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CHANGE IN SIZE OF FARMS IN OHIO—1900-1940

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CHANGE IN SIZE OF FARMS IN OHIO 1900-1940

J. H. SITTERLEY AND J. I. FALCONER

It is evident that many changes are occurring in the size of Ohio farms. The purpose of this study is to discover the extent and nature of these changes. It is realized that the size of the farm business is a product of the acres involved and the volume of business per acre. However, the present study is based largely upon size in terms of acres. Size of farm in terms of acres is of interest both from the standpoint of farm organization and operation, and also because of the relationship between size and the numbers of farms that can exist in a given area.

Size of Farms in 1940

In 1940, the average land area of the 233,783 farms in Ohio was 93.7 acres. While this was the average acreage of all farms there was a wide variation from this acreage. In 1940 there were in Ohio:

946 farms that contained less than 3 acres.
22,251 farms that contained 3 to 10 acres.
16,967 farms that contained 10 to 19 acres.
36,458 farms that contained 20 to 49 acres.
67,951 farms that contained 50 to 99 acres.
61,255 farms that contained 100 to 174 acres.
18,846 farms that contained 175 to 259 acres.
8,006 farms that contained 260 to 499 acres.
966 farms that contained 500 to 999 acres.
137 farms that contained 1000 acres or more.

Although 10 percent of the farms were under 10 acres in size, less than one-half of 1 percent of the total land in farms was occupied by units of this size in 1940. On the other hand, farms of 500 acres or over comprised one-half of 1 percent of the total but contained 4 percent of the total land in farms. Farms from 70 to 174 acres in size made up nearly one-half the total number of farms in the state and contained over one-half of the land in farms.

There is available a limited amount of data showing the size of the farm business in terms other than acres. Measured in terms of the value of farm products produced in 1939 and sold, traded, or used by farm households, Ohio farms would fall into the following groups:

20,874 farms produced under \$100
29,573 farms produced \$100 to \$249.
46,968 farms produced from \$250 to \$599.
36,693 farms produced from \$600 to \$999.
33,467 farms produced from \$1,000 to \$1,499.
36,532 farms produced from \$1,500 to \$2,499.
17,623 farms produced from \$2,500 to \$3,999.
6,005 farms produced from \$4,000 to \$5,999.
2,499 farms produced from \$6,000 to \$9,999.
901 farms produced from \$10,000 to \$19,999.
367 farms produced over \$20,000.

On 30 percent of the farms of the state the families consumed the major part of the production leaving little for sale. In contrast to this, the top 20 percent in terms of size contributed 50 percent of the total farm products marketed from Ohio farms.

While the census reports 233,783 farms in Ohio in 1940, only 176,125 individuals, or 75 percent of the above number, reported themselves as farm operators. This would indicate that the remaining 25 percent did not consider themselves as farmers even though living on tracts classified as farms by the census. At that time, according to the census, the operator worked off the farm a total of 50 or more days per year on 25 percent of the farms.

Number of farm operators reporting work off farm per year

Under 50 days	17,009
50 to 99 days	8,193
100 days and over	49,904

A relatively small percent of Ohio farmers employ hired labor. The 1940 census reported a total of 52,962 Ohio people who gave their occupation as working for wages in farming. In the week of September 24, 1939, only 41,981 farmers reported employing hired labor; in the week of March 24, 1940, the number was only 30,419. This is less than one-quarter of the farm operators in the state. It is evident, therefore, that the majority of farms in Ohio are of a size that the work can be performed by the operator and his family.

Since much of the data for this study is taken from the reports of the U. S. Census it would be well to have in mind the census definition of a farm. The 1940 census defines a farm as a tract of land of 3 acres or more on which some agricultural operations were performed in 1939. Tracts of less than 3 acres were also considered farms if they produced agricultural products in 1939 of a value of \$250 or more. A farm was all the land on which some agricultural operations were performed by one person either by his own labor or with the assistance of members of his household or hired employees. On the basis of this definition there were 233,783 farms in Ohio in 1940.

Types of Farms Based on Size in 1940

Ohio farms may be classified into several rather distinct groups on the basis of size.

Residential Farms.—Residential is a designation which may be given to those farms on which the operator does not depend upon the farm for his income. The farm is the place where he lives rather than where he makes his living. They qualify as farms on the basis of having 3 acres or more of land, rather than on the basis of the nature and extent of their agricultural production. A 3-acre, or larger tract, with only a home and garden qualifies them as farms in the census; there usually is very little or no livestock and not much if any farm machinery. Residential farms number approximately 50,000 or nearly 25 percent of the total number of farms. The occupants of these farms are largely the group who work 100 days or more per year at non-farm work, and retired or semi-retired people. In an industrial state like Ohio this group may be expected to expand still further. Such units provide an opportunity to live in the country, and can contribute to the family living in the way of food. They add but very little to the supply of farm products reaching the market for their farming efforts are almost entirely for home use.

Part-time Farms.—The part-time farms usually contain more acres than the residential units but are not as large, as a rule, as full-time farms. A part of the income is received from work off the farm and a part from the sale of farm products. Either one may provide the major source of income. As contrasted with the residential farm the part-time farm generally has livestock and is reasonably well equipped with the smaller items of farm machinery. The occupant may be a former city resident who continues to hold his job in town, or frequently a former full-time farmer who has decided to supplement his farm income by working off the farm. In numerous instances, the farm could be made to give full-time employment if the occupant decided to quit his other job. There is no sharp line of distinction between the residential and the part-time farm. It is estimated that there are about 25,000 part-time farms in Ohio. These, added to the residential farms, give a total of 75,000 farms in the state where the occupant combines work off the farm, or income from sources other than the farm, with some farming, at least to the extent of having a family garden. This is approximately one-third of all farms in the state.

Full-time Non-commercial Family Farms.—There are many farms in the state where the operator gives his full time to farming and yet where the total amount of products sold is small. Subsistence is the major objective. There are about 40,000 units of this type in the state. On these, the products produced for home consumption are of high relative importance, making up one-third or more of the total production. Little if any labor is hired and the farms are generally conducted on a basis of keeping down expenses rather than that of expanding sales. Farms of this type are found in all areas of the state but more particularly in the hilly areas or areas of relatively low land values. Frequently the operators of these farms are of advanced age.

