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THE Poultry and Egg SITUATION

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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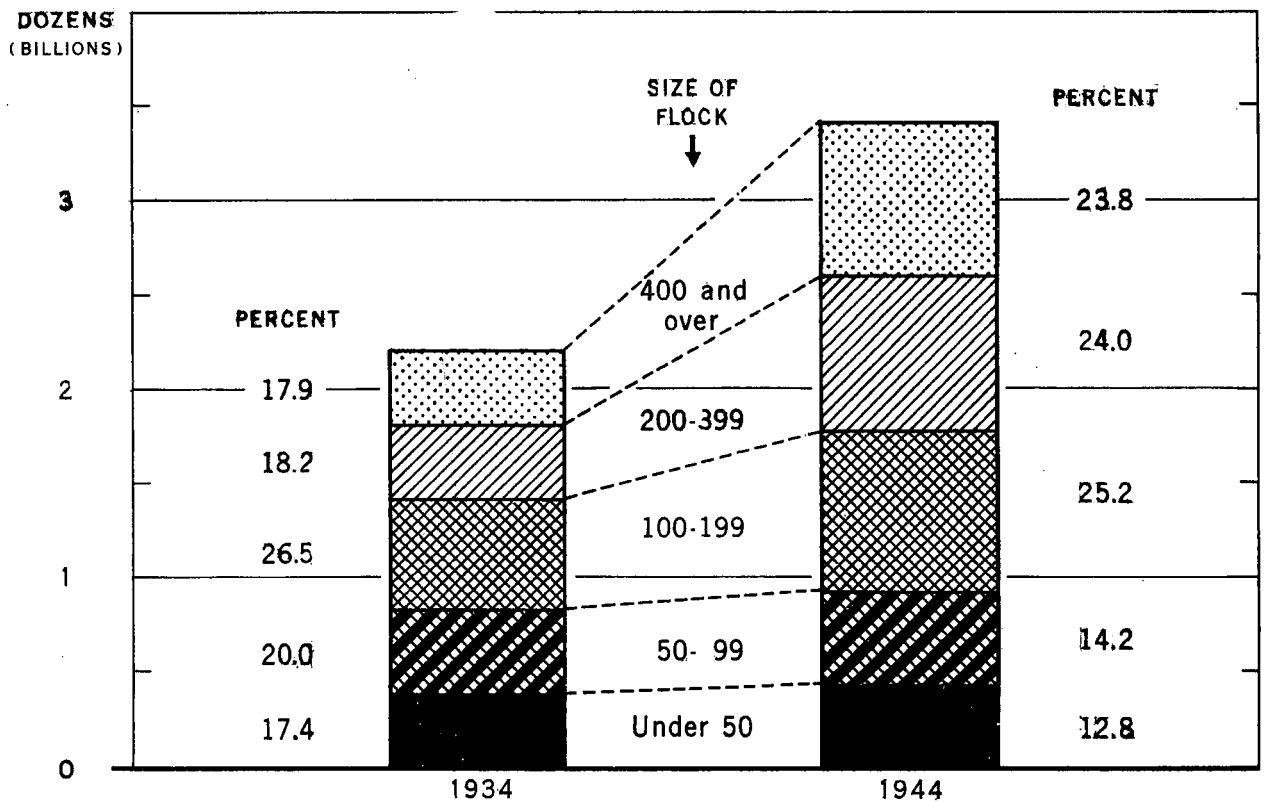
EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK, UNITED STATES, 1934 AND 1944*



*BASED ON U. S. CENSUS DATA ON EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK ON FOLLOWING JANUARY 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NEG. 46708 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Egg production per farm in 1944 was about four-fifths greater than in 1934. This resulted from an increase in the size of poultry farms, and a decrease in the number of farms producing eggs. (See Figure 2.) Total egg output in the United States also rose sharply from 1934 to 1944.

A greater proportion of egg output is coming from large farms. In 1934, farms with 200 or more chickens produced 38 percent of the eggs. By 1944, nearly one-half of the egg production occurred on farms having 200 or more birds.

The Poultry and Egg Situation at a Glance

Item	Unit	Month	Average 1937-46	1947	1948	Month	Average 1937-46	1947	1948	Comments about 1948
Eggs										
Farm production	Mil.doz.	Feb.	327.2	400.5	393.6	Mar.	461.4	513.1	507.8	
Average number of layers on farms	Million	"	367.0	386.0	379.9	"	357.2	375.0	365.9	
Rate of lay per hen	Number	"	10.6	12.4	12.4	"	15.4	16.4	16.6	Continues at a record.
Apparent civilian per capita disappearance	"	"	27.1	33.2	34.0	"	33.4	40.1	39.0	Exceeds any year but 1947.
Frozen egg production	Mil. lb.	"	---	34.3	25.8	"	---	57.3		
Dried egg production	"	"	---	13.2	1.0	"	---	11.2		Far below last year as no purchases by USDA.
Prices received by farmers	Ct. per doz.	Mar.	23.9	40.1	42.6	Apr.	23.7	40.8		Ahead of any March.
Prices received by farmers as a percentage of parity	Percent	"	81	97	92	"	80	97		Above support levels.
Retail price (BAE)	Ct. per doz.	Jan.	39.4	57.5	68.8	Feb.	35.0	53.8	60.6	
Egg-feed ratio	Lb.feed	Mar.	10.6	10.6	9.2	Apr.	10.4	10.4		Less favorable than in 1947.
Stocks: 1/										
Shell	1,000 cases	Feb.	676	221	374	Mar.	2,075	508	1,134	April in-movement about 120 percent ahead of 1947.
Frozen	"	"	1,822	1,962	3,218	"	2,500	2,632	3,828	Increase above last year is Government holdings.
Dried	Mil. lb.	"	---	14.3	27.6	"	---	31.0	11.8	
Chicks hatched	Million	"	95.7	122.2	95.8	"	215.6	255.9	209.3	Eggs in incubators Apr. 1 was 11 percent below that of April 1, 1947.
Chicks and young chickens on farms 1/	"	"	---	---	---	"	180.0	208.6	158.7	
Farm price of poultry ration	Dollars	"	2.23	3.43	4.55	"	2.25	3.77	4.65	
Poultry										
Prices received by farmers for chickens	Ct. per lb.	Mar.	18.5	26.6	27.2	Apr.	19.1	27.7		Exceeded any previous March.
Prices received by farmers as a percentage of parity	Percent	"	110	103	96	"	112	106		
Retail price of chickens (BAE)	Ct. per lb.	Jan.	34.9	52.9	56.9	Feb.	34.8	49.9	55.5	
Prices received by farmers for turkeys	"	Mar.	22.2	29.7	37.0	Apr.	22.0	30.0		
Stocks: 1/										
Poultry, excluding turkeys	Mil. lb.	Feb.	118.2	157.7	192.4	Mar.	136.0	133.7	151.1	A record.
Turkeys	"	"	54.3	126.2	70.0	"	44.5	108.8	55.0	
Chicken-feed ratio	Lb. feed	Mar.	8.4	7.1	5.8	Apr.	8.5	7.1		
Turkey-feed ratio	"	"	9.8	7.9	8.0	"	9.6	7.7		
Receipts of poultry at Central Western Primary Market, per plant	1,000 lbs.	Feb.	7.6	4.9	8.8	Mar.	5.9	4.5	4.2	

