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NEWS LETTER

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FARMS IN THE UNITED STATES

SECOND IN FARMS

With 283,496 farms North Carolina ranks second among the states of the Union in total number of farms. Only Texas, with five times the area of North Carolina, ranks ahead of us in total number of farms The table which appears elsewhere ranks the states of the Union according to the number of farms. The parallel column gives the percent gains and losses in the number of farms during the five-year period following 1920. Texas, with 466,420 farms, leads in number. Rhode Island, with only 3,911 farms, comes last in number.

A farm, for census purposes, is all the land which is directly farmed by one person, either by his own labor alone or with the assistance of members of his household or hired employees. When a landowner has one or more tenants, renters, croppers, or managers, the land operated by each is considered a farm.

The U. S. Decreases

During the last five years there has been a net loss of 75,735 farms in the United States. There are 1.2 percent fewer farms today than there were in 1920. It is the first time in the history of the United States that we have experienced a net loss in the number of farms. The increase by decades since 1850 is shown in the following table which gives the number of farms at each census period.

Year	Number of farms
1850	1,449,073
1860	2,044,077
1870	2,659,98g
1880	4,008,907
1890	4,564,641
1900	5,737,372
1910	6,361,502
1920	6,448,343
1925	6,372,608

"The net decrease of 75,735, or 1.2 percent, in the United States total is the result of considerable decreases in some sections of the country, partly offset by increases in other sections. Among the reasons given for decreases in the number of farms were the following: The ravages of the boll weevil in some of the cotton states; the migration of negro farm workers; a succession of dry seasons in parts of the northwest; the consolidation of farms; and a general recession from wartime expansion in agriculture, which still persisted in 1920. Increases have resulted from the opening up of lands in parts of the West; from the sub-division of ranches and large farms for more intensive operation; and from the development of orchards, truck, and poultry farms. The establishment of small truck and poultry farms, especially near cities, accounts for most of the increases shown for New England and some other parts of the East."

North Carolina Second

In 1920 North Carolina, with 269,763 farms, ranked fifth among the states of the Union. In 1925 she ranks second, having supplanted three great agricultural states during the brief period of five years. The states which have been supplanted are Georgia, Kentucky, and Mississippi, all three of which have suffered heavy losses in number of farms. Georgia, the heaviest loser, had 310,732 farms in 1920 and only 249,098 in 1925, a net loss of 61,634, or nearly a fifth of her farms. Kentucky lost 12,116 farms, or 4.5 percent. Mississippi lost 14,868, or 5.5 percent of her farms.

On the other hand North Carolina showed a net gain of 13,732 farms during the five-year period. We now have 5.1 percent more farms than we possessed in 1920. Only two states in the Union showed larger numerical gains than North Carolina, namely, Texas 30,387, and California 18,743. This is rather significant in view of the fact that North Carolina is both small and densely settled compared with Texas and California.

Our Farm Population

At the present time North Carolina has the second largest farm population of all the states. On the farms of this state live approximately one million six hundred thousand people, or 58 percent of our 2,760,000 inhabitants. Missouri, which ranks third in farms and in farm population, lacks more than one hundred thousand of having as many farm dwellers as North Carolina. The farm population of North Carolina is greater than the combined farm populations of Rhode Island, Nevada, Delaware, Arizona, Wyoming, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Utah, Vermont, New Jersey, New Mexico, Massachusetts, and Idaho, greater by several thousands.

A Frontier State

And yet North Carolina is a frontier state. Although she possesses more farm dwellers than any other state except Texas, only one-fourth of the land area of the state is under cultivation. Three-fourths of the land area of the state is in forests, cut-over woodlands, broomsedge, and unused areas. In the Tidewater country alone there is rich wet land which, if drained, could add fifty percent to the present cultivated area of the state. Less than a third of the great Coastal Plains area is under cultivation; less than a third of the vast Piedmont country is under the plow; and less than a fourth of the entire mountain country is tilled, even counting grazing lands. Vast areas in North Carolina contain only a few families to the square mile. Even the most densely populated areas are sparsely settled when compared with many European states.

Why We Increase

The large increase in farms in North Carolina, therefore, is not surprising when we remember that three-fourths of the state is still to be brought under the plow; when we remember that North Carolina is the only state possessing two great cash crops of fairly equal importance; when we remember that the vast Coastal Plains area, because of its natural resources in the way of soils and seasons, aided by favorable location near the northern consuming public, is destined to become the winter garden, or truck producing center of America; when we remember that Piedmont Carolina with her rapidly growing industrial cities is offering larger local markets for home-grown foods and other raw materials; when we remember that even the mountain country, after long years of partial eclipse, promises to stage a boom that will attract as much attention as Florida's show.

Parallel Development

North Carolina is rapidly developing into a great industrial state, but unlike almost all other developing industrial-urban areas, she is not doing it at the expense of the vast rural regions. It is a parallel development that is taking place in this state. Our industrial-urban gains are well known. The fact that during the last five years we have gained 13,732 farms, while the United States lost 75,600, goes to show that the farm situation in North Carolina is relatively good. We should be thankful that we have not suffered the unhappy experiences of Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and other states.—S. H. H., Jr.