Commercial Family Farms.—The three types of farms thus far described, namely, residential, part-time, and full-time non-commercial farms, comprised a total of 115,000 in 1940 or approximately one-half the farms and one-half the farm families in the state. Their volume of sales, however, comprise less than 10 percent of the state total. The remaining 118,000 farms can be classified as commercial farms. These are the farms that produce a major portion of the products which reach the market. Production for the market is the major objective.

On the greater part of the commercial farms of the state, the major portion of the work is performed by the farm operator and his family with little hired labor. These have been designated as commercial family farms. Around 108,000 farms or about 45 percent of the total in the state may be so classed. This group produces nearly two-thirds of the total farm products sold from Ohio farms.

Large Commercial Farms.—In this group are placed the larger farms in the state comprising perhaps 10,000 in all. These are farms which employ one or more men the year around in addition to the operator. They include most of the units in the state of over 300 acres in size, and some with smaller acreages where intensive types of farming are engaged in. Large commercial farms, while making up less than 5 percent of the total, contribute over one-fourth of the total volume of sales.

Distribution of Different Sizes of Farms in 1940

The size of farm pattern is not uniform over the state. Not only is there a wide variation between areas, but there is an equally wide variation within each area. Considering first the farm under 10 acres, one finds that approximately one-half were located in 22 counties. In Cuyahoga and Summit Counties, 1 farm in 3 was under 10 acres as compared to less than 1 in 20 in several distinctly rural counties (see fig. 1.)

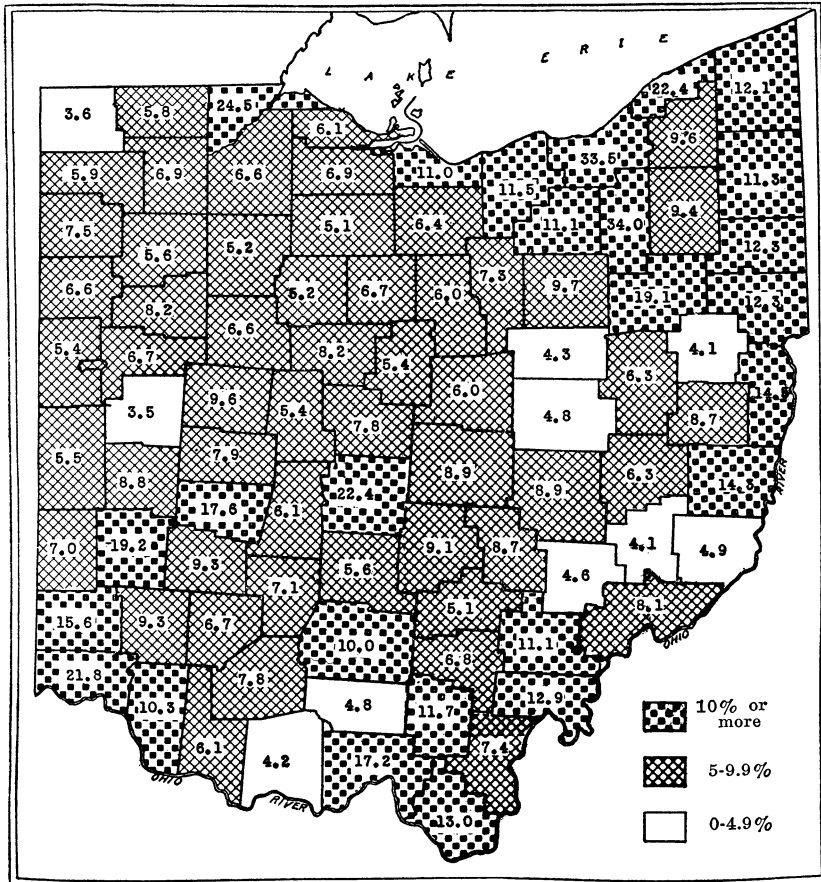


Fig. 1.—Percentage of farms under 10 acres, by counties, 1940.

50 acres were so very numerous, there were less than 3 out of 10 farms with 50 to 174 acres. Farms with 175 acres or more, like those under 50 acres, were much more concentrated in some counties than in others. In Fayette, Madison, Marion, Paulding, and Pickaway, 1 or more out of each 4 farms contained 175 acres or more as compared to less than 1 in 25 in Cuyahoga, Hamilton, Lucas, Montgomery, Summit, and Stark Counties (see fig. 3).

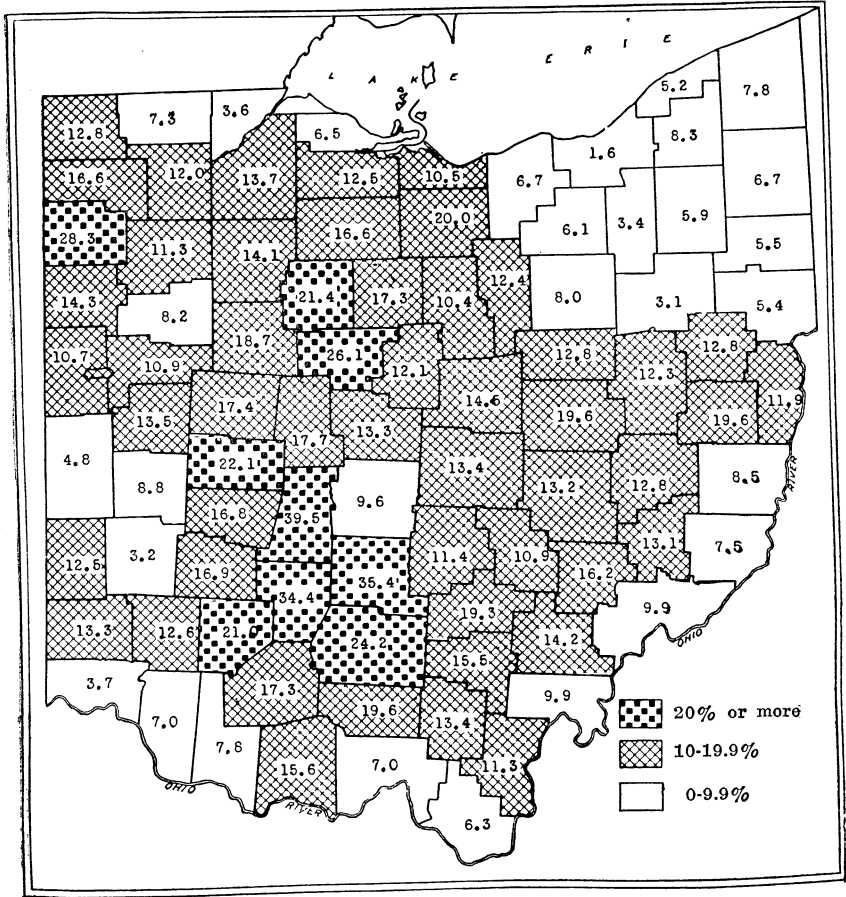


Fig. 3.—Percentage of farms with 175 acres or more, by counties, 1940

Nine counties situated in the territory between the Scioto and Little Miami rivers contained 406 of the 1,103 farms of 500 acres or more. All but one county in the state, Clermont, had one or more farms with 500 acres or over. However, only 50 counties contained farms of 1,000 acres or over.