1/ End of month.

THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION

Approved by the Outlook and Situation Board, April 16, 1948

Contents

SUMMARY

Farmers received an average of 42.6 cents per dozen for their eggs in mid-March, 2.5 cents more than on March 15, 1947 and the highest price on record for the month. Egg prices are likely to continue above last year, reflecting smaller production and continued strong demand. If farmers carry out their intentions to plant feed grains and if yields are about average, the relation between egg and feed prices in the last half of 1948 will be more favorable to producers than in the last half of 1947.

Although egg production in each of the next three quarters is expected to be from 3 to 8 percent less than in the same quarters of 1947, supplies for domestic use will not be correspondingly lower. In the second quarter, supplies for domestic use will be about the same as last year, since little, if any, purchasing will be done by the United States Department of Agriculture for export. In April-June 1947, the Department bought 135 million dozen of shell egg equivalent. In the third and fourth quarters, supplies will be only about 2 to 5 percent less than in 1947 since more eggs will be available from cold storage. Egg consumption in the first quarter of 1948 was about 107 per person, the same as last year and a record for the quarter.

The United States laying flock at the beginning of 1949 is expected to be about 5 percent smaller than on January 1, 1948. Commercial hatchings are currently about one-tenth below last year. The number of chicks and young chickens on farms this April 1 was 24 percent below the previous. April 1. But the average number of layers on farms in March was 2 percent below last year.

On January 1, 1948, 428 million hens and pullets were on farms, 2 percent less than a year earlier and 20 percent below the peak of January 1, 1944. The decline in poultry numbers is part of the adjustment of livestock numbers to smaller feed supplies and higher feed prices. But substantial differences have occurred among regions in the size of the laying flocks. In the North Atlantic States, chicken numbers have changed little in recent years and are substantially above prewar. On the other hand, numbers in the North Central States are about the same as those of the late twenties, 20 percent above the late thirties and 17 percent below 1944. In the Western States, laying flocks are slightly below those of the late twenties and early thirties. There has been a very substantial increase in the rate of lay in the Nation's laying flock. For instance, although the size of the laying flock was about the same at the beginning of 1928, 1942 and 1947 egg production in 1947 was 14 percent above 1942 and 43 percent above 1928. Regionally, the sharpest rises in the rate occurred in the North Central and Northeastern States.

Commercial broiler production is increasing despite relatively low prices. This largely results from the increased efficiency in unit output per pound of feed. In 1947, the number of commercial broilers produced was 283 million, 3 percent above 1946. Prices received by broiler growers were one-half cent a pound less while feed prices averaged 20 percent higher.

Egg production per farm in 1944, based on Census data, was about 80 percent greater than in 1934. Regional increases ranged from 20 percent for the Pacific States to 150 percent for the West South Central. The increase in production per farm is partly due to a shift from small units with less than 50 birds to large units with more than 200 birds.

OUTLOOK

Demand for Eggs Continues Strong

Demand for eggs was stronger during the first quarter of 1948 than in the first quarter of 1947. Per capita consumption from January through March 1948 was nearly 107 eggs per person. This is approximately the same as the first quarter of 1947 which was a record high. Farmers' prices for eggs from January through March averaged 45.4 cents per dozen, 14 percent above the first quarter of 1947. In mid-March they were 42.6 cents a dozen, 2.5 cents above March 1947, and higher than in any other March. For the first quarter of this year, prices received by farmers averaged 90 percent of parity.

Egg prices at least for the next two quarters of 1948, are likely to average moderately higher than in the same quarters of 1947. The prospect that consumer incomes will decline little, if any, during the remainder of 1948 will tend to keep demand strong. Another factor that will tend to keep egg prices above 1947, particularly during the second quarter, is the strong storage demand for shell eggs. (See February-March, Poultry and Egg Situation.) However, the seasonal rise from March and April to November and December may not be as great as the 40 percent rise of last year.

Egg Supplies to Remain Moderately Below 1947

Smaller supplies of eggs and meats than last year will strengthen egg prices during the remainder of 1948. Meat supplies during each of the next three quarters will be about 10 percent below those of the same quarters of 1947. Egg production during the next three quarters probably will be 3 to 8 percent below the same quarters of 1947. Egg production during the first quarter of 1948 totaled 1,263 million dozen, 30 million dozen below the January-March 1947 output. But consumption was about the same this year as no purchases of eggs for price support or export were made by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The United States Department of Agriculture may not buy any eggs for price support in April-June. If purchases are required, they will be much smaller than in the second quarter of 1947. This will permit about as many eggs for current consumption even with a larger into-storage movement in the second quarter of this year as in the same period of 1947. During April-June 1947 the USDA purchased 135 million dozen equivalent of shell eggs for price support. This year the Department has not purchased any eggs for price support or export since egg prices have been averaging 90 percent of parity, the minimum required by the Steagall Amendment. In fact, the Department has sold some of the Government owned frozen eggs for export only.

