

consumption. Farmers also find it difficult to handle commercial poultry because of the high labor requirement for crops during the harvesting and marketing period. Some shifts can be made in acres of individual crops, but at present no new crop appears feasible for the area. The present crops grown are well adapted to the area as a whole and the experiences of most agricultural workers are favorable for their production.

Therefore the best opportunity to increase income is to increase production per acre. This can be done by improving the present level of farm practices such as using higher rates of fertilizer, better insect and disease control programs, doing a better job of seed bed preparation, growing more cover crops, and a recognition of the importance of better crop selection for different types of soil.

RATES OF CROP PRODUCTION WITH NORMAL AND IMPROVED PRACTICES

In order to show changes in net incomes that might be expected if farmers raised their general level of practices, data are presented showing normal practices and yields in the Plant City area and estimated yields that might be obtained if improved practices were followed. Data are also presented on a per acre basis showing the gross value of selected crops and the cost of fertilizer, seed, spray and dust materials, containers, and selling cost with normal and improved practices. A comparison is then made for representative farms showing estimated net income with normal practices and net income that might be obtained if improved practices were used. Rates of crop production with normal and improved practices are discussed in this section.

Normal practices and rates of production were determined from data obtained from various studies in the Plant City area.⁶ Data for each crop were checked with agricultural workers and

⁶It is realized that practices and rates of production vary widely between farmers and from year to year. By normal practices, it is meant the ones that are followed by the largest number of farmers. Normal rates of production are those that one would expect if the normal practices were used and there were no extreme variations in weather conditions. In determining normal practices and rates of production, data from all of the studies in the Plant City area were considered. Tentative figures were determined for practices and yields for each crop, but these were checked with agricultural workers and farmers in the area in arriving at a final figure. For a discussion of labor and materials used on crops in the Plant City area see Florida Agricultural Experiment Station bulletin 489, "Labor and Material Requirements for Crops and Livestock—II Truck Crops" by A. H. Spurlock, Donald L. Brooke, and R. E. L. Greene.