The lack of uniformity is further evidenced by the wide variation in the average size of farm between counties. In 20 counties, the average was under 80 acres and in eleven 120 acres or over. In Madison County the farms averaged 185.5 acres in 1940 which was approximately double the state average and more than five times the Cuyahoga County average (see fig. 4.)

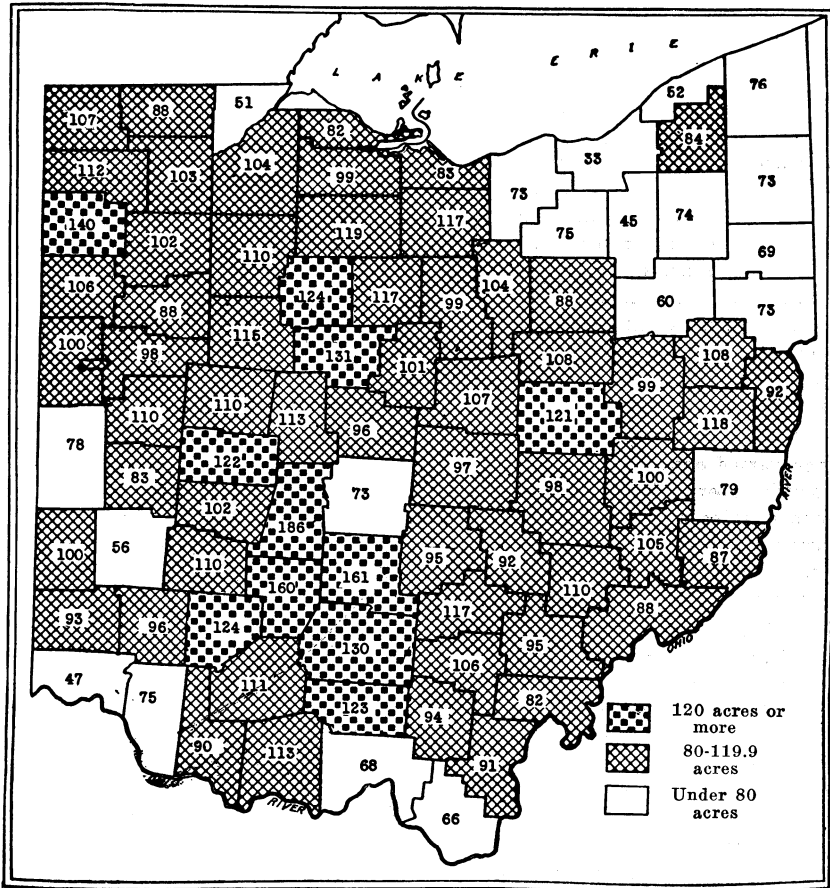


Fig. 4.—Average acreage per farm, by counties, 1940

Numerous factors have been responsible for the development of this irregular pattern. Good roads, rural electrification, and cheap, rapid transportation have resulted in the establishment of many small residential and part-time farms in communities where non-farm employment opportunities are abundant. These improvements make it possible for families to secure all or part of their income from some source other than farming and at the same time to live in the open country. Where this is possible, the acreage of land needed per family is small. This is generally true even when the unit is operated on a part-time farm basis to supplement the non-farm income.

A second cause of the irregularity in the size pattern is the variation in the type of farming over the state. No two enterprises or combinations of enterprises call for the same acreage of land for efficient production. General livestock farms (hogs, beef cattle, and sheep) require considerably more land on the average than equally efficient dairy and poultry farms. In central and western Ohio, where general livestock farms are common, a high proportion of the units are fairly large. In northeastern Ohio, the Miami Valley, and other areas where the dairy enterprise predominates, the farms are noticeably smaller. Intensive crops such as fruit, vegetables, and tobacco require less land than general field and pasture crops. In Darke County, the Miami Valley area, and the Ohio river counties where tobacco is grown, many 20-, 40-, and 60-acre farms are to be found. In the territory along the lake, where fruit and vegetable growing is common, small farms are also numerous. In Paulding County and adjacent territory where soybeans, corn, and small grain are produced and sold, small farms are in the minority. In central eastern Ohio, where pasture and hay crops predominate and the grazing of sheep and beef animals is practiced, there are also relatively few farms of small acreage.

A third factor that has played a part in shaping the size of farm pattern is the varied nature of the land itself. Some of it, such as exists in many parts of southeastern Ohio, is poorly adapted to the type of power and equipment which enables a family to operate a large acreage. Furthermore, some land consumes larger amounts of labor in the control of brush, weeds, erosion, and in the maintenance of soil productivity than others, thus materially limiting the acreage that can be successfully handled by the typical family.

A fourth contributing cause is the lack of uniformity over the state in the size of unit sold or granted to the first settlers. The effect of this on the present size pattern is most pronounced in the territory between the Scioto and Little Miami Rivers known as the Virginia Military Reserve. In this section, the state of Virginia made many land grants to men of that state who served in the Revolutionary War. Under the influence of the plantation type of farming common throughout Virginia at that time, these grants, especially those to officers, often involved several hundreds of acres. Many of these large units have remained more or less intact since the time they were acquired. Consequently a greater concentration of large farms exist in this section of the state than in those where the land was disposed of by other agencies.

Changes in Size of Farms in Ohio Since 1900

The average size of farms in Ohio in 1850 was 125 acres. During the next 50 years the size gradually decreased until in 1900 there were only 88.5 acres of land per unit. Since then the change in the average size has been small with a slight tendency for the amount of land per farm to increase; however, it has been neither uniform nor significant. (See table 1).

