRAL:											
Minnesota.....	2,982,483	1,624,914	54.5	617,770	20.7	739,799	24.8	745,666	5,867	914,609	-18.5
Iowa.....	2,621,073	1,250,938	47.7	587,485	22.4	782,650	29.9	790,424	7,774	930,810	-15.1
Missouri.....	3,954,653	2,432,715	61.5	658,442	16.6	863,496	21.8	869,217	5,721	1,125,413	-22.8
North Dakota.....	619,636	164,817	26.6	200,332	32.3	254,487	41.1	254,799	312	327,943	-22.3
South Dakota.....	652,740	216,710	33.2	182,485	28.0	253,545	38.8	254,059	514	307,318	-17.3
Nebraska.....	1,325,510	621,905	46.9	312,170	23.6	391,435	29.5	392,708	1,273	498,220	-21.2
Kansas.....	1,905,299	993,220	52.1	468,340	24.6	443,739	23.3	445,448	1,709	606,944	-26.6
SOUTH ATLANTIC:											
Delaware.....	318,085	199,122	62.6	84,738	26.6	34,225	10.8	34,772	547	45,974	-24.4
Maryland.....	2,343,001	1,615,902	69.0	543,623	23.2	183,476	7.8	185,424	1,948	245,623	-24.5
Dist. of Columbia.....	802,178	802,178	100.0	255	255	227	12.3
Virginia.....	3,318,680	1,560,115	47.0	1,026,604	30.9	731,961	22.1	735,236	3,275	986,447	-25.5
West Virginia.....	2,005,552	694,487	34.6	900,143	44.9	410,922	20.5	412,927	2,005	532,615	-22.5
North Carolina.....	4,061,929	1,368,101	33.7	1,317,268	32.4	1,376,560	33.9	1,380,805	4,245	1,659,477	-16.8
South Carolina.....	2,117,027	777,921	36.7	638,495	30.2	700,611	33.1	703,722	3,111	916,611	-23.2
Georgia.....	3,444,578	1,559,447	45.3	922,696	26.8	962,435	27.9	967,182	4,747	1,367,627	-29.3
Florida.....	2,771,305	1,813,890	65.5	724,609	26.1	232,806	8.4	237,612	4,806	305,240	-22.2
EAST SOUTH CENTRAL:											
Kentucky.....	2,944,806	1,084,070	36.8	886,566	30.1	974,170	33.1	977,438	3,268	1,261,040	-22.5
Tennessee.....	3,291,718	1,452,602	44.1	822,912	25.0	1,016,204	30.9	1,021,160	4,956	1,275,582	-19.9
Alabama.....	3,061,743	1,340,937	43.8	760,313	24.8	960,493	31.4	966,359	5,866	1,343,080	-28.0
Mississippi.....	2,178,914	607,162	27.9	474,545	21.8	1,097,207	50.4	1,100,369	3,162	1,403,142	-21.6
WEST SOUTH CENTRAL:											
Arkansas.....	1,909,511	630,591	33.0	477,093	25.0	801,827	42.0	804,662	2,835	1,113,102	-27.7
Louisiana.....	2,683,516	1,471,696	54.8	644,365	24.0	567,455	21.1	571,421	3,966	853,949	-33.1
Oklahoma.....	2,233,351	1,139,481	51.0	540,804	24.2	553,066	24.8	555,197	2,131	930,412	-40.3
Texas.....	7,711,194	4,838,060	62.7	1,580,867	20.5	1,292,267	16.8	1,303,603	11,336	2,159,548	-39.6
MOUNTAIN:											
Montana.....	591,024	258,034	43.7	197,051	33.3	135,939	23.0	136,188	249	176,054	-22.6
Idaho.....	588,637	252,549	42.9	171,128	29.1	164,960	28.0	167,428	2,468	202,582	-17.4
Wyoming.....	290,529	144,618	49.8	89,207	30.7	56,704	19.5	57,032	328	72,892	-21.8
Colorado.....	1,325,089	831,318	62.7	295,590	22.3	198,181	15.0	199,727	1,546	252,863	-21.0
New Mexico.....	681,187	341,889	50.2	207,475	30.5	131,823	19.4	133,792	1,969	178,349	-25.0
Arizona.....	749,587	416,000	55.5	256,673	34.2	76,914	10.3	78,725	1,811	114,448	-31.2
Utah.....	688,862	449,855	65.3	158,387	23.0	80,620	11.7	90,341	9,721	104,658	-13.7
Nevada.....	160,083	91,625	57.2	54,997	34.4	13,461	8.4	13,719	258	15,862	-13.5
PACIFIC:											
Washington.....	2,378,963	1,503,166	63.2	602,026	25.3	273,771	11.5	279,948	6,177	340,402	-17.8
Oregon.....	1,521,341	819,318	53.9	473,788	31.1	228,235	15.0	231,262	3,027	258,751	-10.6
California.....	10,586,223	8,539,420	80.7	1,478,572	14.0	568,231	5.4	617,367	49,136	670,426	-7.9