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ABSTRACT

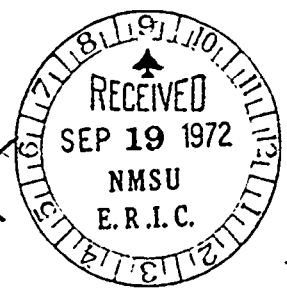
Utilizing data obtained from the 1970 and 1966 June Enumerative Surveys, the U.S. farm population (both operator and nonoperator) was identified by race, tenure, and value of farm products. Data were analyzed in reference to the following questions: (1) How many and what proportion of farm people live on farms of adequate and/or marginal commercial scale?; (2) How many people live on small-scale operations which make minor contributions to farm output?; (3) What proportion of farm people have an ownership interest and what proportion have neither an ownership nor a tenant interest, but live on farms as hired workers?; (4) What is the trend in number, tenure, and scale of farming of Negro and other minority group farmers and how do these populations compare with white operator farm populations? Analysis of data revealed: (1) In both years, the great majority of all farm people resided in the same household as the farm operator; (2) About 1/10 of the farm population lived in rent-free dwelling units on farms; (3) Negroes and other racial minorities on farms were disproportionately of nonoperator status; (4) Most farm people lived on farms operated by an owner rather than a tenant or manager; (5) Despite an overall farm population decline of 15 percent during 1966-70, there was population growth on farms with annual sales of \$20,000 or more; (6) Due to population loss among Negro farm residents, farm population decline was most rapid in the South. (JC)

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# Farm Population by Race, Tenure, and Economic Scale of Farming, 1966 and 1970

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## ABSTRACT

The U. S. farm population in 1966 and 1970 is examined in terms of race, tenure, and economic class, with the operator and nonoperator populations separately identified. In both years, the great majority of all farm people resided in the same household as the farm operator. Only about a tenth of the farm population lived in rent-free dwelling units on farms. Negroes and other racial minorities on farms were disproportionately of nonoperator status. Most farm residents lived on farms operated by a full or part owner rather than a tenant or manager, although there were some differences by race and operator status.

Despite an overall decline of 15 percent in the farm population during 1966-70, population growth occurred on farms with annual sales of \$20,000 or more. Farm population declined most rapidly in the South during the period. This decline is associated with the heavier rates of population loss among Negro farm residents, of whom about 90 percent are in the Southern States.

*Key words.* Farm population, race, tenure status, economic class, population distribution, population growth.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

About 90 percent of all persons on U. S. farms in 1966 and 1970 lived in households headed by a farm operator. The remaining 10 percent—usually hired farmworkers and their families—were in other dwelling units on farms. In 1970, about 35 percent of Negro and other racial minority farm residents were in these nonoperator households, compared with 7 percent of the white farm population.

Population loss during 1966-70 was heavier among the nonoperator population than the operator population. And the Negro and other racial minority farm population continued to decline much faster than the white—by 35 and 12 percent, respectively. Total farm population—about 10.0 million in June 1970—dropped 15 percent over the 4 years.

In 1970, nearly nine-tenths of the farm population lived on farms operated by a full or part owner. Only a tenth lived on farms operated by a tenant or manager. Both types of operations had population declines over 1966-70, but for farms operated by tenants or managers the drop was a marked 36 percent. The proportion of population on tenant or managed farms differed significantly by race—only 10 percent of all white farm residents lived on such farms, compared with 22 percent for Negroes and members of other racial minorities.

More farm people—36 percent of the total—lived on farms with product sales under \$2,500 than on any other economic class of farm. However, when the operator and nonoperator populations are separately identified, this holds true only for residents of operator households. In the nonoperator population, more than half resided on farms in economic classes I and II—those with sales of \$20,000 or more.

Among the operator population of Negroes and other racial minority members, only 3 percent were on farms in these two highest economic classes. In contrast, 22 percent of the white operator population lived on such farms.

Population increased during 1966-70 among residents of class I and II farms. The remaining economic classes had population declines ranging from 19 to 30 percent. Farms in the lowest economic class—those with sales under \$2,500—had the lowest population declines of all classes with population loss. This economic class of farm—which had nearly 70 percent of the Negro and other racial minority population in operator households—has a high proportion of part-time farms. The lower population decline here thus partly reflects the number of residents who, rather than quit farming, have chosen to supplement their farm income with off-farm earnings.

These and other new data in the report strikingly reflect the rapidity of change occurring in American agriculture with respect to the composition of the farm population by location, race, tenure, operator status, and scale of farming. Although the farm population is now less than a third as large as it was at the time of its historic peak (1916) or even three decades ago (1940), the structural changes within it have not yet subsided and appear to be leading to further overall decline.

With the 1970 tenant (and manager) farm population at just 7 percent of the same population 35 years ago, however, there is clearly comparatively little further decline of farm population, or outmovement to the cities, that can result from future decreases in tenant farming.

# FARM POPULATION BY RACE, TENURE, AND ECONOMIC SCALE OF FARMING, 1966 and 1970

by

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## INTRODUCTION

Information on the number, distribution, and personal characteristics of farm people is published annually by the U. S. Departments of Agriculture and Commerce (5, 9).<sup>1</sup> But data have seldom been available that link farm people with characteristics of the farms on which they live. The 1964 Census of Agriculture provided such data for farm operator households, but nothing has been available since then. This report should serve as a partial remedy for such data deficiencies by providing statistics on the 1970 and 1966 farm populations by race, tenure, and value of farm products sold, with the farm operator population and other persons living on farms separately identified. The data were obtained from the 1970 and 1966 June Enumerative Surveys, a national sample survey conducted annually by the Statistical Reporting Service.<sup>2</sup> This survey is designed to produce estimates of farm numbers, crop acreage, livestock inventories, and other features of the agricultural economy (1). With the addition of demographic questions, it is a convenient

vehicle for obtaining data on the farm population and its trends.

Some of the research and policy-relevant questions that the demographic data are intended to help answer are. How many and what proportion of farm people live on farms of adequate commercial scale, from which a reasonable income might be expected? How many are on marginally adequate-scale enterprises which portend economic difficulty or the need for supplementary nonfarm income? How many are on small-scale operations which make only minor contributions to farm output? What proportion of farm people have an ownership interest in their places? How many farm people have neither an ownership nor a tenant interest, but live on farms as hired workers or through other arrangements that do not involve rent? What is the trend in number, tenure, and scale of farming of Negro and other minority group farmers? How do the populations on these farms compare with the populations on farms operated by whites?