During the last 6 months of 1948, egg supplies are likely to be 2 to 5 percent below the same period of 1947. More shell eggs from cold storage will be available for domestic use than in 1947. The into-storage movement of shell eggs during March and April was about double last year's. On April 1, cold storage stocks of shell eggs were 1.2 million cases, 626,000 more than a year earlier.

Commercial into-storage movement of frozen eggs has been about as large as last year. Total frozen stocks, however, are larger but the difference is represented largely by Government holdings.

Egg-Feed Price Ratio Likely to Improve

The relation between egg prices and feed prices during the last half of 1948 will be more favorable to egg producers than in the last half of 1947, if the farmers carry out their planting intentions and yields are average. On March 1, farmers planned to increase the total acreage of four principal feed grains about 3 percent over 1947. If yields are about the same as the 1942-46 average, total 1948 production of the four principal feed grains would be about 116 million tons, 21 percent larger than in 1947. The total supply of the feed grains, however, would be only about 13 percent larger than last year since the carry-over into 1948-49 will be much less. With a smaller number of livestock in prospect for 1948-49, feed grain supplies per grain-consuming unit would be around 10 to 15 percent greater in 1948-49 than in 1947-48.

These increases in feed supplies will tend to lower feed prices during the coming fall and winter. With egg prices higher than last year and feed prices lower, the egg-feed price ratio may be at least 10 percent higher in the second half of 1948 than in the second half of 1947. In mid-March, the egg-feed price ratio was 13 percent below March 1947 and considerably below the average for that month.

Poultry Numbers Declining

There were 428 million hens and pullets on farms January 1, 1948. This was 2 percent fewer than on January 1, 1947. By the beginning of 1949, the size of the National laying flock may be down another 5 percent.

The number of chicks and young chickens on farms April 1, 1948 was 159 million, 24 percent below a year earlier. On the basis of recent hatchery reports, the output of baby chicks during April and May is likely to be about 10 percent less than in 1947. These figures indicate at least a 10 to 15 percent reduction from 1947 in the number of chickens raised in 1948.

The decline in poultry numbers is part of the over-all adjustment of livestock numbers to smaller feed supplies and higher feed prices. The supply of feed concentrates per grain-consuming animal unit for the current feeding year is 11 percent below 1946-47. Livestock numbers have been declining steadily since 1944. On January 1, 1948, the number of animal units was 133 million, 4 percent below a year earlier and 23 percent below the 1944 peak.

Area Adjustments in Poultry Numbers

The number of hens and pullets on farms at the beginning of 1948 was 20 percent below the peak in 1944, the same as in 1942, about 15 percent above 1935-39 (table 1). There have been, however, pronounced regional shifts in poultry numbers. At the beginning of 1948 the number of chickens in the North Atlantic area was only slightly below the wartime peaks but about 50 percent higher than in the late twenties and thirties. The number of layers in this area moved steadily upward from 1933 to 1944. In contrast, the South Central and Western regions show little change in numbers of layers from those of the late twenties, but have slightly more than in the late thirties. On the other hand, the number of birds in the East North Central region was about the same as in the late thirties and somewhat less than in the late twenties.

In the West North Central area, sharp changes in poultry numbers occurred in the late thirties and early forties. Because of the droughts, the number of layers by 1938 was one-fourth below that of the late twenties. Beginning with 1939, numbers rose and by 1944 were 50 percent higher than in 1938. A decrease of about 20 percent has occurred since 1944.

Area Changes in Egg Production

Egg production in 1947 was 14 percent higher than in 1942 and 43 percent higher than in 1928, even though the number of hens and pullets on farms at the beginning of each of the 3 years was nearly the same. The astounding increases in output were due to the rising rate of lay. Production per hen and pullet on farms at the beginning of 1947, was 127 eggs compared with 114 in 1942 and 91 in 1928. (Table 2.) The rate of lay was fairly steady in the late 1920's and early 1930's. But since 1934, it has increased at an average rate of 3 percent per year. This resulted from: (1) better breeding, (2) better management, (3) better feeding, and (4) the shift from farm hatchings to commercial hatchings which resulted in a more rapid dissemination of improved strains.

Table 1.- Potential layers on farms January 1, U. S. and by regions, 1925-48.

(Index numbers 1925-29 = 100)

Year	U. S.	N. A.	E.N.C.	W.N.C.	S. Atl.	S. C.	West.
1925	96.2	99.5	99.7	97.7	97.5	92.4	86.3
1926	97.0	99.4	100.1	99.0	95.7	93.1	90.5
1927	102.2	100.2	103.2	102.0	101.7	103.6	100.1
1928	105.3	102.9	101.5	101.7	107.6	110.3	113.7
1929	99.3	98.0	95.5	99.6	97.5	100.6	109.4
1930	103.6	103.2	98.2	105.7	99.0	103.4	114.7
1931	99.0	96.6	96.9	99.4	93.5	97.0	114.6
1932	95.1	96.8	93.9	93.4	92.8	95.4	102.2
1933	96.3	99.5	95.6	93.4	95.1	100.0	95.9
1934	94.9	100.5	97.2	93.9	89.0	93.1	96.7
1935	86.3	96.8	88.8	80.0	86.6	86.3	88.5
1936	89.3	101.1	93.3	81.9	88.5	88.7	92.7
1937	93.6	111.9	95.8	81.9	94.4	96.3	98.0
1938	87.0	103.4	87.0	76.1	87.7	91.3	92.6
1939	92.9	110.2	89.6	86.2	92.7	97.9	89.0
1940	96.7	116.8	92.1	90.7	95.1	101.2	96.0
1941	93.9	113.1	90.3	89.3	92.9	95.9	92.3
1942	105.4	123.9	97.0	102.7	102.3	111.4	103.5
1943	120.5	145.0	107.0	121.2	112.9	128.6	112.1
1944	129.0	159.5	113.3	127.5	126.0	137.0	121.7
1945	116.7	150.4	102.8	115.9	116.7	120.2	106.5
1946	116.8	154.7	103.8	115.0	115.7	118.4	108.3
1947	107.3	142.0	97.1	106.8	107.9	104.3	99.8
1948	105.4	146.3	95.8	103.8	101.5	100.4	101.6