TABLE 1.—The number of farms, total area in farm, and average acreage per farm by census period for Ohio since 1900

Date	Total number of farms	All land in farms, acres	Average acreage per farm
1900.....	276,719	24,501,985	88.5
1910.....	272,045	24,105,708	88.6
1920.....	256,695	23,515,888	91.6
1930.....	219,296	21,514,059	98.1
1940.....	233,783	21,907,523	93.7

Can this lack of significant change in the average be interpreted as meaning that there has been no material modification in the size of farms since 1900? In appraising the situation it is essential that we keep two things in mind. First, that there are many different sizes of farms in the State as indicated earlier and it is possible for many changes to be made in the number of farms in the different size groups while the state average remains the same. For instance, Farm A, containing 80 acres, is divided and sold, 10 acres with the building to a family seeking a part-time farm and the 70 acres to a neighbor who already has an 80-acre farm. No change occurs in the total number or the average size but the pattern is changed from two 80-acre farms to a 10-acre farm and an 150-acre farm. Second, an increase may occur in the number of one size group in one section and be offset by a corresponding decrease in the same size group in another section with neither being reflected in the state average.

When one examines the different size-groups individually and their distribution over the state, it becomes evident that numerous changes have taken place in the size of farm pattern since 1900. The most pronounced and widespread changes were the reductions in the numbers of 20-49- and 50-99-acre farms. (See fig. 5 and table 2).

TABLE 2.—Farms by size groups in Ohio in 1900 and 1940—and change

Size group	1900	1940	Change 1900-1940	Percentage 1940 is of 1900
Under 10 acres.....	17,347	23,197	+ 5,850	133.7
10-19 acres.....	18,115	16,967	- 1,148	93.6
20-49 acres.....	57,566	36,458	-21,108	63.3
50-99 acres.....	89,774	67,951	-21,823	75.7
100-174 acres.....	67,258	61,255	- 6,003	91.0
175-259 acres.....	18,361	18,846	+ 485	102.6
260-499 acres.....	7,218	8,006	+ 788	110.9
500-999 acres.....	916	966	+ 50	105.5
1000 or more acres.....	164	137	- 27	83.5
Total.....	276,719	233,783	-42,936	84.5

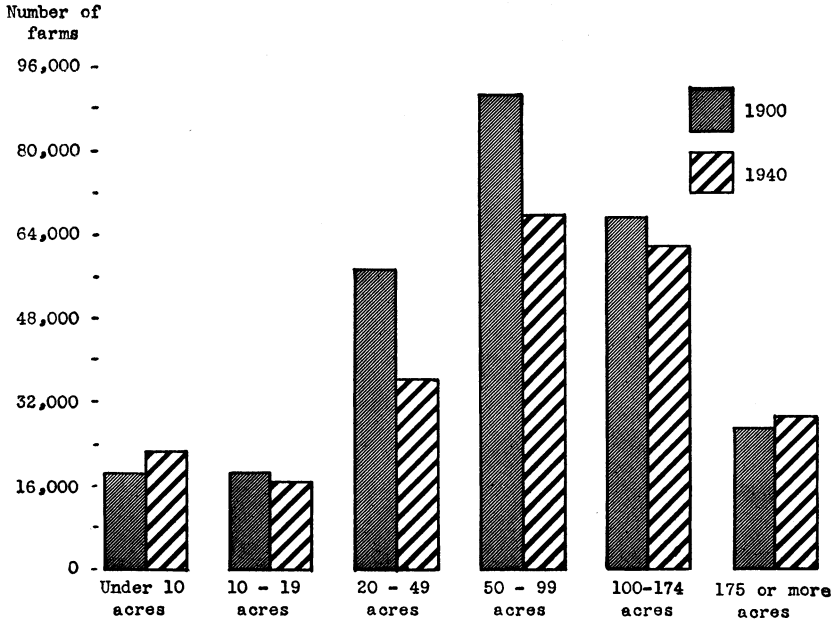


Fig. 5.—Number of farms by size groups, in Ohio, 1900 and 1940

In 1940, there were 21,108 or 36.7 percent less farms in what is commonly referred to as the 40-acre group, and 21,823 or 24.3 percent less farms in what is commonly referred to as the 80-acre group. When allowance is made for the change in the total number of farms in the state, the 40-acre group dropped from 20.8 farms per 100 to 15.6, and the 80-acre group from 32.4 to 29.1. (See table 3).

TABLE 3.—Farms by size groups in Ohio in 1900 and 1940 and the percentage each group is of the total

Size group	1900		1940	
	Number	Percent of total	Number	Percent of total
Under 10 acres	17,347	6.2	23,197	9.9
10- 19 acres.....	18,115	6.5	16,967	7.2
20- 49 acres.....	57,566	20.8	36,458	15.5
50- 99 acres.....	89,774	32.4	67,951	29.0
100-174 acres.....	67,258	24.3	61,255	26.2
175-259 acres.....	18,361	6.6	18,846	8.0
260-499 acres.....	7,218	2.6	8,006	3.4
500-999 acres.....	916	0.3	966	0.4
1000 or more acres.....	164	137
Total.....	276,719	100.0	233,783	100.0

Only five counties—Butler, Geauga, Jefferson, Scioto, and Stark—contained as many or more farms in the 40-acre group in 1940 as in 1900. Forty counties had 20 or more such farms in each 100 and no county contained as few as 10 per 100 in 1900. In 1940 there were 13 counties with less than 10

per 100 and only 14 with 20 or more. Decreases of 50 percent or more occurred in 26 counties. In these, the number dropped from 17,514 to 6,729. The sharpest decline occurred in Paulding where the number fell from 1,392 to 120 in 40 years. Most of the counties in which large decreases occurred are situated in the central and northwestern part of the state. The least reduction took place in northeastern Ohio and the Miami Valley. (See fig. 6).