## OPERATOR AND NONOPERATOR FARM POPULATION BY RACE

About 10.0 million persons were living on farms in the conterminous United States in June 1970 (table 1).<sup>3</sup> This was about 1.7 million fewer people than in June 1966, a decline of 15 percent in the 4-year period. Three-fifths of the farm people lived in the Northern and Western States, with the remainder in the South. The Southern farm population declined somewhat more rapidly from 1966 to 1970 than did the farm population elsewhere. Part of the more rapid Southern decline is associated with the exceptionally rapid rate of decrease of the Negro farm population, more than 90 percent of which is in the South. Farm people of the Negro race

and other minority races numbered 724,000 in 1970, a decline of one-third from 1966.

From the surveys, it was possible to distinguish between (1) farm operator households and (2) nonoperator households—households that were located on a farm but that did not contain a farm operator or pay cash rent for the house. Nonoperator households are most often those of hired farmworkers but may consist of other persons who for various reasons are permitted to live in a farm home rent-free.

In both 1966 and 1970, about 90 percent of all persons on U. S. farms lived in households where the head (or occasionally some other member) was a farm operator (fig. 1). In addition to the farm operator and his immediate family, these households may also contain other relatives or unrelated individuals. Although survey data are not available on household composition, there are figures on average household size. Nationally, the average operator household contained 3.5 persons in 1970, a figure which varied little by geographic region.

<sup>1</sup> Italic numbers in parentheses refer to items listed in Literature Cited, page 13.

<sup>2</sup> See page 14 for detail on sample size and design and reliability of the estimates.

<sup>3</sup> Farm population estimates in this report exclude Alaska and Hawaii and relate to June only. They are derived from a different sample survey than those used in previously published ERS and Census-ERS farm population reports. Therefore, the numbers relating to national, regional, and racial totals in this report differ slightly from previously published April-centered annual averages for 1966 and 1970 (3, 4, 7, 8).

Table 1.—Farm population by operator status and region, June 1970 and 1966

Operator status and region	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
Total .....	10,030	11,736	-14.5	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	9,158	10,632	-13.9	91.3	90.6
Nonoperator population .....	873	1,105	-21.0	8.7	9.4
South .....	4,086	5,065	-19.3	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	3,555	4,340	-18.1	87.0	85.7
Nonoperator population .....	531	725	-26.9	13.0	14.3
North and West .....	5,945	6,671	-10.9	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	5,693	6,202	-11.0	94.2	94.3
Nonoperator population .....	342	379	-9.8	5.8	5.7

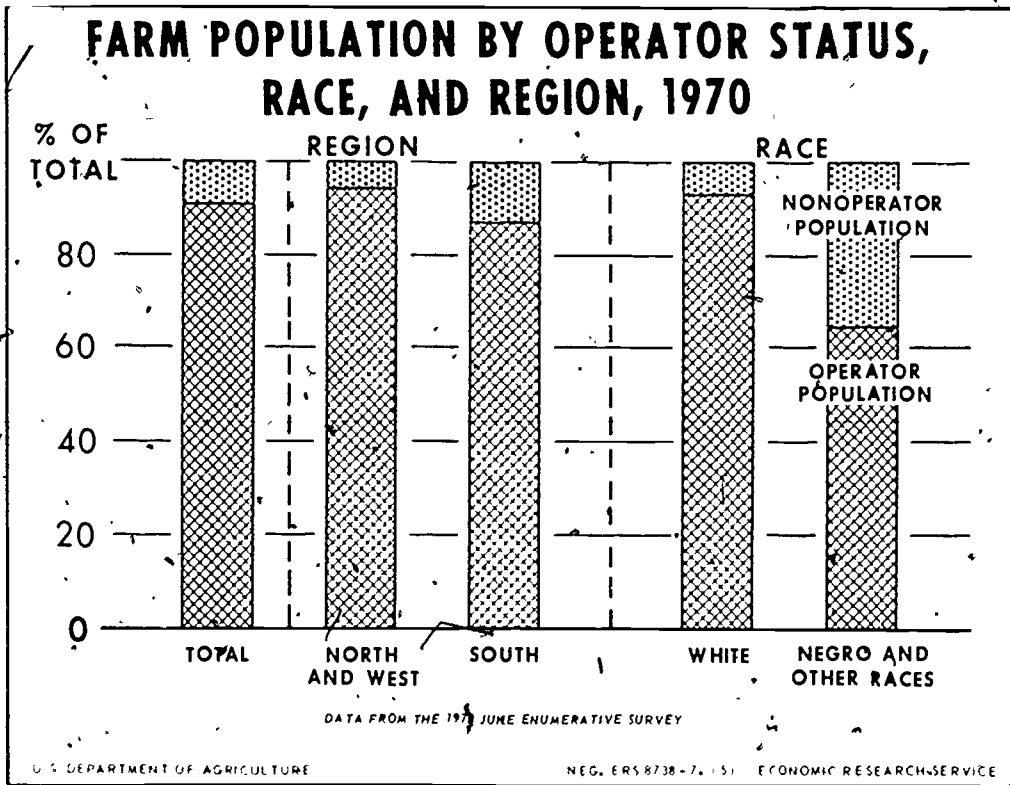


Figure 1

However, households with a white head were typically smaller than those headed by members of minority races. The average number of persons per operator household was 3.5 for whites and 4.5 for Negroes and other races. This racial difference in average size was somewhat more pronounced in the South.

In 1970, a total of 873,000 farm residents were members of nonoperator households—9 percent of the total farm population. These households averaged about the same number of persons as the operator households. Rent free housing units on farms tend to be occupied primarily by regular farmworkers rather than seasonal help. But both types of hired farmworkers have come to

be primarily nonfarm residents. An earlier ERS study reports that in 1970, only about 27 percent of the Nation's hired farmworkers had a farm residence (2).

The proportion of the farm population living in nonoperator households was highest in the South. For the 16 Southern States, an average of 13 percent of all farm people were in nonoperator households, compared with 6 percent in the combined Northern and Western States. The higher proportion of nonoperator population in the South principally reflects the existence of large plantations there which hire year-round workers and provide housing for them. Many of these workers are

Negroes, and as a result Negroes and other racial minority farm people are disproportionately of nonoperator status. Nationally, in 1970, about 35 percent of Negroes and other minorities on farms were

in nonoperator households, compared with 7 percent of the white farm population (table 2).