Table 2.- Number of eggs produced per hen and pullet on farms, January 1, United States, and by regions, 1925-47

(Index numbers 1925-29 = 100)

Year	U. S.	N. A.	E.N.C.	W.N.C.	S. Atl.	S. C.	West.
1925	97.2	98.3	96.8	96.8	97.7	96.3	97.7
1926	102.6	99.3	101.1	101.4	102.3	106.1	104.7
1927	100.4	100.2	100.0	100.2	104.7	103.7	99.5
1928	98.3	98.4	98.9	100.2	96.5	95.1	96.0
1929	101.5	103.8	103.2	101.4	98.8	98.8	102.1
1930	100.4	102.0	103.2	101.4	97.7	93.9	101.2
1931	103.7	106.6	106.4	103.7	101.2	98.8	102.9
1932	101.5	106.6	104.3	97.9	101.2	100.0	102.1
1933	98.3	105.6	101.1	97.9	101.2	91.5	100.3
1934	96.1	105.6	97.9	97.9	96.9	91.5	102.1
1935	103.7	112.0	107.4	100.2	98.8	97.6	104.7
1936	102.6	112.9	104.3	95.6	101.2	98.8	109.0
1937	106.9	113.8	109.6	103.7	103.5	100.0	109.9
1938	114.5	120.2	116.0	116.4	110.5	109.8	106.4
1939	111.2	118.4	116.0	112.9	105.8	104.9	106.4
1940	109.1	117.5	113.8	110.6	107.0	100.0	103.8
1941	118.8	126.6	122.3	122.1	109.3	113.4	109.0
1942	123.1	128.4	126.6	130.2	114.0	115.9	108.1
1943	121.0	123.0	124.5	126.7	112.8	114.6	110.7
1944	121.0	123.0	126.6	129.0	109.3	113.4	110.7
1945	127.4	121.1	134.0	139.4	116.3	119.5	115.1
1946	126.3	122.0	133.0	141.7	115.1	114.6	113.3
1947	137.1	138.4	142.6	148.6	120.9	122.0	123.7

Table 3.- Farm egg production, United States, and by regions, 1925-47

(Index numbers 1925-29 = 100)

Year	U. S.	N. A.	E.N.C.	W.N.C.	S. Atl.	S. C.	West.
1925	93.3	97.8	96.5	94.4	95.4	89.2	84.4
1926	99.4	98.7	101.5	100.6	98.6	98.7	94.7
1927	103.0	100.6	102.9	101.8	106.2	107.7	99.4
1928	103.1	101.1	100.6	102.0	103.9	104.7	109.7
1929	101.2	101.8	98.5	101.2	95.9	99.7	111.6
1930	104.2	105.6	101.8	107.4	96.8	97.2	116.2
1931	102.8	103.2	103.0	103.1	94.4	95.7	118.4
1932	96.8	103.5	98.5	91.1	94.2	95.5	104.5
1933	94.7	105.0	96.4	91.4	91.4	91.3	96.4
1934	91.8	105.9	95.6	85.9	86.5	84.8	91.8
1935	89.7	108.5	95.5	79.9	86.0	84.6	92.7
1936	92.1	114.0	97.7	77.9	89.5	87.7	101.3
1937	100.2	127.6	104.8	84.7	97.3	96.2	107.9
1938	99.7	124.1	101.1	88.4	97.0	100.7	98.5
1939	103.6	130.8	104.1	97.5	97.9	102.6	94.6
1940	105.9	136.7	105.0	100.3	101.4	100.7	99.5
1941	111.7	142.9	110.7	108.6	101.7	108.4	100.8
1942	129.6	159.3	123.0	133.8	116.7	128.7	112.3
1943	145.5	178.5	133.4	154.1	128.0	146.8	124.3
1944	156.1	196.0	143.3	163.8	138.0	155.2	156.1
1945	149.0	181.9	138.4	161.5	135.3	143.9	149.0
1946	148.3	187.5	138.4	162.6	133.4	135.2	122.5
1947	147.5	197.9	139.6	159.5	131.6	128.3	122.0

The changes among regions in the rate of lay are even more striking. Compared with the later 1920's, the East and West North Central States have shown increases of 42 and 48 percent, respectively. The North Atlantic region has increased almost 40 percent. On the other hand, increases in the South Atlantic, South Central, and Western areas have been only about one-fifth.

Because of an increase in the number of potential layers and the sharp rise in the rate of lay, 1947 egg production in the North Atlantic region was about double that of the late 1920's. In all other areas, the increases since the late 1920's has been due mainly to the rising rate of lay. Production in the West North Central area in 1947 was about 60 percnet above the late 1920's and in the South Atlantic and East North Central regions 30 to 40 percent higher. In the Western and South Central areas, the rise since the late 1920's has been 20 and 28 percent, respectively.

Commercial Broiler Output for 1947 Increases Despite Lower Prices

Placement of chicks on farms for broiler raising during February and March was running about 15 percent ahead of the same month of 1947. This occurred despite the fact that relation between broiler prices and feed prices has not been as favorable as in early 1947. Broiler prices for the first quarter have been running about 30 percent higher, but feed prices have been about 35 percent ahead of last year.

The number of broilers produced in 1947 was 283 million, 3 percent above 1946, and 18 percent below the previous peak in 1945. The increase over 1946 occurred despite the fact that the average price received by broiler growers in 1947 was one-half cent less than in 1946, and feed prices during 1947 averaged about 20 percent higher than in 1946.

The commercial broiler industry has shown remarkable growth during the past 15 years. In the early 1930's, output was less than 50 million birds. The record of 345 million was set in 1945.

The tremendous improvement in the efficiency in unit output partly explains the increases in the broiler industry in the last few years. In 1946 and 1947 at least 20 percent more chicken meat was being obtained from a pound of feed than in the late 1930's. The decrease in the time necessary to raise a broiler to marketing age is among the factors responsible for this increase in efficiency. For example, it took about 15 to 16 weeks to raise a broiler in the late 1930's while in the last 2 years about 13 weeks has been sufficient. Another reason for increased efficiency is the decline in death loss due to better management and improved breeds. Broiler production requires relatively lower fixed outlays than do some alternative activities, and with commercial hatcheries, numbers can be increased very rapidly.

