

2
494

ALABAMA AGRICULTURE 1950 - 1976

RALPH BROWN BRADSHAW
LIBRARY
FEB 3 1978
AUBURN UNIVERSITY



Ala. agric. Expt. Sta. Bulletin
Ad.
Years of
Change & Progress

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION/AUBURN UNIVERSITY
R. DENNIS ROUSE, Director
AUBURN, ALABAMA

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
INTRODUCTION	3
FARM AND NONFARM INCOME CHANGES IN ALABAMA	4
Changes in Sources of Employment and Income in Alabama	4
Changes in Sources of Farm Income in Alabama	7
Changes in the Distribution of Farm Receipts per Farm	9
Changes in Prices Received and Paid by Alabama Farmers	9
CHANGES IN FARM RESOURCE USE AND EFFICIENCY	11
Changes in Farm Numbers and Size	13
Farm Labor	16
Farm Land and Buildings	18
Fertilizer Use	19
Production Expenses	21
Productivity	22
LEGAL ORGANIZATION OF FARMS	22
CHANGES IN CROP AND LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISES	24
Crops	26
Livestock	35
RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF MAJOR CROPS IN TERMS OF HARVESTED ACREAGE	38
CHANGES IN ALABAMA'S SHARE OF NATIONAL PRODUCTION	39
SUMMARY	42
SELECTED REFERENCES	43

FIRST PRINTING 4M, OCTOBER 1977

*Information contained herein is available to all without regard to race,
color, or national origin.*

Alabama Agriculture 1950-1976: Years of Change and Progress

S. R. Spurlock and J. L. Adrian*

INTRODUCTION

AGRICULTURE has undergone many changes during the last quarter of a century. These changes have resulted from factors both from within and outside the agricultural sector and, particularly from international developments. The changes have generally reflected positively on the viability and versatility of the agricultural industry.

Alabama agriculture is constantly adjusting to changes in prices and productivities of inputs and to changes in demand for products. Technological developments, relative input prices, and government programs have influenced the utilization of inputs and thus, the supply of agricultural products. Demand for these products has changed in response to increases in disposable income, shifts in tastes and preferences, population growth, and development of foreign markets.

This report reflects in a descriptive way the impact of factors such as these on Alabama agriculture. Forecasts are not included although they can be implicitly derived from the presentation of historical data. This bulletin serves two purposes: (1) it provides a reference source identifying characteristics of Alabama agriculture, and (2) important secular trends in Alabama agriculture can be identified and analyzed to provide incentive for future research endeavors.

Secondary data from national and State sources are utilized. Charts and graphs are developed to depict trends in Alabama agriculture.

*Former Graduate Research Assistant and Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology.

When United States and Alabama data are compared, semi-log plotting is utilized to reflect both percentage and absolute changes in the respective characteristics. Equal slopes of the relationships indicate equal percentage rates of change for the characteristics considered; that is, parallel lines would indicate that the rates of change for the factors are the same.

Two definitions of what constitutes a farm have been used since 1950. Analyses made in this report utilize the definition prevailing at each point in time. The data taken from the 1950 and 1954 Censuses of Agriculture used a definition of a farm as any operation of 3 or more acres if the annual value of agricultural products, exclusive of home-garden products, amounted to \$150 or more. Places of less than 3 acres were counted only if the annual value of sales of agricultural products amounted to \$150 or more. The 1959, 1964, 1969, and 1974 Censuses of Agriculture defined a farm as any place of less than 10 acres from which \$250 or more agricultural products were sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year, or any place of 10 acres or more from which \$50 or more of agricultural products were sold.

FARM AND NONFARM INCOME CHANGES IN ALABAMA

During the 1950-1975 period, Alabama per capita income increased from \$880 to \$4,215, a 379 percent increase, while nationally the increase was 264 percent, \$1,496 to \$5,448, figure 1. In actual income, however, the gap between U. S. and Alabama per capita income widened from \$616 in 1950 to \$1,233 in 1975. While Alabama's rate of income growth was slightly higher than the national rate between 1961 and 1974, the situation worsened in terms of actual income.

Changes in Sources of Employment and Income in Alabama

Farming as a source of employment and income has decreased in relative importance since 1960, figure 2. Farm employment was 10.9 percent of total employment in 1960 and 6.2 percent in 1975. As a source of income, farming has decreased from 6.6 to 3.1 percent of all Alabama income.