The rate of population decline was somewhat heavier among nonoperator households than farm operator

Table 2.—Farm population by operator status and race, South and United States, June 1970 and 1966

Operator status, race, and region	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
<b>Total</b>					
White .....	9,307	10,616	-12.3	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	8,685	9,863	-11.9	93.3	92.9
Nonoperator population .....	622	753	-17.4	6.7	7.1
Negro and other races .....	724	1,120	-35.4	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	473	768	-38.4	65.4	68.6
Nonoperator population .....	250	352	-29.0	34.6	31.4
<b>South</b>					
White .....	3,415	3,993	-14.5	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	3,120	3,609	-13.5	91.4	90.4
Nonoperator population .....	295	384	-23.2	8.6	9.6
Negro and other races .....	671	1,072	-37.4	100.0	100.0
Operator population .....	434	730	-40.5	64.7	68.1
Nonoperator population .....	237	342	-30.7	35.3	31.9

households. From 1966 to 1970, the nonoperator population decreased by 21 percent, compared with 14 percent in the operator population. This disparity between the overall rates of population loss for the two groups resulted primarily from differences in the South. In that region, use of farm-based hired workers has been declining rapidly. Elsewhere, there was no significant difference in loss of operator and nonoperator populations.

Although Negroes and other minority races experienced the greater proportionate loss in population during 1966-70, there were contrasting patterns of loss by operator status and race (fig. 2). Within the white population, the number of persons in nonoperator households declined 17 percent, while the number in operator households declined 12 percent. On the other hand, among Negroes and other minorities, the decreases

for nonoperator and operator populations were 29 and 38 percent, respectively. In the course of mechanizing and modernizing crop farming—especially cotton—most Southern landowners have ceased to produce their crops with tenant farmers and have shifted to hired workers. The effect has been to speed the decline of Negro operators—who were once predominantly tenants—and to retard somewhat the loss in nonoperator Negro households.

In the Southern States, the heavier loss in the operator population among Negroes and other minority races becomes readily apparent. For the 4-year period, the percentage decrease in the minority operator population was more than double that for whites—41 percent against 14 percent. For both operator and nonoperator populations, Negro and white combined, the rate of population decline was greater in the South than in the combined North and West.

## FARM POPULATION BY TENURE STATUS OF FARM OPERATOR AND RACE

Farm tenure relates to the ownership or rental status of the land used by an operator. The tenure classification is based on inquiries about land owned, land rented from others, and land managed for others. The two tenure groups used in this study are (1) owners and part owners—who own all or part of the land they operate—and (2) tenants or managers—who rent from or

manage for others all the land they operate. The nonoperator population was classified by the tenure status of the operator on whose farm they lived.

About 90 percent of the 10 million persons residing on farms in 1970 lived on farms operated by a full or part owner (table 3). The remaining tenth lived on tenant or managed farms. There are relatively few



## PERCENT OF LOSS IN THE FARM POPULATION BY OPERATOR STATUS AND RACE, 1966-70

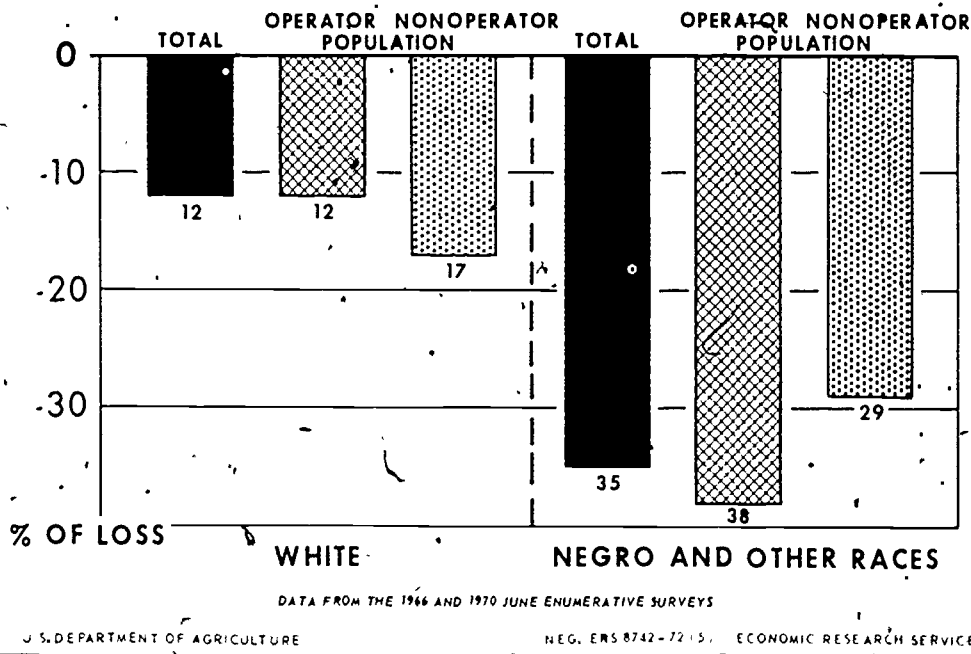


Figure 2

Table 3.—Farm population by tenure of operator and race, June 1970 and 1966

Tenure of operator and race	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races .....	10,017	11,736	-14.6	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	8,962	10,078	-11.1	89.5	85.9
Tenants and managers .....	1,056	1,659	-36.3	10.5	14.1
White .....	9,307	10,616	-12.3	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	8,407	9,268	-9.3	90.3	87.3
Tenants and managers .....	900	1,348	-33.2	9.7	12.7
Negro and other races .....	711	1,120	-36.5	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	555	810	-31.5	78.1	72.3
Tenants and managers .....	156	311	-49.8	21.9	27.7

<sup>1</sup>Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

managed farms. The tenant farm population is thought to be at least 90 percent of the combined tenant and manager groups.

Although population decreased during 1966-70 on both tenure classes of farms, a marked decline (36 percent) occurred in the population residing on farms operated by tenants and managers. Nearly all of the loss on these farms was in the operator household population. The censuses of agriculture show that the proportion of farms run by tenants has fallen steadily

and rapidly since 1935 (6). At that time, there were 2.9 million tenant farms. Given the average population per farm of that period, there were probably about 13.5 million people on tenant farms. The tenant (and manager) farm population of 958,000 in 1970 is thus just 7 percent of the number at the peak of tenant operations 35 years earlier. Clearly, there is comparatively little further decline of farm population, or outmovement to the cities, that can result from future decreases in tenant farming.

From 1966 to 1970, Negroes and other races experienced heavier rates of population loss than whites, regardless of tenure status. The greatest disparity in rates of population decline by race and tenure status was among persons on owner operations. In this tenure group, the white population decreased 9 percent, while the number of Negroes and other minority races declined 31 percent.