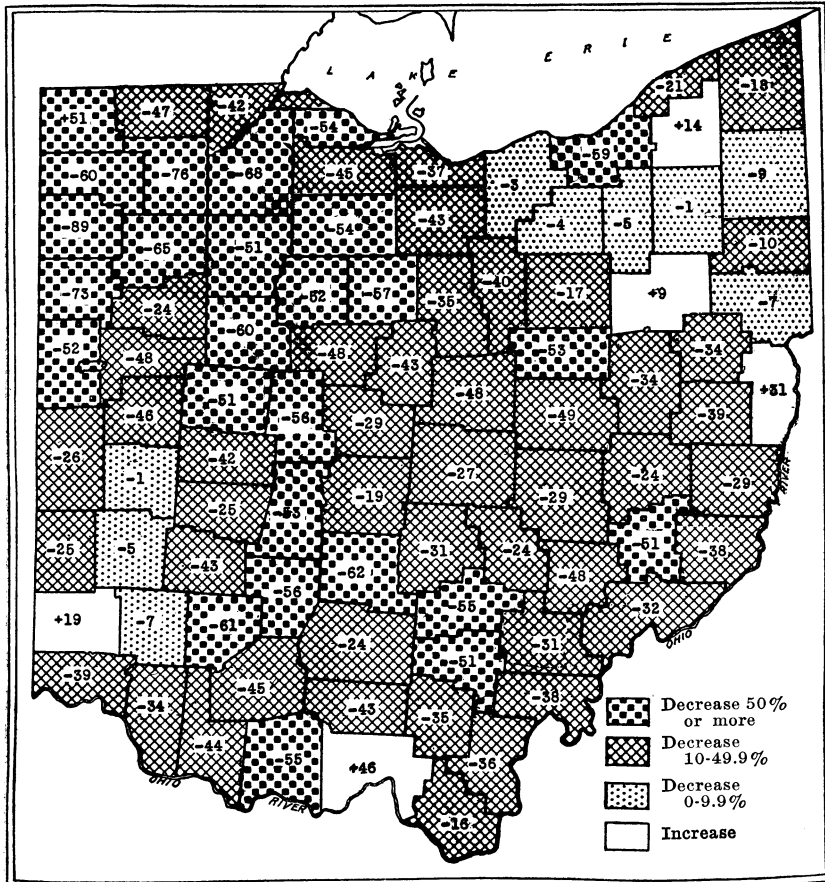


Fig. 6.—Percentage change in number of farms with 20-49 acres, by counties, 1900-1940

All but four counties had less farms in the 80-acre group in 1940 than in 1900. In numerous counties there were less than two-thirds as many. The sharpest drop took place in the central and northwestern counties. However, important declines were also registered in several eastern and southeastern counties. The smallest reductions took place in northeastern Ohio, the Miami

Valley, and along the Ohio River (see fig. 7). In 1900, farms in the 80-acre group comprised 35 or more in each 100 in 23 counties; while in 24 counties, there were less than 25 per 100.

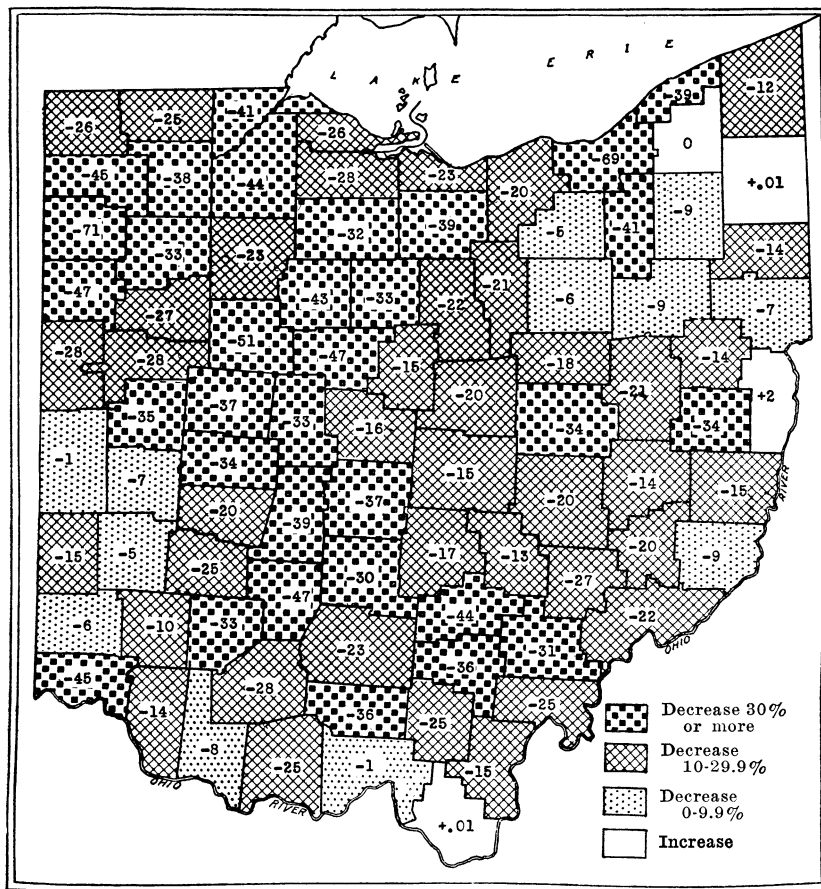


Fig. 7.—Percentage change in number of farms with 50-99 acres, by counties, 1900-1940

The most pronounced change, other than that which took place in the 40- and 80-acre groups, occurred in the under 10-acre group. However, here, as in the remaining size groups, the state totals do not fully reflect the extent of the change. This is due to two things; first, the fact that the direction of change has not been uniform over the state with the result that the increase in one area has offset the decreases in another; and second, the reduction which occurred in the total number of farms growing out of farm consolidation, expansion of urban and industrial areas, and the abandonment of farms in the poorer parts of the state.

During the 40 years following 1900, farms with less than 10 acres more than doubled in 12 counties and smaller increases occurred in 46 others. In the remaining 30 counties decreases took place. Summit, Medina, and Scioto counties experienced the largest growth while Darke, Preble, and Shelby counties experienced the sharpest drop. (See fig. 8). In all but 14 counties there were more farms of this size per 100 farms at the end of the period than at the beginning. In 1900, only 5 counties had 10 or more farms per 100 under 10 acres and in none was there as many as 20 per 100. In 1940, there were 27 counties in which 10 or more of the farms were under 10 acres and 6 counties in which there were 20 or more per 100. In Cuyahoga and Summit counties, one-third of all the farms were in this size group whereas in 1900 there were 13 per 100 in Cuyahoga and only 7 per 100 in Summit.