Total Alabama employment has increased from 1,074,200 workers in 1960 to 1,334,930 workers in 1975. Employment in manufacturing has increased from 23.9 to 27.8 percent of the total. The income generated from manufacturing has increased from 27.1 to 28.5 percent of the total. Government's shares of employment and income

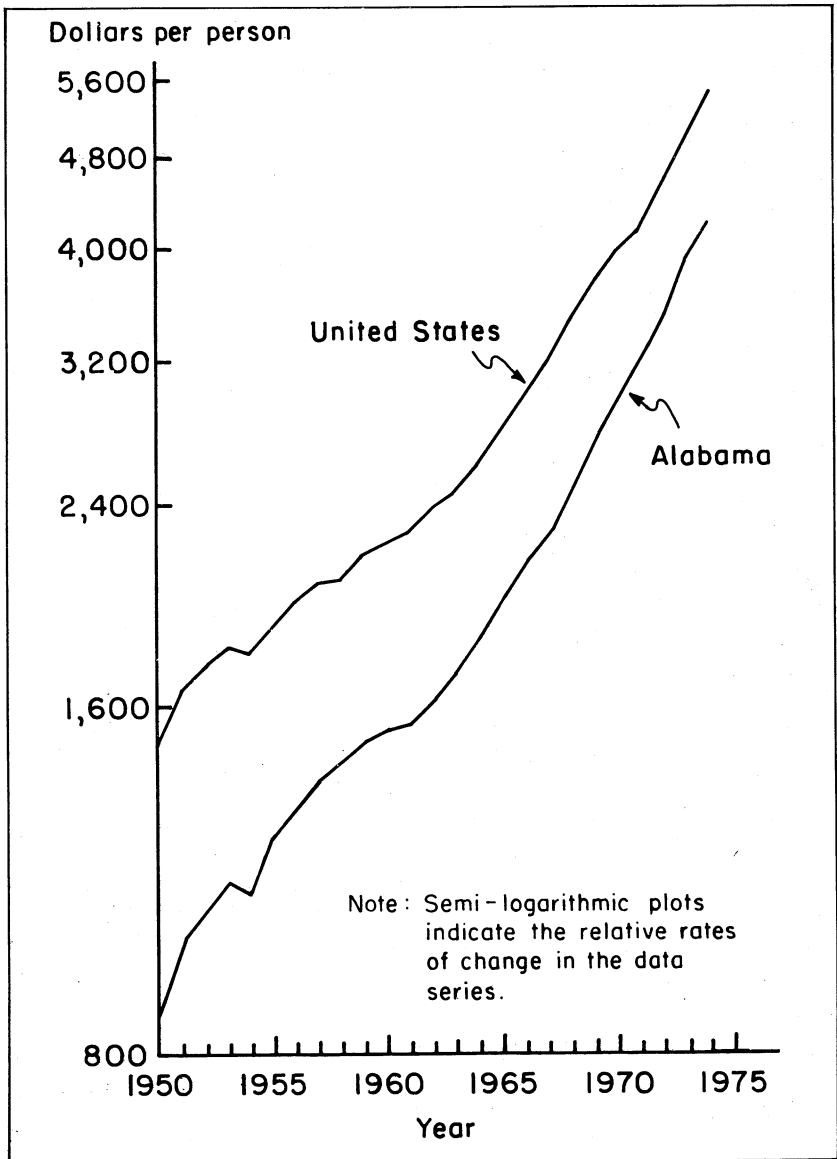


FIG. 1. Trends in per capita personal income, United States and Alabama, 1950-1974.

were 5.7 and 17.2 percent, respectively, in 1960 and 6.1 and 20.7 percent, respectively, in 1975.