A sizable difference existed in the proportions of the two racial groups on tenant or managed farms. In 1970, only a tenth of all white farm residents lived on tenant farms, compared with about a fifth for Negroes and other races (fig. 3). The higher proportion of members of minority races on tenant-operated farms is in keeping with data on tenure status of farms. In 1964, over half of the Negro and other racial minority commercial farm

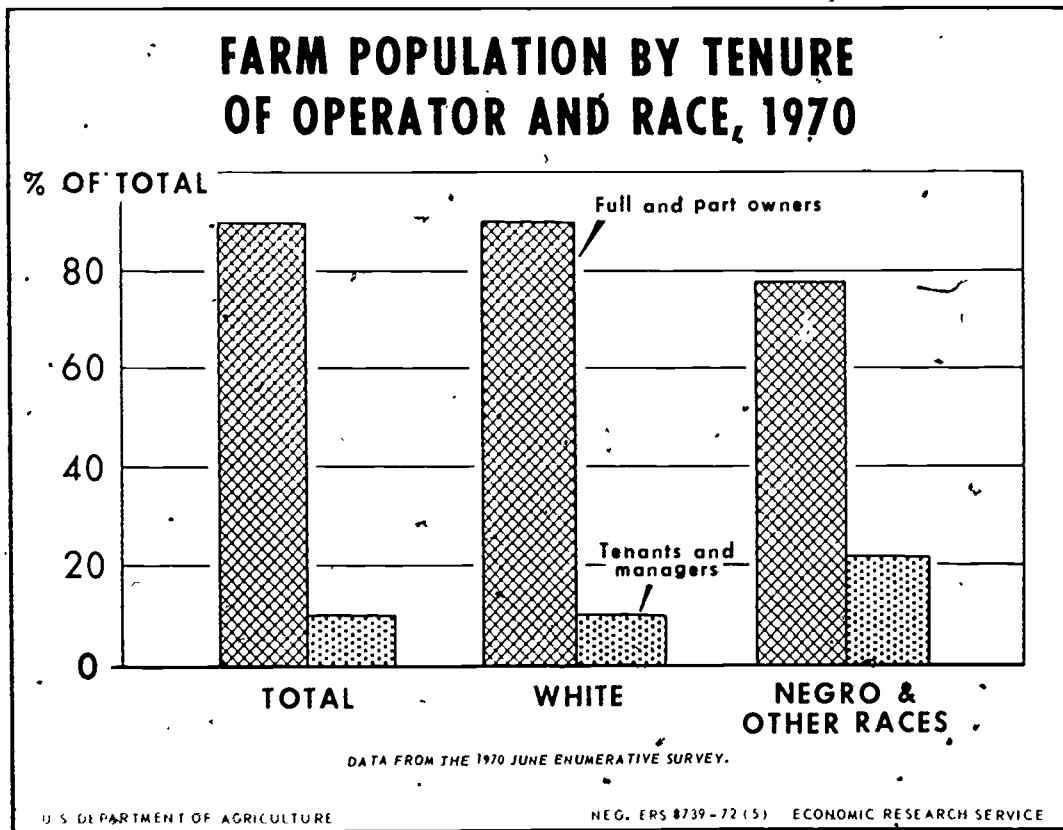


Figure 3

operators were tenants. Their tenant farms had more harvested acreage than did owner operations of this racial group. Also, in terms of value of sales, they accounted for 61 percent of the total value of farm products sold from all commercial farms operated by Negroes and members of other races.

It must be remembered in considering the foregoing figures on rates of population loss that the data refer to the total farm population, including nonoperator households, and that the tenure classification for these households is that of the operator of each farm. Data in table 4, which shows similar figures for farm operator households separately, indicate that the distribution of the operator population by tenure and the rates of change since 1966 do not differ significantly for the total and white populations from the data in table 3, but there are some differences for Negroes and other racial minorities. Of the total Negro and other minority farm residents in 1970, 78 percent lived on owner-operated

farms, but almost 40 percent of these people were nonoperators, presumably working for wages on large enterprises. Of the Negro and other minority farm operator household population, slightly less than three-fourths were on owner operations. Twenty-six percent of the Negro and other minority farm operator household population was of tenant (or manager) status, compared with just 10 percent of the white farm operator group. But as late as 1959, a majority of all farmers other than white were classified as tenants.

The farm population in nonoperator households had lower rates of population loss for 1966-70 than the population in operator households for all race and tenure groups except white persons on owner operations (table 5). For this race and tenure group, the rate of decline was 9 percent for the operator population and 17 percent for the nonoperator population. There were no significant differences in distribution among persons in nonoperator households by race.

Table 4.—Population in farm operator households by race and tenure of operator, June 1970 and 1966

Race and tenure of operator	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races .....	9,145	10,632	-14.0	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	8,187	9,096	-10.0	89.5	85.6
Tenants and managers .....	958	1,536	-37.6	10.5	14.4
White .....	8,685	9,863	-11.9	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	7,847	8,592	-8.7	90.4	87.1
Tenants and managers .....	838	1,272	-34.1	9.6	12.9
Negro and other races .....	460	768	-40.1	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	340	504	-32.5	73.9	65.6
Tenants and managers .....	120	264	-54.5	26.1	34.3

<sup>1</sup> Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

Table 5.—Farm population in nonoperator households by race of head and tenure of operator, June 1970 and 1966

Race of head and tenure of operator	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races .....	873	1,105	-21.0	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	775	982	-21.1	88.8	88.9
Tenants and managers .....	98	123	-20.3	11.2	11.1
White .....	622	753	-17.4	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	560	676	-17.2	90.0	89.8
Tenants and managers .....	62	76	-18.4	10.0	10.1
Negro and other races .....	250	352	-29.0	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	215	305	-29.5	85.7	86.6
Tenants and managers .....	36	47	-23.4	14.3	13.3

The two major regions for which data were available for this study—the South and the combined North and West—have become remarkably similar<sup>2</sup> in the

distribution of their farm residents by tenure, considering the wide regional disparities that existed a generation ago (tables 6, 7, and 8). In 1935, 53.5

Table 6.—Farm population by tenure of operator and race, for regions, June 1970 and 1966

Region, tenure of operator, and race	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
North and West .....	5,932	6,710	-11.1	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	5,326	5,810	-8.3	89.8	87.1
Tenants and managers .....	606	860	-29.5	10.2	12.9
South .....	4,086	5,065	-19.3	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	3,636	4,267	-14.8	89.0	84.2
Tenants and managers .....	450	799	-43.7	11.0	15.8
South by race:					
White .....	3,415	3,993	-14.5	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	3,115	3,502	-11.1	91.2	87.7
Tenants and managers .....	300	491	-38.9	8.8	12.3
Negro and other races .....	671	1,072	-37.4	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	521	764	-31.8	77.6	71.3
Tenants and managers .....	150	307	-51.1	22.4	28.7