Poultry Products Account for the Smallest Proportion of Farm Income in 1947 in Two Decades

Last year was the only year in the past 10 in which poultry products did not account for at least 10 percent of farmers' receipts. Cash receipts from poultry and poultry products in 1947 reached a record 2.9 billion dollars; but were only 9 percent of the total receipts from farm marketings and 17 percent of the receipts from livestock and livestock products.

The proportion of farmers' receipts coming from poultry and poultry products increased steadily up to 1943. From 1910 to 1920, poultry and poultry products accounted for about 8 percent of total receipts. The proportion increased to about 10 percent in the late 1920's. From 1935 to 1939, farmers received slightly more than 10 percent of their cash receipts from poultry and poultry products. In 1943, the proportion reached a record 13 percent.

Receipts from poultry products in relation to livestock and livestock products increased sharply during the war. The proportion of income coming from poultry in relation to livestock and livestock products income decreased substantially in 1946 and 1947.

Table 4. - Cash receipts from poultry and products

Year	Eggs	Chickens	Commercial broilers	Turkeys	Total poultry and products	Total poultry and poultry products as a percentage of: Total livestock and livestock products	Total poultry and poultry products as a percentage of: Total farm marketings
	Mil. dol.	Mil. dol.	Mil. dol.	Mil. dol.	Mil. dol.	Percent	Percent
1925-29 Av.	690	341	---	---	1,091	18.8	10.0
1935-39 Av.	485	213	39	63	812	17.9	10.2
1940	468	199	72	78	827	16.9	9.9
1941	663	264	103	98	1,141	17.6	10.2
1942	1,017	389	155	145	1,724	19.0	11.2
1943	1,445	696	238	160	2,570	22.4	13.2
1944	1,365	635	227	199	2,455	21.7	12.1
1945	1,500	696	309	245	2,784	23.2	12.9
1946	1,480	632	269	268	2,681	19.6	10.9
1947	1,772	552	291	227	2,871	16.8	9.5

World Egg Production Substantially Below Prewar

The unfavorable 1947 grain harvest in Europe and reduced output of feed grain in United States will not permit any substantial increase in world egg production and chicken numbers in 1948. In 1947, poultry numbers and egg production in Central and Western Europe were about three-fourths of those in the years just before World War II. Because of increases in North America, world egg production for 1947 is reported at 80 to 85 percent of prewar.

Chicken numbers in 1947 for most European countries were below prewar. However, numbers in Spain, France, Ireland and the Scandinavian countries had almost recovered to prewar levels. On the other hand, the large prewar exporters of eggs and egg products--Denmark, Poland, and Belgium--had poultry populations one-fourth to two-thirds those of prewar. In the United Kingdom, chicken numbers were about 10 percent below prewar.

In sharp contrast to the situation in Western Europe, chicken numbers in the United States and Canada increased substantially during the war. In Canada, chicken numbers in 1947 were about one-half greater than in 1934-38. In a few small Near Eastern countries, such as Lebanon, Palestine and Syria, poultry numbers were about the same or moderately larger than in prewar. Australia also indicated an increase in egg production.

(NOTE: The above statement is based on reports issued by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations in Foreign Crops and Markets for March 29, 1948; also, a recent publication by Food and Agriculture Organization on Poultry and Eggs.)

EGG PRODUCING UNITS ARE BECOMING LARGER AND FEWER

Among the most important changes which have been occuring in American agriculture during the past decade or so have been the decline in the numbers of farms and an increase in output. In 1944, for example, the total number of farms in the United States was 5.9 million--13 percent less than in 1934. On the other hand, the agricultural plant produced about one-third more. The egg enterprise has shown similar trend.

Farms reporting production of eggs in 1944 produced on the average 82 percent more eggs than in 1934. Output per farm in the New England and West South Central regions more than doubled. The smallest gain occurred in the Pacific States where production per farm rose only about one-fifth. In all other regions, the increase was from 50 to 100 percent.

In 1934, egg production per farm was the largest in the Pacific States. But in 1944 production per farm was larger in the New England and Middle Atlantic States than in the Pacific areas.

The large increases in egg production per farm resulted in part from an increase in the scale of poultry farms and a decrease in the number of farms. An additional factor was the rise in production per layer. (See discussion on page 6.)