Gross and net incomes per farm for Alabama have been below national averages since 1950, figures 3 and 4. As indicated by the de-

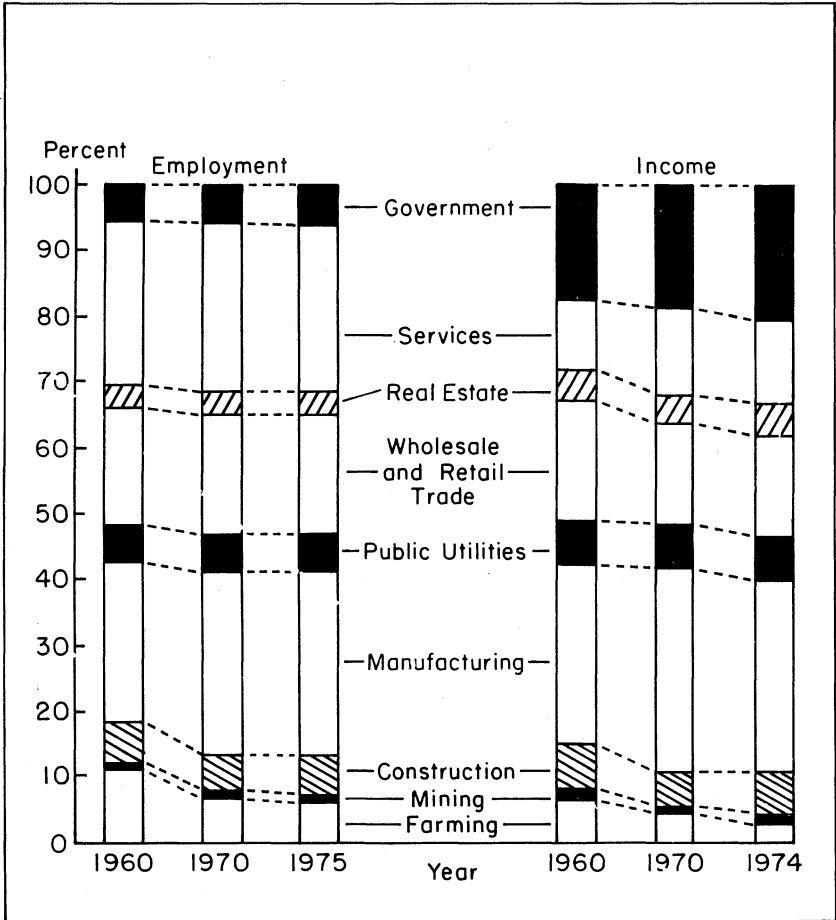


FIG. 2. Trends in sources of employment and income in Alabama.

clining distance between the semi-log plots, gross income per farm in Alabama increased more rapidly than did national averages between 1958 and 1972, 171 percent increase versus 208 percent. However, U. S. gross income per farm grew more rapidly than Alabama gross income per farm after 1972. Alabama gross income per farm was 39 percent of U. S. gross income per farm in 1950 and 58 percent in 1975. In absolute terms, the gap had increased from \$3,470 in 1950 to \$14,711 in 1975.

Alabama net income per farm reflected more variability than did national net income per farm. Alabama net income per farm was 51 percent of the national average in 1950 and 58 percent in 1975. In absolute terms, the differential was \$1,112 in 1950 and \$3,437 in 1975.