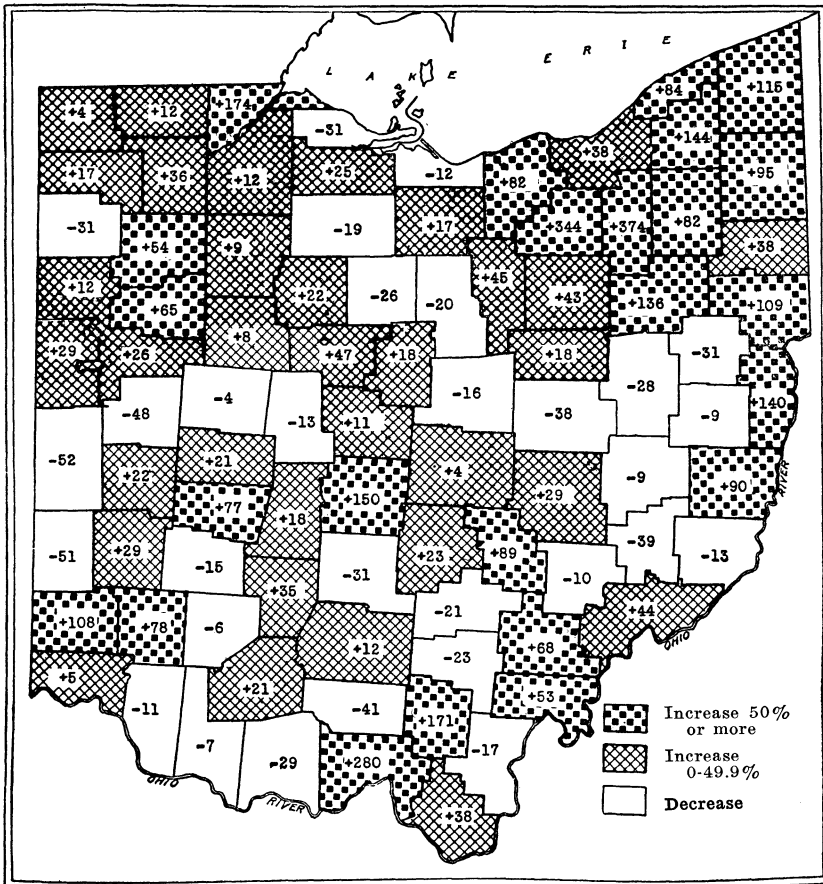


Fig. 8.—Percentage change in number of farms under 10 acres, by counties, 1900-1940

The number of 10-19 acre farms decreased in two-thirds of the counties and increased in one-third. In many of the counties, the reduction was small with the result that when adjustments are made for the over-all reduction in the number of farms, half of the counties contained more 10-19-acre units per 100 in 1940 than in 1900. The counties in which significant increase occurred were those with considerable opportunity for non-farm employment while those in which marked decrease took place were either distinctly rural with limited non-farm employment or were counties in which both the farm and non-farm opportunity were poor and considerable farm retirement was taking place.

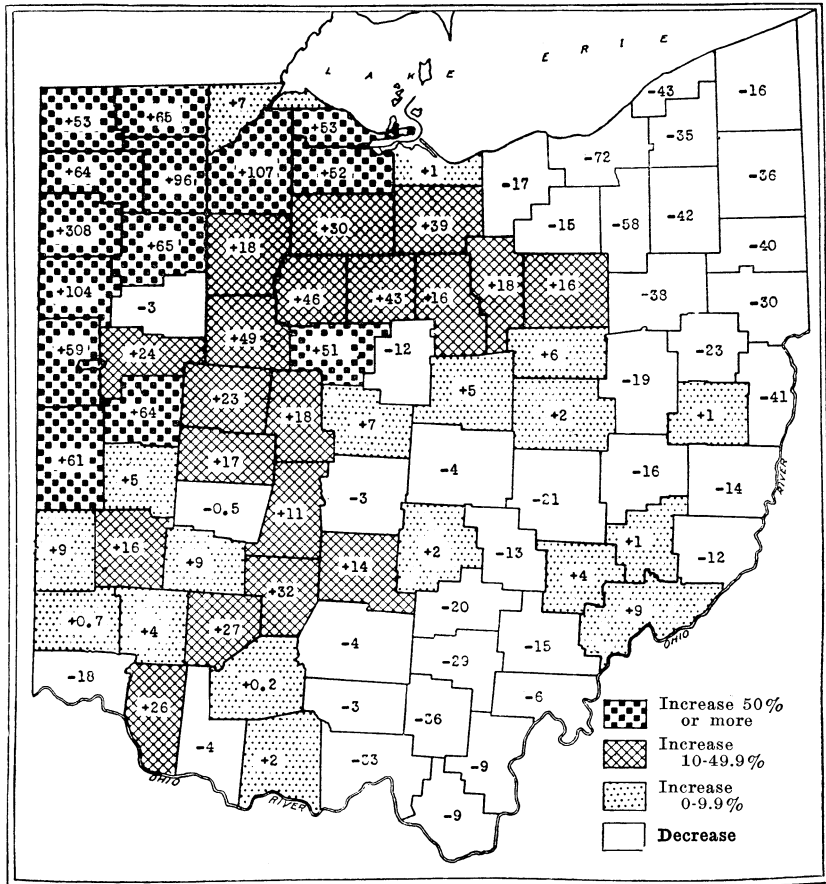


Fig. 9.—Percentage change in number of farms with 175 acres or more, by counties, 1900-1940

One hundred- to 174-acre farms dropped 9 percent in the state as a whole. Only one-fourth of the counties had as many or more in 1940 as in 1900. However, like the change in the number of 10-19-acre farms, most of the reductions were small and consequently their relative importance increased in two-thirds

of the counties. Thirty-five counties had 30 or more per 100 in contrast to nine counties in 1900. The increase, both in number and relative importance, was most pronounced in northwestern Ohio, while the sharpest reductions occurred in the urban and industrial counties.

For the state as a whole, there was very little change in the total number of 175-259-acre farms. In 1940 there was only 485 or 2.6 percent more units of this size. Nevertheless, within the state there were significant changes. In northwestern Ohio, a pronounced growth took place; eighteen counties registered increases of 25 percent or more. In 1900 there were 2,679 farms in this size group or less than 5 per 100 in these 18 counties; 40 years later there were 4,355 or approximately 10 per 100. Eleven other counties also (all except two are located in the western half of the state) registered increases ranging from 10 to 24 percent. Counteracting these increases were sharp reductions in 11 counties and moderate reductions in 19 others. All of these counties except four are located in the eastern half of the state. The sharpest drop was in the highly developed urban and industrial sections of northeastern Ohio where the pronounced expansion has occurred in part-time and residential farms. The reductions in southeastern Ohio corresponded closely with the decrease in the total area in farms resulting from farm retirement. In the remaining 29 counties, little or no change occurred.