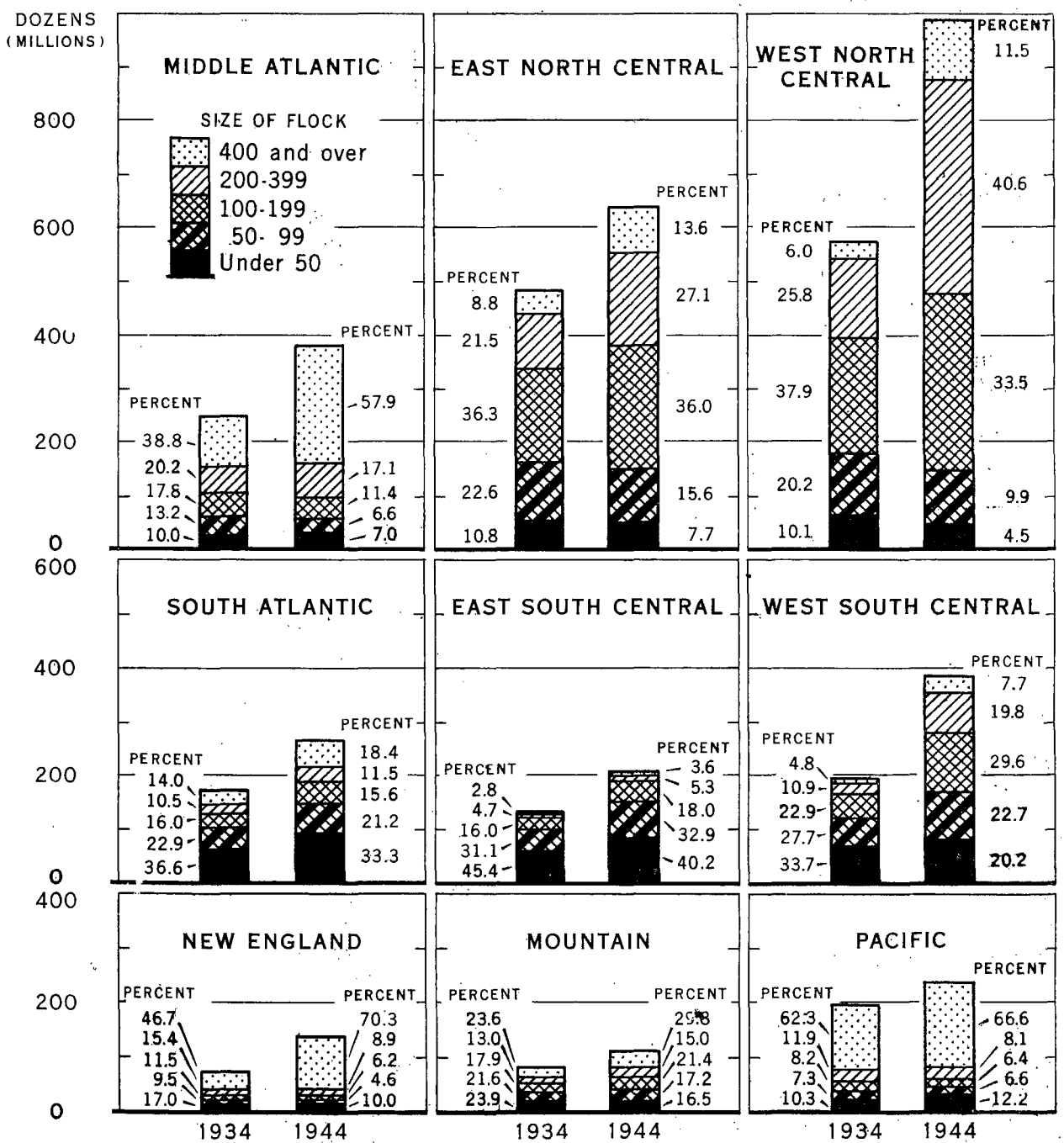
Table 5.- Eggs: Average production per farm reporting 1934 and 1944, United States and by regions, United States Census

Region	1934	1944	1944 as a percentage of 1934
	Dozen	Dozen	Percent
New England	760	1,722	227
Middle Atlantic	792	1,538	194
East North Central	528	830	157
West North Central	566	1,124	199
South Atlantic	180	309	172
East South Central	139	253	182
West South Central	206	510	248
Mountain	429	697	162
Pacific	1,045	1,266	121
United States	387	706	182
S. Dak.	419	1025	245

In 1944, eggs were produced on 4-3/4 million farms, compared with nearly 5.6 million farms in 1934, a decrease of 15 percent. (Table 7 and figure 2.) Decreases of 15 to 20 percent occurred in the North and South Central States, in the New England and Middle Atlantic States. The number of farms producing eggs in the Pacific States changed little. These shifts have been brought about by a reduction in the number of farms with less than 100 chickens and large increases in the proportion of farms with more than 200 chickens. In 1934, 80 percent of the farms had less than 100 birds and produced 37 percent of the eggs. In 1944, only 72 percent of the farms had less than 100 birds and produced about 27 percent of the eggs. On the other hand, the number of farms with more than 200 birds rose from almost 6 percent in 1934 to more than 11 percent in 1944. Accordingly, the proportion of the eggs produced by the larger farms, (farms with 200 birds or more) increased from 36 percent in 1934 to almost 50 percent in 1944.

The most significant changes in the size of farm flocks occurred in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and North Central States. In these areas, the shift from the small to large flocks was very pronounced. In each region, the number of farms with more than 200 birds at least doubled from 1934 to 1944. Little change occurred in the size or distribution of farm flocks in the Mountain and Pacific areas since these regions already were highly commercialized by the early 1930's. In the South Central States some moderate shifts from the small to large flocks took place. However, in both the East South Central and West South Central States most of production is still in the flocks with less than 100 birds.