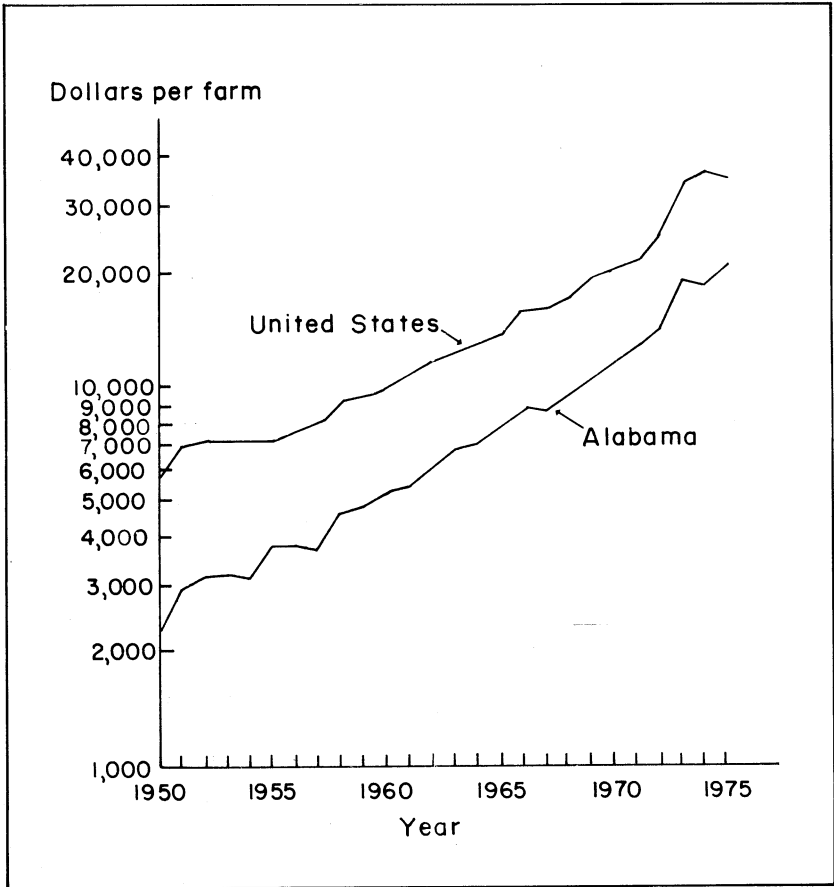


FIG. 3. Trends in gross income per farm, United States and Alabama, 1950-1975.

Changes in Sources of Farm Income in Alabama

The income data used in this section include only income generated from farming activities. However, many farmers received additional income from off-farm employment. Also, government payments have been excluded. These sources of income have had a substantial effect on total income for many farmers.

There have been many changes in the makeup of Alabama's agricultural sales over the last 25 years, figure 5. Livestock and livestock products have increased in relative importance as a source of revenue. In the 1950-54 period, livestock and livestock products accounted for 39.4 percent of farm income. This increased to 65.5 percent in the 1970-74 period. A major source of this increase has been the sale of broilers. Receipts from broiler sales increased from 4.6 percent of total

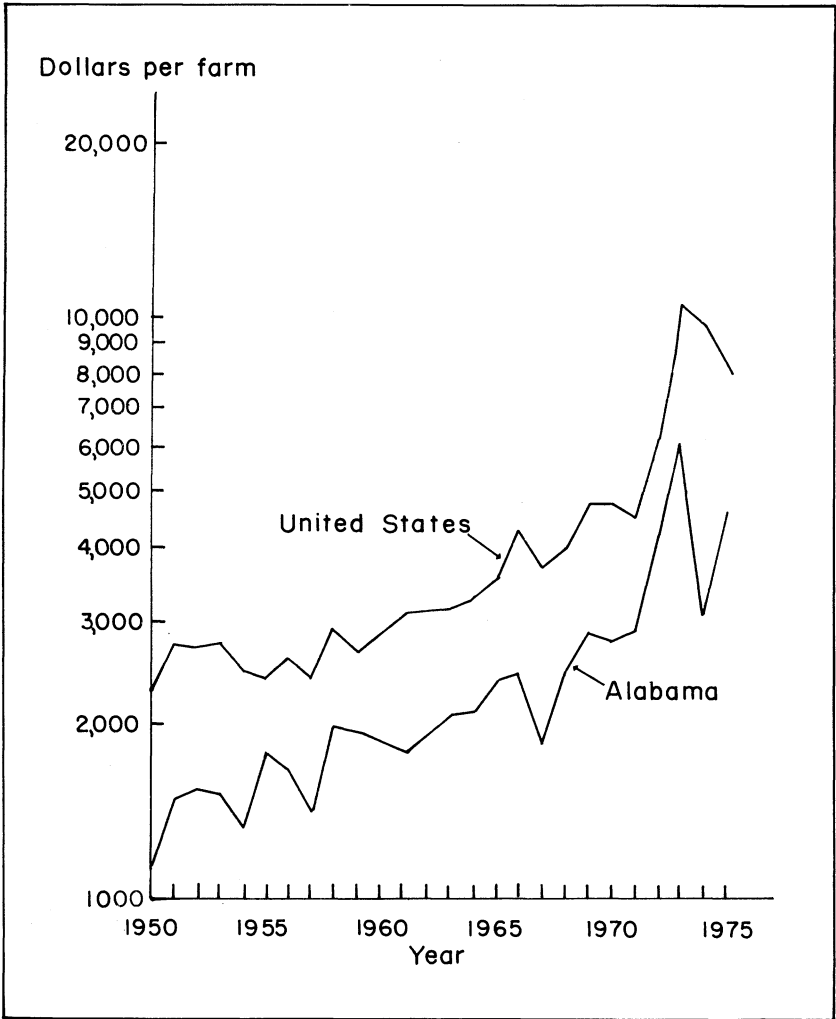


FIG. 4. Trends in net income per farm, United States and Alabama, 1950-1975.

in the 1950-54 period to 23.1 percent in the 1970-74 period. The relative importance of cattle and calves has also increased. In the 1950-54 period, cattle and calves represented 11.0 percent of all cash receipts. By the 1970-74 period, the percentage increased to 17.0 percent.