Large farms in terms of area (260 to 499 acres) were somewhat more numerous in the state in 1940 than in 1900, but the trend was by no means uniform over the state. Fairly significant increases occurred in half of the counties. Most of these were in the western and north central part of the state. At the same time, definite decreases were registered in 29 counties all but two of which were situated in the eastern half of the state. The most important decrease appeared in the northeastern urban and industrial sections. Northwestern and north central counties experienced the sharpest increase. In several counties in this part of the state there was more than double the 1900 number.

The most outstanding growth was in Paulding County where there were only thirty-three 260-499-acre units in 1900, and 188 in 1940. In southwestern Ohio, an area where the large farms were most numerous in 1900, there was further expansion; however, at a less rapid rate than in the northwest, where in 1900 the 40- and 80-acre units predominated.

In 1940, there were 50 more farms with 500-999 acres and 27 less farms with 1000 or more acres than there were in 1900. Here again the changes in the state totals do not give a true picture of the trend. During the period considered, many of the large farms in the eastern and the hilly section of southern Ohio passed out of the picture. This area had 603 farms with 500 acres or more at the beginning of the period. Forty years later there were only 500. This drop was offset by an increase of 126 farms with 500 acres or more in the west and north central sections of the state.

The Pattern and Significance of Change

Three rather distinct trends are evident from 1900 to 1940. First, there has been an increase in the number of rural resident and part-time farms. Second, there has been a pronounced decrease in the number of farms of 20 to 100 acres in size. And third, there has been a steady increase in the percentage of farms over 160 acres in size. While the above general statement holds

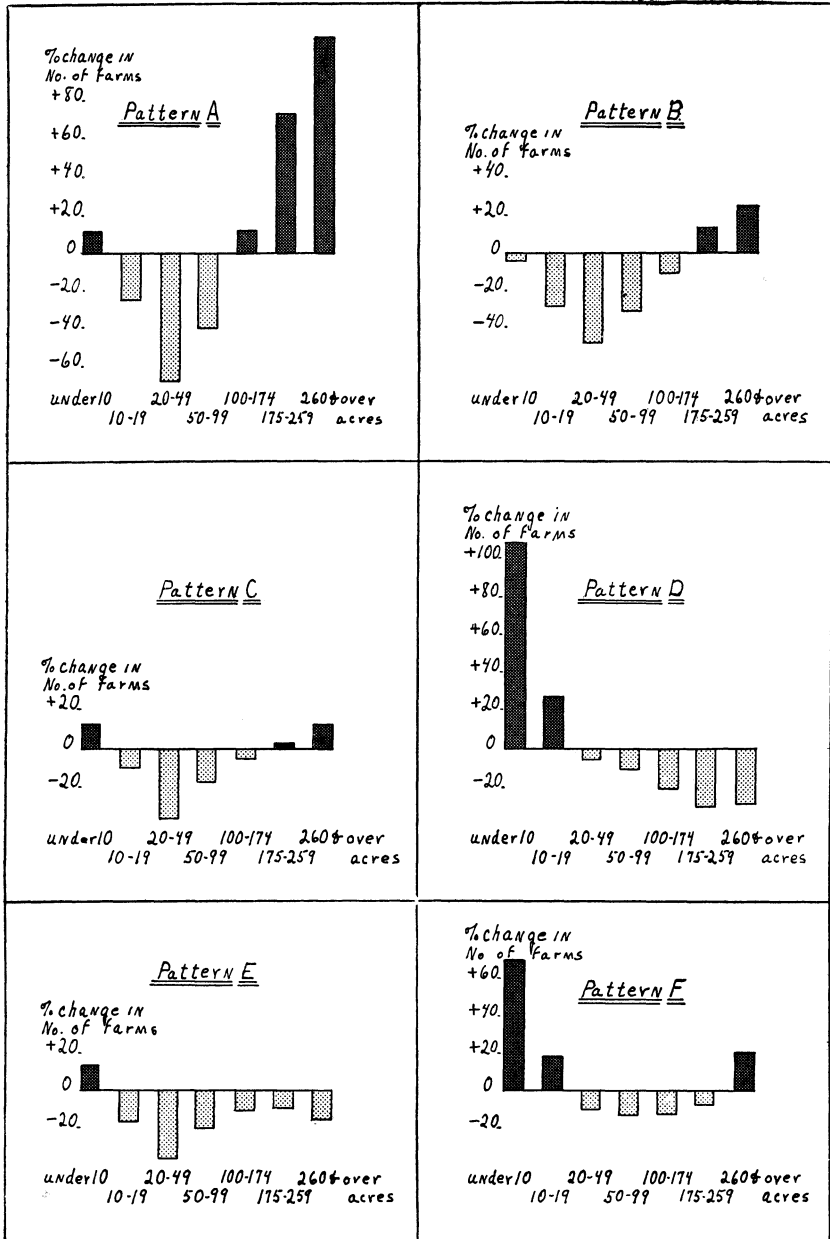


Fig. 10.—Patterns of change within the state in the number of farms in each size group, 1900-1940. (For location in the state of the different patterns of change, see fig. 11.)

true, several different patterns of change are evident when the trends by counties or areas are compared. The most distinct of these patterns are shown graphically in figure 10 and the counties in which each prevails are shown in figure 11.

