

Tenure of Farm Operators

Tenure patterns in farming have changed. Part-owner operators have increased as a percentage of all farmers. The proportion of full owners has declined only slightly, while the percentage of tenant-operated farms has declined significantly.

The proportion of tenants in each sales class and for all farms decreased from 1969 to 1974, reflecting farmers' long-held desire to acquire farmland and the ability to do so. But at the same time, the proportion of full owners declined only slightly. In 1974, 62 percent of farms were classified as full owners, 27 percent as part owners, and 11 percent as tenants. Full owners mostly dominated in farms with sales of less than \$20,000 (73.4 percent), and accounted for less than one-third of the farms with sales of more than \$100,000. By contrast, part owners were the majority in farms with sales of more than \$100,000--accounting for nearly 60 percent (table 12).

This trend in resource ownership structure is projected to continue into the future. Part owners are likely to account for more than one-third of all farms, while the share of tenants will decline from 11 percent in 1974 to 7 percent in 2000. The share of full owners is likely to remain the same. Full owners will be concentrated mostly in small farms and will account for only 16 percent of

Table 11--Farm operator replacement rates

Item	1964-74	1974-84	1984-94	1994-2004
			<u>Percent</u>	
Replacement rate on farms with sales of: ^{1/}				
\$100,000 or more	296	299	293	145
less than \$100,000	44	47	42	32
Total	51	56	63	53
			<u>Thousands</u>	
Net entry of operators under 35 years	475	452	405	284
Net exit of operators over 55 years	930	811	650	537

^{1/} Percentage of exiting operators over 55 years of age replaced in the following decade by entering operators under 35 years at the beginning of the decade.

Source: Adjusted 1974 Census of Agriculture and Projection. See text for details.