THE FARMERS FEDERATION

In Western North Carolina farmers have no special money crops. The major products consist of poultry and eggs and Irish potatoes. Strawberries and such vegetables as tomatoes, cabbage, beans, sweet corn, carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach, and celery are also grown. When individual farmers formerly "sold down" the prices of these perishable products on glutted local markets "the bottom fell out."

In the vicinity of Asheville the Farm Bureau Federation, Inc., a democratic corporation consisting of 2,500 shareholding farmers, represents the outstanding farmers' organization of its kind in the South. Market News, a bulletin published by the Bureau of Markets of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, relates the story of the recent growth of this farmers' cooperative from which we quote:

"Perhaps the most conspicuously successful organization for marketing general farm products to be found in the entire country is doing business in western North Carolina with Asheville as the base of operations. The Farmers Federation, Inc., has just completed a stock drive which added $160,350 to its capital stock, $10,350 more than their objective, and more money is still coming in. The phenomenal growth of this organization during the past five years demonstrates what can be accomplished by and for our rural folk if the undertaking is based on correct principles and if the management is gifted with vision, energy, patience, initiative, and business ability. All of these qualities are possessed to a remarkable degree by the President of the Farmers Federation and his staff and their enthusiasms have infected the membership as well. Beginning with a small neighborhood organization of fifty members and $5,000 in capital stock, the Farmers Federation has increased fifty-fold in membership, now 2,500, and its capital stock is now around $250,000, which will enable it to become a real factor in marketing farm products not only in home territory but in the great eastern markets as well as foreign countries. A remarkable feature about all this is that western North Carolina is not essentially a farming country."—N. C. Cotton Grower.

COOPERATION

California rightfully owes much to its development of cooperative associations. They have given the state a sound and profitable agriculture. They have enabled the state to weather the economic trials following the World War as no other section has been able to do. They have molded the people of California into a unit with a single thought and a single purpose.

Cooperative marketing is the great contribution of California producers to the welfare of their state. It is one of California's contributions to the social and economic stability of the nation.—N. C. Cotton Grower.

TOWN AND COUNTRY

There should always be a spirit of cooperation and friendship between town and country dwellers. Time was (and not so very long ago) when there was a great gulf fixed between the two, and it was taken for granted that what appeared to be in the interest of one was per se inimical to the best interest of the other. Although this feeling is not so strong as it was it still prevails to too great an extent.

So far as fundamental economic principles are concerned, all the people are interdependent, and, therefore, what affects the people of the towns and cities affects to a greater or less extent the people of the rural districts. If the producers of cotton, tobacco, truck and fruit do not prosper on account of certain adverse conditions neither will the business men of the towns and cities prosper, that is, they will not permanently prosper. If the business methods of the city and town men work permanently against the men of the rural districts, those business methods will in the end redound to the hurt of the cities and towns, because the fountain head is the all-important part of the stream and must be fed to give a healthy flow. But the only way in which a fountain head of a stream can get a healthy outlet is through good conditions for its passage to the sea. In other words, if there is to be permanent prosperity in a community, county, or state there must be cooperation between town and country.

Let there be cooperation between town and country, and the best starting point would be in the maintenance of good roads and schools, such as we have in this county and state. Town and country dwellers are benefited alike by good roads and good schools, whose resultant good effects, in accordance with the fixed laws of trade, promote both agricultural and business prosperity.—Sanford Express.

WHAT MAKES A CITY

Our small towns are in grave danger of being strangled by the larger centers. Unless they become choice residential or industrial centers, they have no special attraction to offer home seekers who are moving in every day from rural communities. No man can afford to do business and to rear a family in a dead town. The only place he can afford to move into, small or large, is a choice residence center. Trade, banking, and manufacture can easily make a city big, but they are no guarantee of its being great.

A city is really great when it is the best possible place to live in and to rear children in—which means, the best schools and churches, the best libraries, the best attention to sanitation and health, the wholesomest recreation and the highest morality, the most neighborly and the freest from gossip, feuds, and factions, the keenest sense of civic and social responsibility and the best conditions of law and order, the best market facilities and the most generous concern about progress and prosperity in the surrounding trade area.—Gastonia Gazette.

RURAL ELECTRIC POWER

XII. AMOUNT OF CURRENT USED

Having considered in the preceding article the current requirements of electric appliances used around the farm household, we now turn to the larger farm operations where the spin of the electric motor is made to replace the toil of hand labor. A table showing typical monthly consumption of electricity in kilowatt hours is out of the question here, since farmers differ so much in the kind of apparatus they have use for, and in the amount of work they have to give to the various pieces of apparatus. Instead a table is presented showing consumption of electricity per unit of work done, and cost per unit of work based on a rate of 10 cents per kilowatt hour.