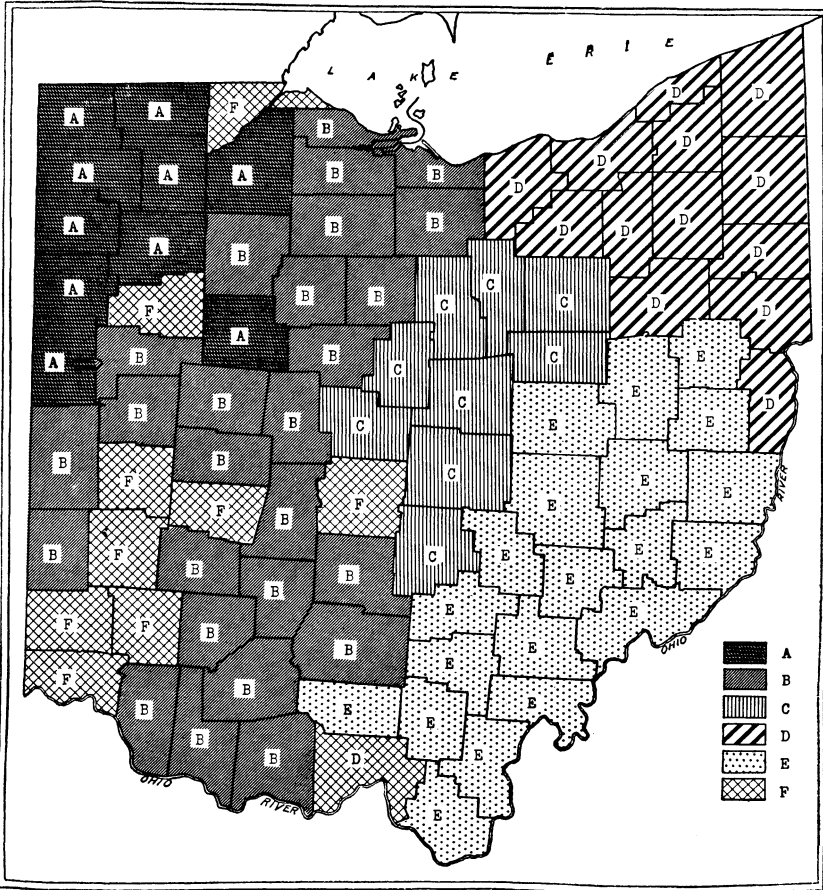


Fig. 11.—Counties with similar patterns of change in the number of farms in each size group between 1900 and 1940. Letter designates pattern of change most nearly followed. See page 17 for description of patterns.

Tracts of less than 10 acres in size have increased most rapidly in number during the past few decades. The greater part of these could be classed as residential and part-time farms. With an expanding industrial population, good transportation facilities and with improved facilities for living in rural areas it would seem that their number will continue to increase. Their occupants will be made up of former full-time farmers who have accepted off-farm employment, city employed people who have moved to the country, and of farm reared young people who desire to remain in the country while receiving their

income largely from sources other than the farm. Other factors contributing to their increase are shorter working hours in the city and the growing numbers receiving old age or retirement pensions. Their number will probably continue to increase in the vicinity of industrial areas. There is no indication that the number of tracts of 10 acres or less that give full-time profitable employment to the operator as a result of intensification is increasing.

Perhaps the most significant change is the decrease in number of farms of 20 to 100 acres in size. From 1900 to 1940, farms of 20 to 49 acres in size decreased 37.7 percent in number, while those of 50 to 99 acres decreased 24.3 percent in number. This trend prevailed in every area of the state. However, in 1940, farms in these two size groups still comprised 45 percent of the total. In the main, these seem to be the farms which are too large for the rural resident or part-time farmer and yet not large enough for full-time farm operators unless an intensive type of farming is carried on.

It might be anticipated that with the increase in production of fruit, vegetables, and dairy and poultry products that this size of unit would increase in number. However, it appears that the adoption of intensive enterprises has not had sufficient influence on the volume of business to offset the lack of land. Consequently, many are being consolidated into larger units or divided up into residential or part-time farms.

Aside from the increase in number of tracts of 10 acres or less in size, the trend in the state seems to be towards farms of 160 acres or more. When one contrasts the farming methods of 1900 with those of 1940, less labor is required to produce the crops on 160 acres of land in 1940 than on 100 acres in 1900. The increasing use of power machinery has greatly increased the acreage which one man can handle. It is to meet this situation that the tendency has been for the commercial farm to become larger in size. At the present rate of adoption of farm machinery, it would seem that the present trend to increase the size of the commercial farm will continue.

There is little evidence that the family sized farm is decreasing in relative importance in the state. The tendency is rather to increase the acreage in the family sized farm in keeping with the ability of the operator to handle more land. If the family sized farm, the farm on which the operator and his family provide most of the labor, is to be maintained as the basis of our farming and rural life it will have to continue to adjust itself to changing conditions.

Farming is both a business and a way of living. Both of these elements are clearly evident as factors shaping the size of Ohio farms.

On the one hand are the residential and part-time farms comprising one-third of the total number. Occupants of these secure the major part of their income from non-farm sources. They elect, however, to live in the country and to supplement their non-farm income by income from the farm, or to gain those advantages which can be acquired by living in the country. This group does not contribute much to the volume of farm products which are marketed, neither does it occupy any very large percent of the total area of farm land. As a part of the total number of farm families, however, they are a large and growing percentage. This gives rise to such problems as fitting the families into the life of the community, their children into the rural schools, and of making their limited farming activities as productive as possible. In times of urban unemployment a new set of problems arise.

On the other hand, the business aspects of farming are becoming more evident on the commercial farms. An increasing proportion of the materials used on these farms is purchased on the market, and the income is dependent upon sales on the market. To an increasing extent, farm income is dependent upon the state of the market. The modern commercial farm has few of the characteristics of the typical farm of 1 or 2 generations ago.

With the use of larger units of machinery and newer management methods, the necessary investment in working capital has increased as has also the volume of output which one man can handle. This gives rise to problems of finance. How is the young man to acquire access to the necessary capital to secure and operate a farm? What are the relative merits of owning and renting? The element of managing the available resources becomes an increasingly important item. These are the farms which in the main will produce the food which will be consumed by the city population.

1945 Census of Agriculture

The 1945 census of agriculture just released reveals that most of the trends outlined above continued and were much accelerated during the 5 years 1940-1945. Both the 40- and 80-acre size groups continued to drop sharply. In addition, these were joined by the 120-acre group (100-139 acre) which for the first time registered a significant drop in numbers. The long-time upward trend in the total number of very small or residential and part-time farms appears to have been temporarily slowed down. On the other hand, the trend toward larger farms was much speeded up.

Between 1940 and 1945, the total number of farms in the state dropped from 233,783 to 220,575 and the average size increased from 93.7 to 99.4 acres. During this period, the very small farms increased less than 1 percent, the 40-, 80-, and 120-acre groups dropped 13 percent, and the larger farms increased 17 percent.

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