<sup>1</sup> Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

Table 7.—Population in farm operator households by tenure of operator and race, for regions, June 1970 and 1966

Region, race, and tenure of operator	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
North and West .....	5,590	6,292	-11.2	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	5,013	5,465	-8.3	89.7	86.9
Tenants and managers .....	577	827	-30.2	10.3	13.1
South .....	3,555	4,340	-18.1	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	3,174	3,631	-12.6	89.3	83.7
Tenants and managers .....	381	709	-46.3	10.7	16.3
South by race .....					
White .....	3,120	3,609	-13.5	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	2,857	3,162	-9.6	91.6	87.6
Tenants and managers .....	264	448	-41.1	8.4	12.4
Negro and other races .....	435	730	-40.4	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	317	469	-32.4	73.0	64.2
Tenants and managers .....	117	261	-55.2	27.0	35.8

<sup>1</sup>Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

Table 8.—Farm population in nonoperator households by race of head and tenure of operator, for regions, June 1970 and 1966

Region, race of head, and tenure of operator	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
	1970	1966		1970	1966
	Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
North and West .....	342	379	-9.8	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	313	345	-9.3	91.5	91.3
Tenants and managers .....	29	33	-12.1	8.5	8.7
South .....	531	726	-26.9	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	462	636	-27.4	87.0	87.6
Tenants and managers .....	69	90	-23.3	13.0	12.4
South by race .....					
White .....	295	384	-23.2	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	258	341	-24.3	87.7	88.6
Tenants and managers .....	36	44	-18.2	12.3	11.4
Negro and other races .....	237	342	-30.7	100.0	100.0
Full and part owners .....	204	295	-30.8	86.1	86.5
Tenants and managers .....	33	46	-28.3	13.9	13.5

percent of all Southern farms were tenant farms, compared with 30.5 percent of Northern and Western farms. By 1970, the proportion of farm people on tenant farms was 11 percent in the South and 10 percent

in the North and West. In short, a tenant relationship to the land is for all practical purposes no more common today among Southern farm people than among those elsewhere in the Nation.

### FARM POPULATION BY VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD AND RACE

From the June Enumerative Surveys it is also possible to obtain data on the farm population related to the total value of products sold from the farm in the preceding year. Sales value is based on gross income received from the sale of crops, livestock, poultry, livestock and poultry products, horticultural commodities, and miscellaneous agricultural products.

Since the survey data were restricted to the value of sales, without corresponding information on age of operator and days of off-farm work, there is no subdivision of small-scale operations into part-retirement and part-time classes such as is available in the census of

agriculture. Six economic classes are used in the June Surveys on the basis of the total value of all farm products sold, as follows:

Economic class of farm	Value of farm products sold
I .....	\$40,000 and more
II .....	\$20,000 to \$39,999
III .....	\$10,000 to \$19,999
IV .....	\$5,000 to \$9,999
V .....	\$2,500 to \$4,999
VI .....	Less than \$2,500

## Economic Classes I and II

On farms in classes I and II, where sales were \$20,000 and above, the farm population increased from 1966 to 1970 (table 9 and fig. 4). As the total farm population declined by 1.7 million, the number of persons residing on farms in these two higher classes had an overall increase of about 400,000 people, or 22 percent. This reflects an underlying increase in the number of farms that produce high volumes or handle products with high values. Some of the increase may be due to inflation of the dollar, some to a genuine increase in the number of large scale farms, and some to a growth of specialized operations, such as cattle feedlots, where the value of animals handled is high, but profit as a percentage of sales is low in relation to profits on traditional farms. Population on class I and II farms rose from 17 percent of the total farm population in 1966 to 25 percent in 1970.

Class I farms (\$40,000 or more in sales) accounted for 43 percent of the total value of sales in 1964 but represented only 4.5 percent of all farms. These farms are disproportionately in the North and West and are heavily represented among poultry, potato, vegetable, fruit, sugar beet or cane, and cotton farms, plus livestock

ranches. Class II farms are more widely distributed throughout the United States. Farm residents in classes I and II live chiefly in the Northern and Western regions of the country. In 1970, 67 percent of the population on class I and 80 percent on class II farms were outside the South (tables 10 and 11).

Although the population on farms in classes I and II increased overall between 1966 and 1970, there was some regional variation. Outside the South, population increased in both categories. In the Southern States, a slight increase in class I and decrease in class II resulted in no significant overall change. Therefore, for the period studied, it would appear that although the most productive farms of the South did not experience a population increase, they did manage to retain their population.

There was no significant difference nationally by race in the proportions residing on class I and II farms. In 1970, nearly a fourth of both racial groups were on farms with sales of \$20,000 or more (table 9). However, this similarity by race ceases when the operator and nonoperator populations are examined separately. Within the operator population, 22 percent of the whites

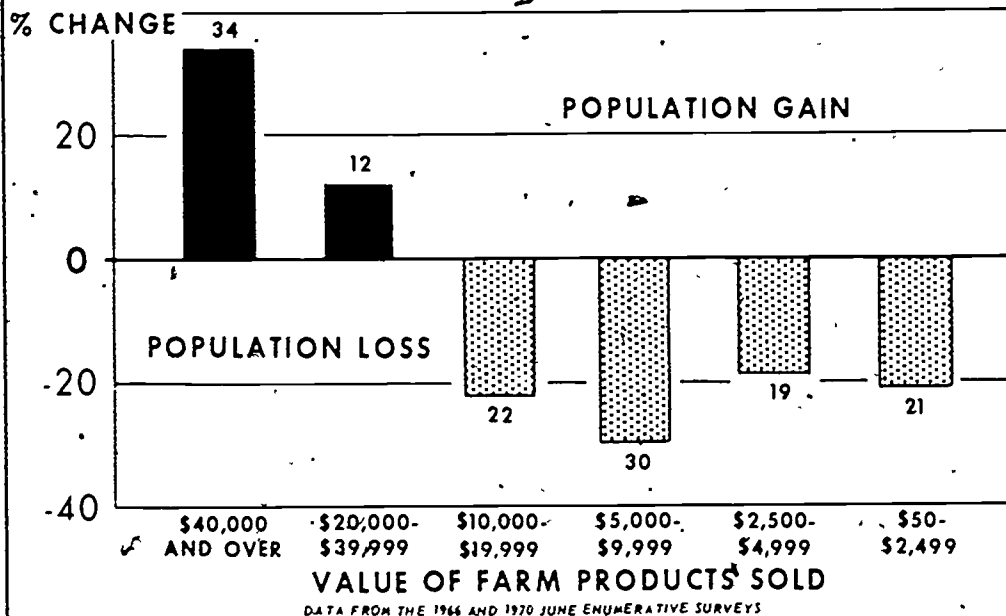
Table 9.—Farm population by value of products sold and race, June 1970 and 1966