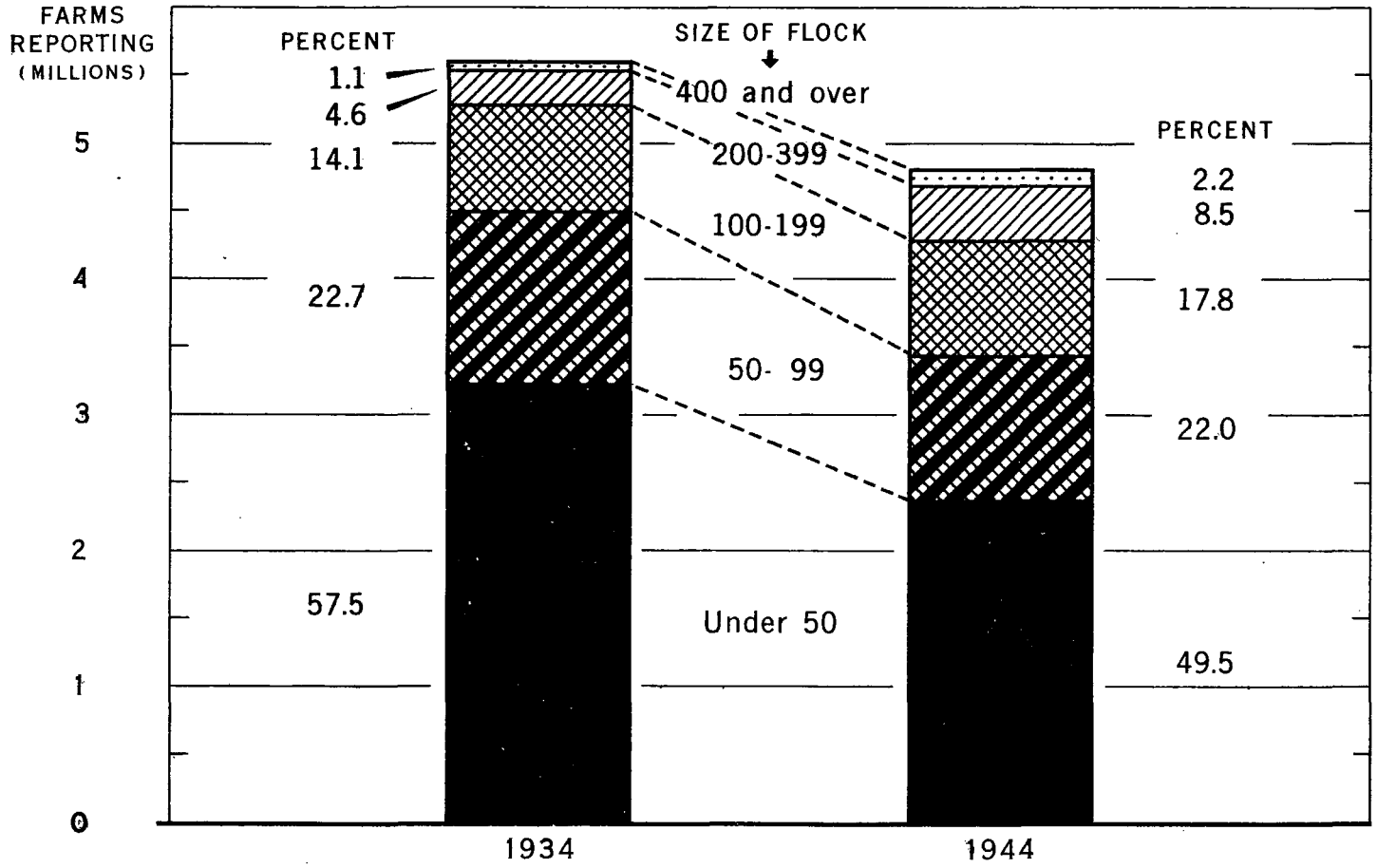
EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK, BY REGIONS, 1934 AND 1944*



*BASED ON U. S. CENSUS DATA ON EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK ON FOLLOWING JANUARY 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FIGURE 1 NEG. 46709 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

FARMS REPORTING EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK, UNITED STATES, 1934 AND 1944*



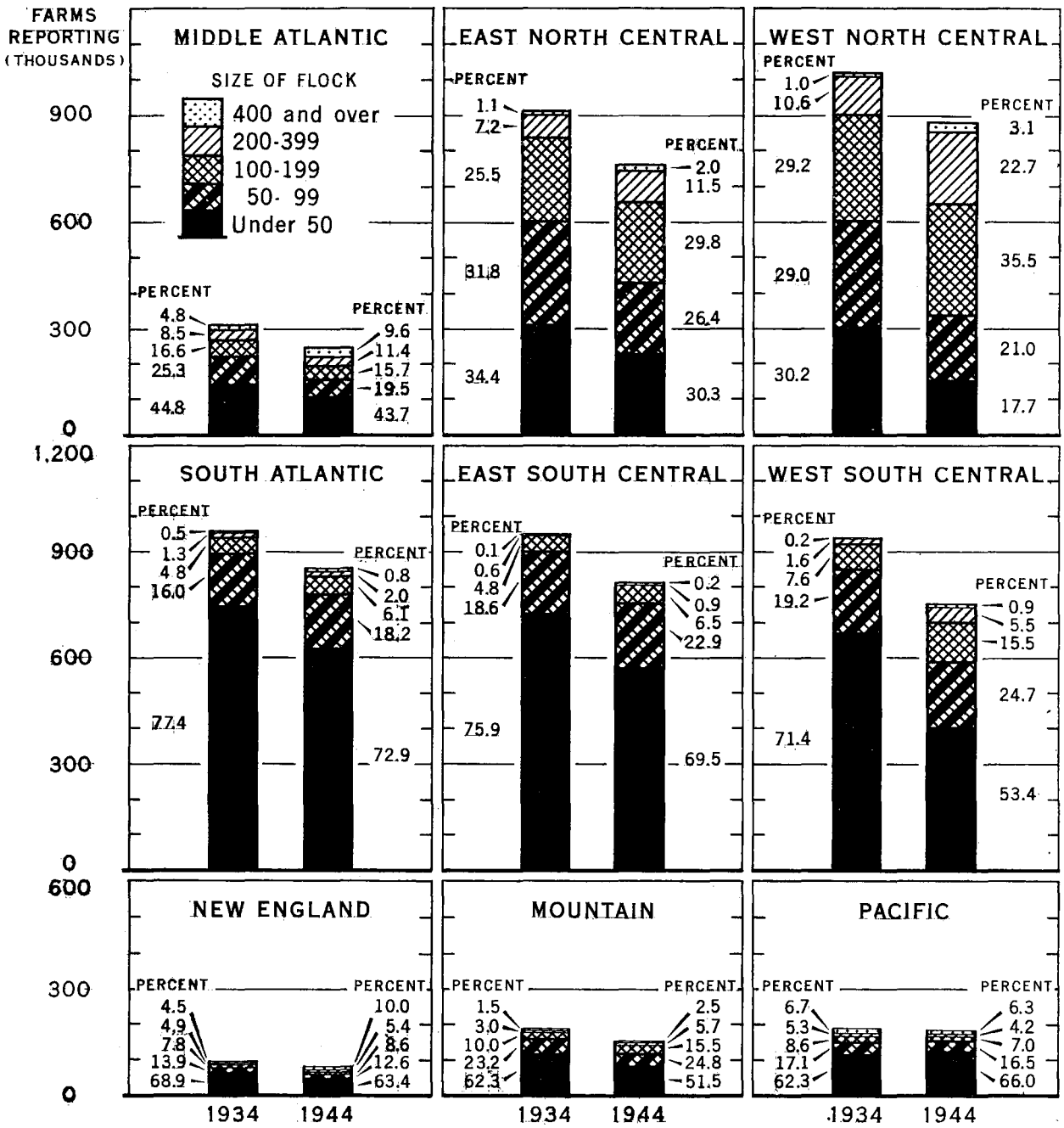
*BASED ON U. S. CENSUS DATA ON FARMS PRODUCING EGGS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK ON FOLLOWING JANUARY 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FIGURE 2 NEG. 46710 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Fifteen percent fewer farms were producing eggs in 1944 than in 1934. But the number of large farms (those with 200 or more birds) almost doubled during the decade.