Cost of Current

	K.W.H. per unit	Cost per unit
Grinding corn	.8 per bushel	8.0 cents per bu.
Sawing wood	1.25 per cord	12.5 cents per cord
Pumping water	.5 per 72 gallons	5.0 cents per 72 gal.
Separating cream	.04 per 100 lbs.	0.4 cents per 100 lbs.
Churning butter	.06 per 100 lbs.	0.6 cents per 100 lbs.
Grinding feed	.66 per 100 lbs.	6.6 cents per 100 lbs.
Husking corn	.1 per bu.	1.0 cent per bu.
Milking	.016 per gallon	0.16 cents per gal.
Cutting beets and turnips	.16 per ton	1.6 cents per ton
Cutting ensilage (and elevating it)	.66 per ton	6.6 cents per ton

The rate of 10 cents per kilowatt hour which is the basis of the costs given in the above table is only a rough estimate taken from averages of rural rates in all parts of the country. It is made to include the flat rate for current (which might be only 4 or 5 cents per K. W. H.) plus the rural service charge which public utility companies usually make on account of the increased expense of serving rural customers as compared with city customers. It is hoped that figures on actual rates charged by the power companies of North Carolina may be presented in a later article. If the rate is less than the cautious estimate of 10 cents per K. W. H., as is likely to be the case, then the cost per unit could still be calculated from the table given above. For instance, at a 7 cent rate, the cost of grinding feed would be .66 multiplied by 7, or 4.62 cents per 100 lbs. of feed ground. Grinding corn would cost 5.6 cents per bushel instead of 8 cents, and so on.

Monthly Consumption

In order to get an idea of total monthly consumption of electricity, including both household appliances and farm apparatus, an average based on 77 electrified farms in Pennsylvania has been taken. Small, moderate-sized, and a very few large farms are included. The average monthly consumption was 104.2 kilowatt hours, and the average monthly bill was $8.55. That made the average rate to be 8.2 cents per K. W. H.

All these figures, of course, concern only the farmer who gets his power from a public utility company. In the case of one who generates his own electricity on the premises by means of a water wheel turned by small stream, there is practically no operating expense after the system is once installed. There are thousands of small power sites in Central and Western North Carolina, which, once harnessed, would supply farms with power and light at very little cost. And in the case of one who generates electricity by gasoline or kerosene engine, about the only operating expenses are those of fuel and oil.—A. T. Cutler.

NUMBER OF FARMS IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1925
Percent Increase and Decrease 1920-1925

In the table below the states of the Union are ranked according to the total number of farms in 1925 as recently reported by the U. S. Census Bureau. The accompanying column shows the percent increase or decrease in the number of farms between 1920 and 1925.

U. S. total 6,372,608 farms in 1925 against 6,444,343 in 1920, a decrease of 75,735 farms, or 1.2 percent since 1920. The largest numerical decreases occurred in Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Illinois, Ohio, Arkansas, and Montana. The largest numerical increases occurred in Texas, California, North Carolina, Minnesota, Virginia, Washington, Oregon, and Oklahoma.

North Carolina with 283,495 farms now ranks next to Texas in total number. During the five-year period our numerical gain was 13,732, and only Texas and California had larger numerical increases.

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Rank	States	Number of Farms 1925	Percent Inc. or Dec. 1920-1925
1	Texas	466,420	7.0
2	North Carolina	283,495	5.1
3	Missouri	260,485	—1.0
4	Kentucky	258,510	—4.5
5	Mississippi	257,233	—5.5
6	Tennessee	252,666	0
7	Georgia	249,095	—19.8
8	Ohio	244,707	—4.7
9	Alabama	237,579	—7.2
10	Illinois	225,645	—4.9
11	Arkansas	221,897	—4.6
12	Iowa	213,495	0
13	Pennsylvania	200,420	—0.9
14	Oklahoma	197,226	2.7
15	Indiana	195,806	—4.5
16	Virginia	193,720	4.0
17	Wisconsin	193,133	2.0
18	Michigan	192,326	—2.1
19	New York	188,762	—2.3
20	Minnesota	188,260	5.5
21	South Carolina	172,762	—10.3
22	Kansas	165,880	0.4
23	California	136,413	15.9
24	Louisiana	132,451	—2.2
25	Nebraska	127,830	2.7
26	West Virginia	90,377	3.5
27	South Dakota	79,531	6.6
28	North Dakota	75,969	—2.2
29	Washington	73,271	10.5
30	Florida	59,202	9.6
31	Colorado	58,016	—3.2
32	Oregon	55,911	11.4
33	Maine	50,035	3.7
34	Maryland	48,997	2.3
35	Montana	47,054	—18.4
36	Idaho	40,584	—3.6
37	Massachusetts	33,455	4.5
38	New Mexico	31,690	6.2
39	New Jersey	29,676	—0.1
40	Vermont	27,786	—4.4
41	Utah	26,000	1.3
42	Connecticut	23,237	2.6
43	New Hampshire	21,065	2.6
44	Wyoming	15,511	—1.5
45	Arizona	10,803	8.3
46	Delaware	10,257	1.2
47	Nevada	3,912	23.7
48	Rhode Island	3,911	—4.2