Value of products sold and race	Economic class	Population		Percentage change 1966-70.	Percentage distribution	
		1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
		Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races		10,017	11,736	-14.6	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	203	899	33.8	12.0	7.7
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	1,290	1,151	12.1	12.9	9.8
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	1,518	1,942	-21.8	15.2	16.5
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	1,193	1,696	-29.7	11.9	14.5
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	1,227	1,520	-19.3	12.3	12.9
\$50 - 2,499	VI	3,586	4,529	-20.8	35.8	38.6
\$250 - 2,499		3,098	NA	...	30.9	...
\$50 - 249		488	NA	...	4.9	...
White		9,307	10,616	-12.3	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	1,098	768	43.0	11.8	7.2
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	1,233	1,102	11.9	13.3	10.4
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	1,461	1,853	-21.2	15.7	17.5
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	1,123	1,592	-29.5	12.1	15.0
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	1,147	1,376	-16.6	12.3	13.0
\$50 - 2,499	VI	3,244	3,925	-17.4	34.9	37.0
\$250 - 2,499		2,805	NA	...	30.1	...
\$50 - 249		439	NA	...	4.7	...
Negro and other races		711	1,120	-36.5	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	105	191	-19.8	14.8	11.7
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	57	49	16.3	8.0	4.4
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	57	89	-36.0	8.0	7.9
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	70	104	-32.7	9.8	9.3
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	80	143	-44.1	11.3	12.8
\$50 - 2,499	VI	342	604	-43.4	48.1	53.9
\$250 - 2,499		293	NA	...	41.2	...
\$50 - 249		49	NA	...	6.9	...

NA = not available.

<sup>1</sup>Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

# PERCENT OF CHANGE IN THE FARM POPULATION BY VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, 1966-70



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. ERS 8740-72-51

ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE

Figure 4

Table 10.—Southern farm population by value of products sold and race, June 1970 and 1966

Value of products sold and race	Economic class	Population		Percentage Change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
		1970	1966		1970	1966
		Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
<b>South</b>		4,086	5,065	-19.3	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	392	336	16.7	9.6	6.6
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	263	279	-5.7	6.4	5.5
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	358	432	-17.1	8.8	8.5
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	450	567	-20.6	11.0	11.2
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	598	763	-21.6	14.6	15.1
\$50 - 2,499	VI	2,026	2,689	-24.7	49.5	53.1
\$250 - 2,499		1,767	NA	...	43.2	...
\$50 - 249		259	NA	...	6.3	...
<b>White</b>		3,415	3,993	-14.5	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	298	215	38.6	8.7	5.4
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	213	234	-9.0	6.2	5.9
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	308	348	-11.5	9.0	8.7
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	386	466	-17.2	11.3	11.7
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	520	624	-16.7	15.2	15.6
\$50 - 2,499	VI	1,691	2,107	-19.7	49.5	52.8
\$250 - 2,499		1,481	NA	...	43.4	...
\$50 - 249		210	NA	...	6.1	...
<b>Negro and other races</b>		671	1,072	-37.4	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	94	121	-22.3	14.0	11.3
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	50	45	11.1	7.5	4.2
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	50	85	-41.2	7.5	7.9
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	64	101	-36.6	9.5	9.4
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	78	139	-43.9	11.6	13.0
\$50 - 2,499	VI	335	582	-42.4	49.9	54.3
\$250 - 2,499		286	NA	...	42.6	...
\$50 - 249		49	NA	...	7.3	...

NA - not available.

Table 11.—Northern and Western farm population by value of products sold, June 1970 and 1966

Value of Products sold	Economic class	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
		1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
		Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
North and West .....		5,932	6,671	-11.1	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over .....	I	812	563	44.2	13.7	8.4
\$20,000 - 39,999 .....	II	1,027	872	17.8	17.3	13.1
\$10,000 - 19,999 .....	III	1,160	1,509	-23.1	19.6	22.6
\$5,000 - 9,999 .....	IV	743	1,130	-34.2	12.5	16.9
\$2,500 - 4,999 .....	V	629	796	-16.8	10.6	11.3
\$50 - 2,499 .....	VI	1,561	1,840	-15.2	26.3	27.6
\$250 - 2,499 .....		1,332	NA	...	22.5	...
\$50 - 249 .....		229	NA	...	3.9	...

NA = not available.

<sup>1</sup> Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

were on class I and II farms, but only 3 percent of Negroes and other races (table 12 and fig. 5). The high proportion (25 percent) of the total minority race farm population on class I and II farms results not from these people being operators of such farms, but rather from

their being "nonoperators" living in other dwelling units on these farms.

In the population of nonoperator households, a heavy concentration in classes I and II is found regardless of race. In 1970, the proportion in these

Table 12.—Population in farm operator households by value of products sold and race, June 1970 and 1966

Value of Products sold and race	Economic class	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
		1970 <sup>1</sup>	1966		1970	1966
		Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races .....		9,145	10,632	-14.0	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over .....	I	821	555	47.9	9.0	5.2
\$20,000 - 39,999 .....	II	1,145	976	17.3	12.5	9.2
\$10,000 - 19,999 .....	III	1,407	1,779	-20.9	15.4	16.7
\$5,000 - 9,999 .....	IV	1,116	1,583	-29.5	12.2	14.9
\$2,500 - 4,999 .....	V	1,155	1,443	-20.0	12.6	13.6
\$50 - 2,499 .....	VI	3,501	4,295	-18.5	38.3	40.4
\$250 - 2,499 .....		3,026	NA	...	33.1	...
\$50 - 249 .....		474	NA	...	5.2	...
White .....		8,685	9,863	-11.9	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over .....	I	816	548	48.9	9.4	5.6
\$20,000 - 39,999 .....	II	1,138	971	17.2	13.1	9.8
\$10,000 - 19,999 .....	III	1,386	1,751	-20.8	16.0	17.7
\$5,000 - 9,999 .....	IV	1,070	1,516	-29.4	12.3	15.4
\$2,500 - 4,999 .....	V	1,091	1,329	-17.9	12.6	13.5
\$50 - 2,499 .....	VI	3,183	3,748	-15.1	36.6	38.0
\$250 - 2,499 .....		2,756	NA	...	31.7	...
\$50 - 249 .....		427	NA	...	4.9	...
Negro and Other races .....		460	768	-40.1	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over .....	I	5	8	-37.5	1.1	1.0
\$20,000 - 39,999 .....	II	7	6	16.7	1.5	.7
\$10,000 - 19,999 .....	III	21	28	-25.0	4.6	3.7
\$5,000 - 9,999 .....	IV	46	66	-30.3	10.0	8.6
\$2,500 - 4,999 .....	V	64	114	-43.9	13.9	14.8
\$50 - 2,499 .....	VI	317	547	-42.0	68.9	71.2
\$250 - 2,499 .....		270	NA	...	58.7	...
\$50 - 249 .....		47	NA	...	10.2	...