About one-half of the egg-producing farms in 1944 had less than 50 birds and produced 13 percent of the total egg output (see cover chart). In 1934, 58 percent of the farms had less than 50 birds, and produced 17 percent of the output.

FARMS REPORTING EGG PRODUCTION CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK, BY REGIONS, 1934 AND 1944*



*BASED ON U. S. CENSUS DATA ON FARMS PRODUCING EGGS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF FLOCK ON FOLLOWING JANUARY 1

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FIGURE 3

NEG. 46711 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Table 6.-Egg production classified by size of flock on following January 1, United States and by regions, 1934 and 1944, U. S. Census

(Data for cover chart and figure 1)

Region	Under 50		50 to 99		100-199		200-399		400 and over		Total	
	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
N. Eng.	17.0	10.0	9.5	4.6	11.5	6.2	15.4	8.9	46.7	70.3	100.0	100.0
M. Atl.	10.0	7.0	13.2	6.6	17.8	11.4	20.2	17.1	38.8	57.9	100.0	100.0
E. N. C.	10.8	7.7	22.6	15.6	36.3	36.0	21.5	27.1	8.8	13.6	100.0	100.0
W. N. C.	10.1	4.5	20.2	9.9	37.9	33.5	25.8	40.6	6.0	11.5	100.0	100.0
S. Atl.	36.6	33.3	22.9	21.2	16.0	15.6	10.5	11.5	14.0	18.4	100.0	100.0
E. S. C.	45.4	40.2	31.1	32.9	16.0	18.0	4.7	5.3	2.8	3.6	100.0	100.0
W. S. C.	33.7	20.2	27.7	22.7	22.9	29.6	10.9	19.8	4.8	7.7	100.0	100.0
Mount.	23.9	16.5	21.6	17.2	17.9	21.4	13.0	15.0	23.6	29.8	100.0	100.0
Pac.	10.3	12.2	7.3	6.6	8.2	6.4	11.9	8.1	62.3	66.6	100.0	100.0
U. S.	17.4	12.8	20.0	14.2	26.4	25.2	18.2	24.0	17.9	23.8	100.0	100.0
S.D.	17.7	3.7	22.6	10.0	35.0	35.4	17.2	43.0	2.4	7.9	100.0	100.0

Table 7.-Eggs: Number of farms reporting production by size of flock on following January 1, United States and by regions, 1934 and 1944, U. S. Census

(Data for figures 2 and 3)

Region	Under 50		50 to 99		100-199		200-399		400 and over		Total	
	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
N. Eng.	65.4	51.5	13.2	10.2	7.4	7.0	4.7	4.4	4.3	8.1	95.0	81.2
M. Atl.	139.2	108.6	78.5	48.5	51.4	38.9	26.4	28.3	14.9	23.8	310.4	248.1
E. N. C.	314.9	231.5	291.3	202.0	233.6	227.9	65.7	88.2	9.7	15.3	915.2	764.9
W. N. C.	307.9	156.4	296.4	185.7	298.1	312.8	107.7	199.8	10.6	27.4	1,020.7	882.2
S. Atl.	743.3	624.1	154.0	156.0	46.0	52.6	12.4	16.8	4.5	6.7	960.2	856.3
E. S. C.	724.1	567.7	177.5	186.8	45.9	53.0	5.5	7.8	0.9	1.6	953.9	816.9
W. S. C.	671.9	402.5	181.0	186.2	71.1	117.0	15.5	41.6	2.1	6.6	941.6	753.9
Mount.	119.2	81.5	44.4	39.2	19.0	24.6	5.8	9.1	2.8	3.9	191.2	158.3
Pac.	119.1	124.7	32.6	31.1	16.4	13.3	10.1	7.9	12.8	11.8	191.0	188.8
U. S.	3,204.9	2,348.8	1269.0	1,045.7	788.9	847.2	253.9	403.8	62.5	105.2	5,579.2	4,750.7
S.D.	27.3	7.8	22.4	12.2	16.7	22.8	4.5	15.1	0.4	1.4	71.3	59.3

Table 8.-Eggs: Percentage distribution of farms reporting production by size of flock on following January 1, United States and by regions, 1934 and 1944, U.S. Census

(Data for figures 2 and 3)

Region	Under 50		50 to 99		100-199		200-399		400 and over		Total	
	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944	1934	1944
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
N. Eng.	68.9	63.4	13.9	12.6	7.8	8.6	4.9	5.4	4.5	10.0	100.0	100.0
M. Atl.	44.8	43.7	25.3	19.5	16.6	15.7	8.5	11.4	4.8	9.6	100.0	100.0
E. N. C.	34.4	30.3	31.8	26.4	25.5	29.8	7.2	11.5	1.1	2.0	100.0	100.0
W. N. C.	30.2	17.7	29.0	21.0	29.2	35.5	10.6	22.7	1.0	3.1	100.0	100.0
S. Atl.	77.4	72.9	16.0	18.2	4.8	6.1	1.3	2.0	0.5	0.8	100.0	100.0
E. S. C.	75.9	69.5	18.6	22.9	4.8	6.5	0.6	0.9	0.1	0.2	100.0	100.0
W. S. C.	71.4	53.4	19.2	24.7	7.6	15.5	1.6	5.5	0.2	0.9	100.0	100.0
Mount.	62.3	51.5	23.2	24.8	10.0	15.5	3.0	5.7	1.5	2.5	100.0	100.0
Pac.	62.3	66.0	17.1	16.5	8.6	7.0	5.3	4.2	6.7	6.3	100.0	100.0
U. S.	57.5	49.5	22.7	22.0	14.1	17.8	4.6	8.5	1.1	2.2	100.0	100.0
S.D.	38.3	13.2	31.5	20.6	23.4	38.4	6.4	25.4	0.4	2.4	100.0	100.0

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