The decline in cotton as a source of revenue has been dramatic. In the 1950-54 period, cotton accounted for 39.7 percent of all farm revenue, while it was only 8.8 percent in the 1970-74 period. The proportion of farm income from soybeans increased from .9 percent to 7.4

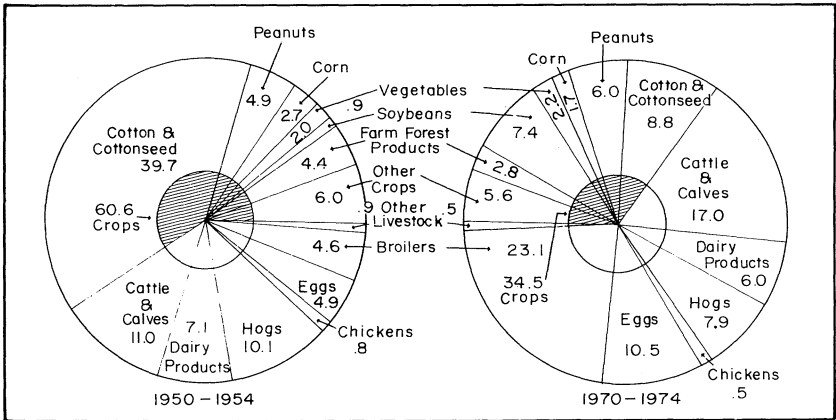


FIG. 5. Average percentage contributions of various crops, livestock, and products to total cash receipts for 1950-1954 and 1970-1974 periods, Alabama.

percent. The percentage of farm income from peanuts, vegetables, and other crops has remained relatively stable over the last 25 years. The category “other crops” includes potatoes, sweet potatoes, all hay, peaches, pecans, wheat, greenhouse and nursery, and others.

Changes in the Distribution of Farm Receipts per Farm

The distribution of Alabama farms by economic classes for the years 1950 and 1974 is shown in figure 6. The trend has been for a greater percentage of farms to shift into a higher economic class. Of all farms with sales of over \$2,500, the largest increase has been in the \$40,000 and over. This class increased to 23.0 percent by 1974. The proportion of farms selling \$20,000 to \$39,999 increased from 3.4 percent in 1950 to 12.5 percent in 1974. Farms with annual sales of \$10,000 to \$19,999 increased from 7.7 percent to 15.9 percent during this same period. Farms in the \$5,000 to \$9,999 class decreased from 25.1 percent to 21.0 percent, while those farms selling \$2,500 to \$4,999 decreased from 62.7 percent to 27.6 percent.

Changes in Prices Received and Paid by Alabama Farmers

The index of prices paid has risen almost every year since 1950.¹ The index of prices received by Alabama farmers has been more erratic, but has not decreased below the 1966-1968 index value of 100 since 1950, figure 7. The gap between the prices paid index and the

¹An index of prices paid by Alabama farmers is not calculated. Thus, the U.S. index was used as a proxy for the Alabama index. This does not result in a large discrepancy because input prices differ little across the nation especially when transportation costs are considered.