NA = not available

<sup>1</sup> Excludes an estimated 13,000 Indians living in farm residences on reservations.

# FARM POPULATION BY OPERATOR STATUS, RACE, AND VALUE OF FARM PRODUCTS SOLD, 1970

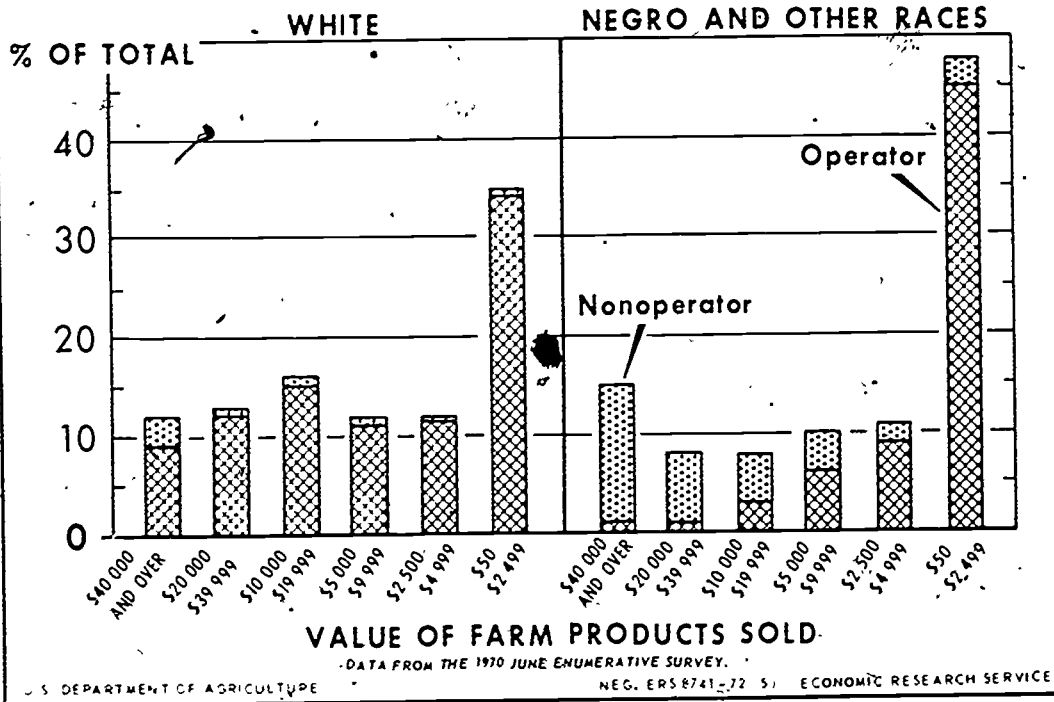


Figure 5

upper categories was 60 percent for whites as well as for Negroes and other racial minorities (table 13). According to the latest census of agriculture (1969), 80 percent of regular hired farmworkers were on farms in classes I and II.

The ability of farms to retain their population, or to

experience a population increase, disappears as one proceeds down the economic class scale. The traditional farm population decline becomes evident for persons on farms in class III and below (fig. 4). The population on all these farms declined substantially during 1966-70, with the loss ranging from 19 percent to 30 percent

## Economic Class III

In 1970, class III farms contained about 15 percent of the total farm population; like class II farms, they were widely scattered throughout the United States. The population on class III farms declined regardless of region, but rates of population loss were slightly higher in the Northern and Western States than in the South. For 1966-70, the rates of decline were 23 percent (North and West together) and 17 percent (South). Despite the slightly higher rate of population loss in the

Northern and Western States, persons on class III farms were relatively more numerous there than in the South. They constituted about one-fifth of the farm population outside the South and about one-tenth in the South.

Negro and other minority race residents on class III farms were mostly in nonoperator households. Of the 57,000 minority race members on class III farms in 1970, nearly two-thirds lived in other dwelling units on farms.

## Economic Classes IV and V

About one-fourth of the 1970 U. S. farm population was on farms with value of products sold of \$2,500 to \$9,999. These farms are relatively small-scale agricultural operations under today's conditions. In 1964, approximately 70 percent of them had less than 100 acres of land from which crops were harvested. The likelihood of the operator or members of his family

working off the farm was much higher for farms in these classes than for the farms previously discussed. In 1964, three-fifths of the operators of class IV and V farms worked off the farm 100 days or more. The nonfarm income of the operator and members of his household was equal to one-half the value of farm products sold from all class IV and V farms. The overall rate of



Table 13.—Farm population in nonoperator households by race of head and value of products sold, June 1970 and 1966

Value of products sold and race	Economic class	Population		Percentage change, 1966-70	Percentage distribution	
		1970	1966		1970	1966
		Thousands	Thousands	Percent	Percent	Percent
All races		873	1,105	-21.0	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	382	344	11.0	43.7	31.1
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	145	175	-17.1	16.6	15.8
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	111	163	-31.9	12.7	14.7
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	77	113	-31.9	8.8	10.3
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	73	77	-5.2	8.3	6.9
\$50 - 2,499	VI	86	234	-63.2	9.8	21.1
\$250 - 2,499		72	NA	...	8.3	..
\$50 - 249		14	NA	...	1.6	..
White		622	753	-17.4	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	282	220	28.2	45.3	29.3
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	95	131	-27.5	15.3	17.4
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	75	102	-26.5	12.1	13.6
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	53	76	-30.3	8.6	10.1
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	56	47	19.1	9.1	6.3
\$50 - 2,499	VI	60	177	-66.1	9.7	23.5
\$250 - 2,499		49	NA	...	7.9	...
\$50 - 249		11	NA	...	1.8	...
Negro and other races		250	352	-29.0	100.0	100.0
\$40,000 and over	I	100	123	-18.7	40.0	35.1
\$20,000 - 39,999	II	50	44	13.6	20.0	12.4
\$10,000 - 19,999	III	36	61	-41.0	14.4	17.3
\$5,000 - 9,999	IV	23	38	-39.5	9.2	10.7
\$2,500 - 4,999	V	16	29	-44.8	6.4	8.4
\$50 - 2,499	VI	25	57	-56.1	10.0	16.2
\$250 - 2,499		23	NA	...	9.2	...
\$50 - 249		2	NA	...	.8	...

