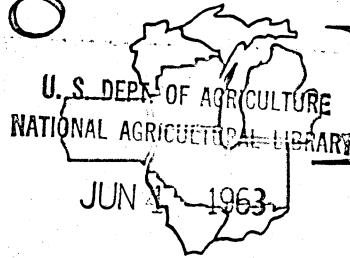


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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

FARM POPULATION continued its long-term decline during 1962 but at a slower rate than in the previous year. Government estimates place the farm population at 14.3 million persons in 1962. This compares with 14.8 million a year earlier and 15.6 million in 1960. Estimates for the preceding years are not comparable because of changes in the definition of a farm.

The farm population now represents about 7.7 per cent of the nation's total population, compared with 8.7 per cent in 1960. This is a "young" population only in the sense that it has a high proportion of children and teenagers—43 per cent of all farm people are under 20 years old, in contrast with 39 per cent of nonfarm people.

Farm Population Continues Steady Decline

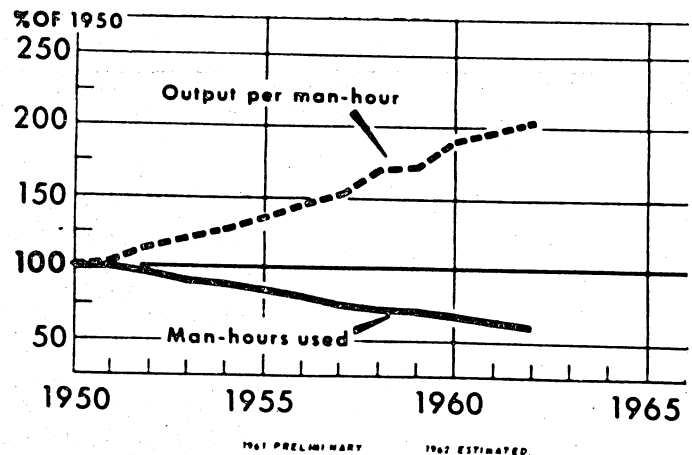
Age	1962 (thousands)	1960	Per cent change
Under 14	4,359	4,995	-12.7
14 - 19	1,812	1,868	-3.0
20 - 24	721	763	-5.5
25 - 44	2,855	3,264	-12.5
45 - 64	3,212	3,453	-7.0
65 and over ...	1,354	1,326	+2.1
Total	14,313	15,635	-8.5

However, the farm population has a rather low proportion of young and early middle-aged adults. Only 25 per cent of the farm population is in the 20-to-44-year-old age bracket contrasted with 31 per cent of the nonfarm population. This reflects the high rate of out-migration that has persisted among young farm adults for the past two decades. In the group over 45 years of age, the migration rate drops rapidly. As a result of the shift from rural to urban areas, farm persons of late middle age or older considerably outnumber young adults. As is true in most occupations, the older one is, the less likely he is to shift to another type of work.

The movements from farm to city are closely tied to job openings, with the demand for workers in nonfarm jobs playing an important role in the decline in farm population. The trend in population also reflects the continued rise in productivity of farm workers as larger equipment and increased mechanization are applied to more and more farm jobs. Other technological advances—such as hybrid seeds and animals, fertilizers, pesticides and weed inhibitors—also boost output per man-hour and help to reduce the number of farm workers required to feed the nation.

Increased mechanization and wide adoption of other technology has reduced the labor requirements in farming by one-third since 1950 while doubling the output per man-hour. Labor productivity has increased in both crop and livestock production, although the gain has been

Man-hours Used Declines as Output Increases



much greater with the former because of a higher degree of mechanization. Crop yields have also risen more than the production per animal.

SUGAR PRICES rose again last week, continuing the upward spiral brought on by short supplies. The latest increase pushed refined sugar prices to \$15.05 per hundredweight. This compares with \$9.80 per hundredweight at the beginning of the year and about \$9.30 a year ago. Propelling the price rise in the refined sugar market is the soaring cost of raw sugar. In New York raw sugar is selling for \$12.30 per hundredweight compared with \$6.45 a year ago—an increase of almost 100 per cent. These prices for both raw and refined sugar are at the highest level at New York since 1920 when World War I damage to European sugar beet crops sent the market soaring.

Behind the price rise are the increasing world consumption of sugar, dwindling supplies resulting from smaller production of the cane crop in Cuba and successive poor harvests of sugar beets in Europe. Latest estimates place Cuban production this year at 3.4 million metric tons compared with a 1962 crop of 4.8 million.

Prices are expected to continue to rise at least until the fall months when growers in the U. S. and Europe begin to harvest sugar beets.

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