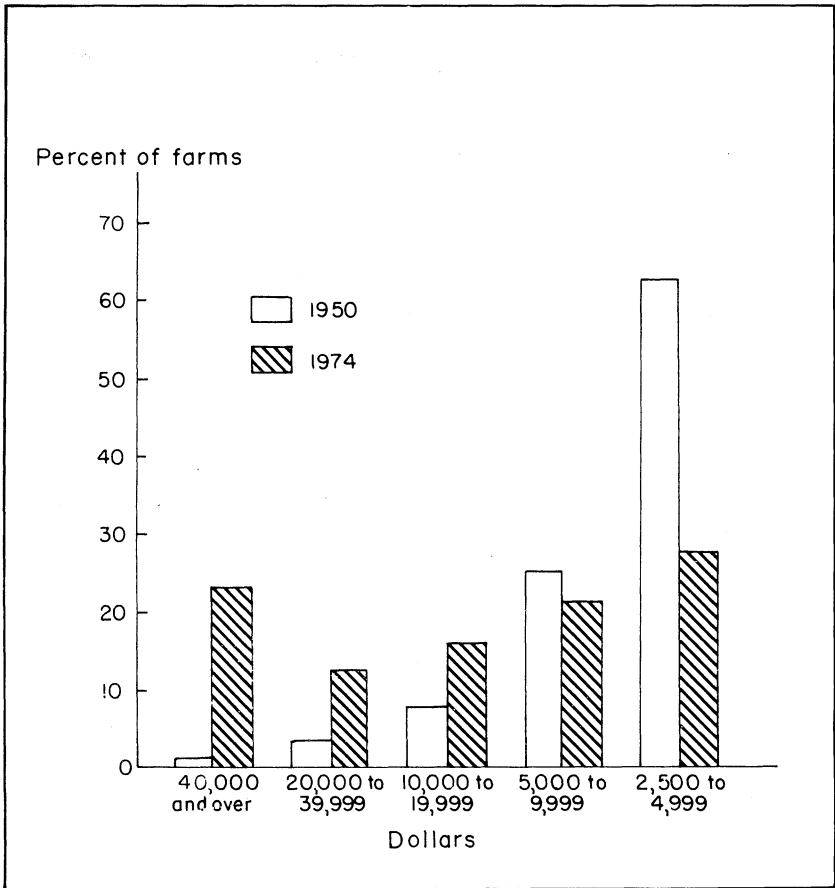


FIG. 6. Percentage of Alabama farms in economic classes, 1950 and 1974.

prices received index has narrowed. In the period from 1967 to 1972, the index of prices paid was higher, but in 1973 the index of prices received rose to 176. Input prices also increased dramatically to 145 percent of the base in 1973 and to 186 percent of the base in 1976.

The parity ratio (Index of Prices Received divided by Index of Prices Paid times 100) is another measure of farmers' relative purchasing power, figure 8. Based on this ratio, Alabama farmers generally lost purchasing power of a given quantity of agricultural output for the period 1950 to 1975. The parity ratio was a high of 157 in 1951 and a low of 89 in 1971. However, the parity ratio reflects only changes in prices and not changes in productivity. Thus, if productivity (output per unit of input) has increased, the relative position of the farmer may not be adequately represented by the parity ratio.