NA = not available

population loss—25 percent—was somewhat heavier among persons residing on farms in these two classes than in other categories with loss. This was primarily due to the heavy loss of 34 percent from class IV farms in the combined Northern and Western States in just 4 year's time.

### Economic Class VI

In this report, class VI farms are those with farm product sales of less than \$2,500, without any restriction on age of operator, days of off-farm work, or amount of nonfarm income. In 1964, part-time farms constituted nearly half of all farms with sales of this value. The existence of farms with limited labor requirements, very limited sources of land and capital, and low incomes has provided incentives for farm operators to increase their earnings by working off the farm. In 1964, most operators of part-time farms had a full-time off-farm job. Part-time farming is particularly prevalent around urban centers and in the South. The predominance of part-time farms in the South was evidenced by the high proportion of the region's farm population in class VI. Half of the South's farm residents resided on class VI farms, compared with about one-fourth in the combined Northern and Western States.

The high proportion of part-time farms in class VI may also explain why farms in this category, where sales are at their lowest, have not experienced above-average population declines. Nationally, their rate of population decline from 1966 to 1970 was somewhat lower than for some of the higher economic classes. This lower rate of population loss reflects at least in part the part-time farm residents in class VI who, rather than quit farming, have chosen to supplement their farm income with income from nonfarm work.

Nearly half of the Negro and other racial minority farm population lived on class VI farms. The 1966-70 rate of population loss for minority races on these farms was more than double that for whites—43 percent compared with 17 percent. Nearly 70 percent of the Negro and other racial minority population in farm operator households lived on class VI farms, compared with only 10 percent of the nonoperator (other dwelling units) population.

In 1970, the June survey included questions that permitted the value of sales for the \$50 to \$2,499 group to be separated into two categories. (1) \$250 to \$2,499 and (2) \$50 to \$249. The data indicated that the population on farms in the lower group comprised only 5 percent of the total farm population. The proportion never exceeded 10 percent, regardless of race or region. Such places have only negligible agricultural activity.

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## DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

**Population coverage.**—The population estimates in this report relate to the 48 conterminous States and thus exclude Alaska and Hawaii.

**Farm population.**—The farm population consists of all persons living on places of 10 or more acres if as much as \$50 worth of agricultural products were sold from the place in the preceding year. It also includes persons living on places of under 10 acres if as much as \$250 worth of agricultural products were sold from the place. Persons in institutions, summer camps, and motels and tourist camps and persons living on rented places where no land is used for farming are classified as nonfarm.

**Race.**—The population is divided into two groups on the basis of race: (1) white and (2) Negro and other races. Other races includes Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and any other races except Negro and white. Persons of Mexican birth or ancestry are classified as white. For operator households, race relates to the farm operator only, and the race of other members of his household is assumed to be the same as that of the farm operator. For the population in other dwelling units on farms—that is, the nonoperator population—race relates to the head of the household.

**Operator population.**—Persons living in the farm operator's household.

**Nonoperator population.**—Persons living in other dwelling units on farms.

**Tenure.**—The tenure classifications are restricted to the farm operator and his rights on the land he operates. The tenure of farm operators is based on replies to inquiries about land owned, land rented from others,

land managed for others, and land rented to others. The two classifications used in this report are

**Owners and part owners**—those who own all or part of the land they operate; and **tenants and managers**—those who rent from or manage for others all the land they operate.

**Value of sales.**—Value of sales is based on gross income received from the sale of crops, livestock, poultry, livestock and poultry products, horticultural commodities, and miscellaneous agricultural products. All sales data relate to 1 year's farm operation. Crop sales represent the crop's produced in the preceding year which have been sold or will be sold even though some sales will occur after the end of the calendar year. Sales of livestock and poultry and their products relate to the calendar year of the sale regardless of when raised or produced.

In the June Enumerative Surveys, all Government program payments received in the preceding year are included in the value of sales. It is only in this respect that the sales data in this report differ from those obtained in the census of agriculture. Under census procedures, the income from Government payments and loans is not included in the value of sales.

**Economic class of farms.**—On the basis of the total value of all farm products sold, farms are divided into six economic classes as follows:

Class of farm	Value of farm products
I . . . . .	\$40,000 or more
II . . . . .	\$20,000 to \$39,999
III . . . . .	\$10,000 to \$19,999
IV . . . . .	\$5,000 to \$9,999
V . . . . .	\$2,500 to \$4,999
VI . . . . .	\$50 to \$2,499

*Rounding.*—The individual figures in this report are rounded to the nearest thousand and have not been adjusted to group totals, which are independently

rounded. Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent, therefore, the percentages in a distribution do not always add to exactly 100.0 percent.

## SOURCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

*Source of data.*—Estimates in this report are based on data obtained in the 1966 and 1970 June Enumerative Surveys of the Statistical Reporting Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The sample for both surveys was a probability area sample of the 48 conterminous States, consisting of approximately 17,000 area segments (sampling units). Information was obtained from about 23,000 farm households associated with these sample segments.

*Reliability of the estimates.*—Since the estimates are based on a sample, they may differ somewhat from figures that would be obtained if a complete census count had been taken. As in any survey work, the results are subject to error of response and of reporting as well as to sampling variability.

The standard error of estimate, which measures variations that occur by chance because a sample rather than the whole of a population is surveyed, was

computed for each population characteristic. All statements of comparison made in the text of this report are statistically significant at a two standard error level. This means that the chances are at least 19 in 20 that a difference identified in the text indicates a difference in the populations that is greater than chance variation arising from the use of samples.

The sample design and the varying sampling rates do not permit a concise generalized table showing approximate order of magnitude of standard errors for estimated numbers. The 1970 U. S. farm population total in this report was 10,030,000. The standard error for this estimate was 50,000. The chances are 68 out of 100 that the estimate would differ from a complete census count by less than this amount. The chances are 95 out of 100 that the estimate would differ from a complete census count by less than 100,000 (twice the standard error).