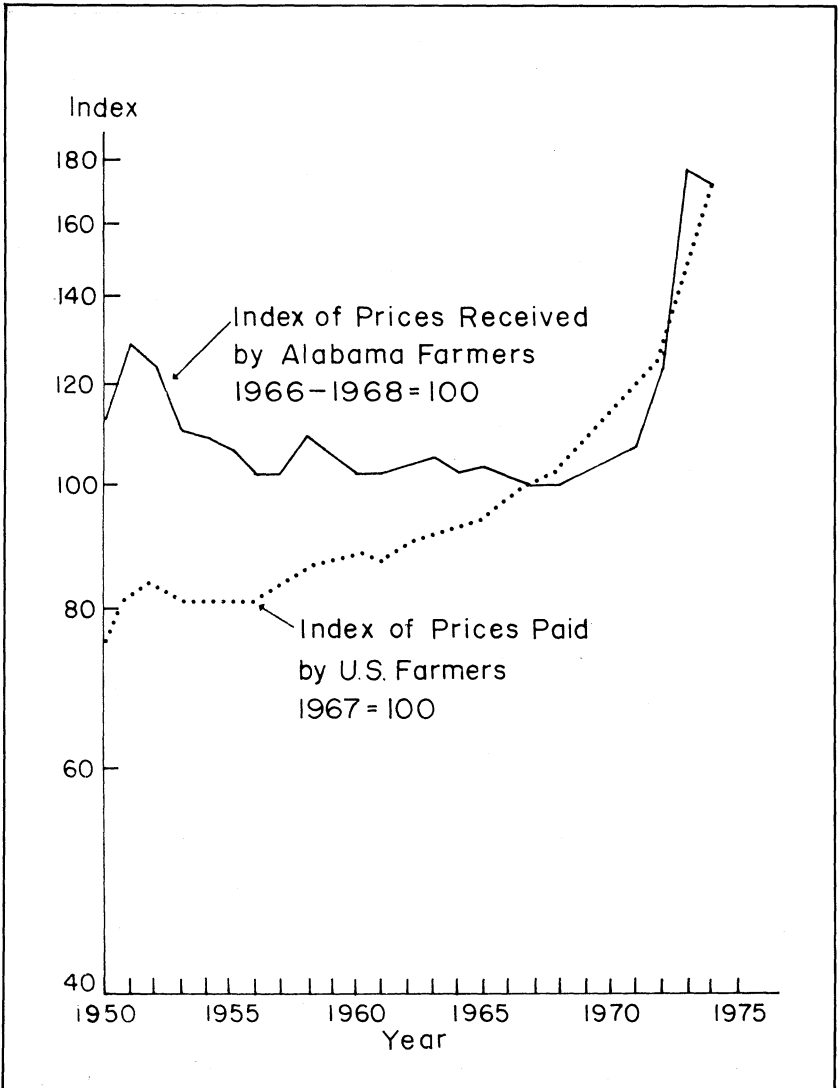


FIG. 7. Index of prices received by Alabama farmers and index of prices paid by United States farmers, 1950-1976.

CHANGES IN FARM RESOURCE USE AND EFFICIENCY

Dramatic adjustments have been made in the quantity, quality, and organization of resources used by Alabama farmers. Purchased capital inputs have replaced substantial quantities of inputs that formerly originated on the farm. Modern advances in machinery, fertilizers, seed varieties, breeds, pesticides, and feed additives have enabled fewer

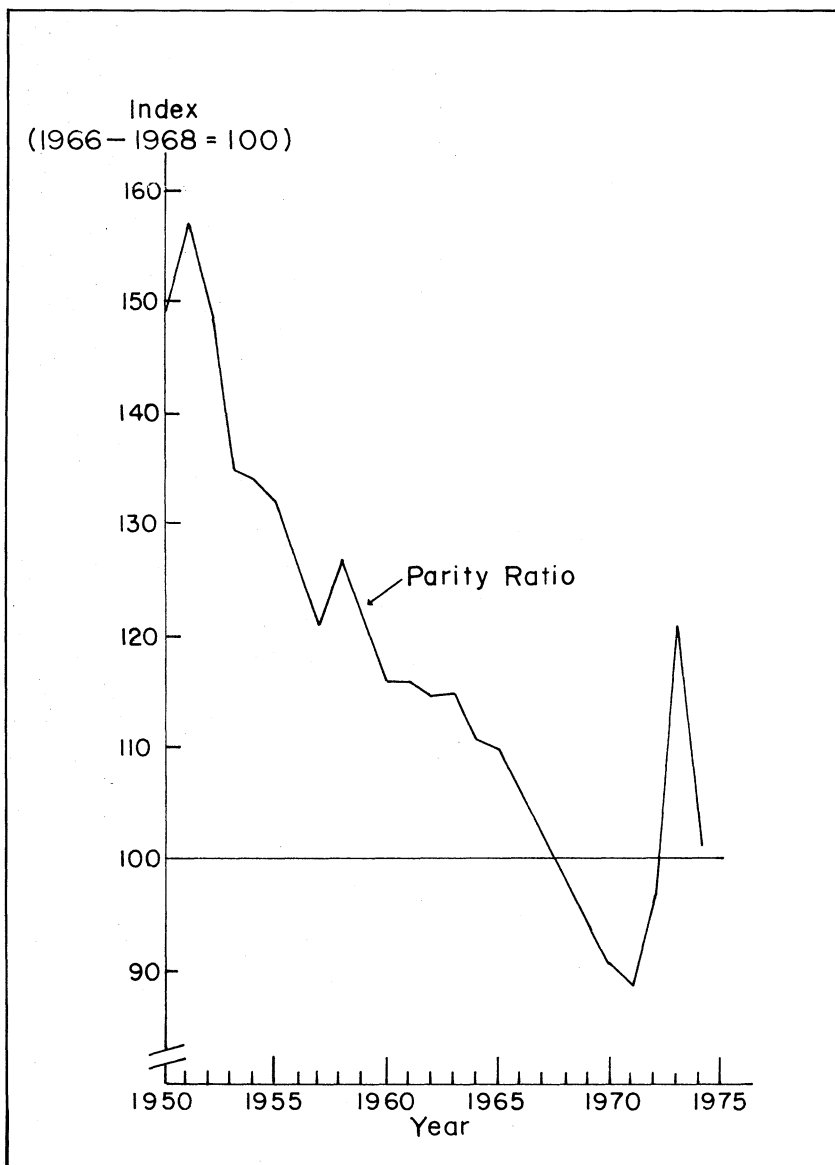


FIG. 8. Ratio of indexes of prices received to prices paid by Alabama farmers, 1950-1974.

farmers to produce even greater levels of agricultural output. There has been only a moderate increase in total input use due to reductions in labor requirements, an earlier phase-out of farm produced animal power, and improved management and organization.

Changes in Farm Numbers and Size

Figure 9 illustrates the decline in farm numbers and the increase in acreage per farm between 1950 and 1974. Each series has been plotted with semi-log vertical axes so that line segments of equal slope represent equal percentage rates of change. The period between 1954 and 1959 had the greatest rate of decline in farm numbers. Over the 24-year period, farm numbers decreased from 211,500 to 60,000. During this same period, average farm size increased from 98.8 acres

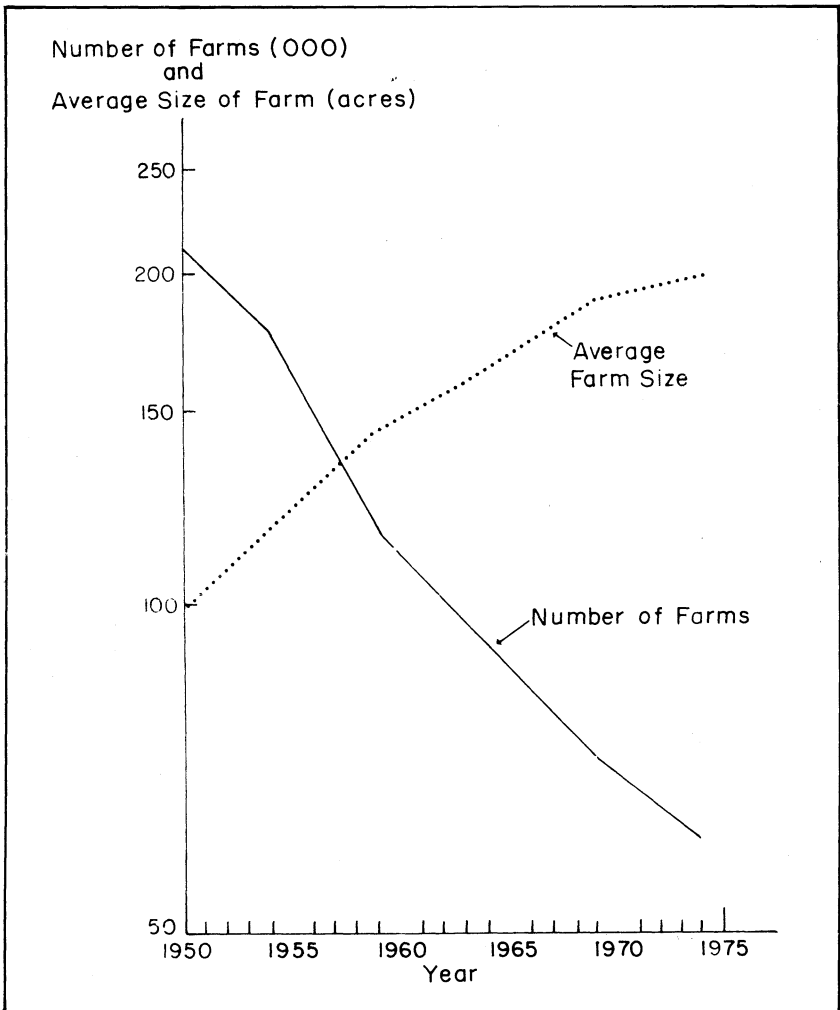


FIG. 9. Trends in farm numbers and average farm size in Alabama, 1950-1974.

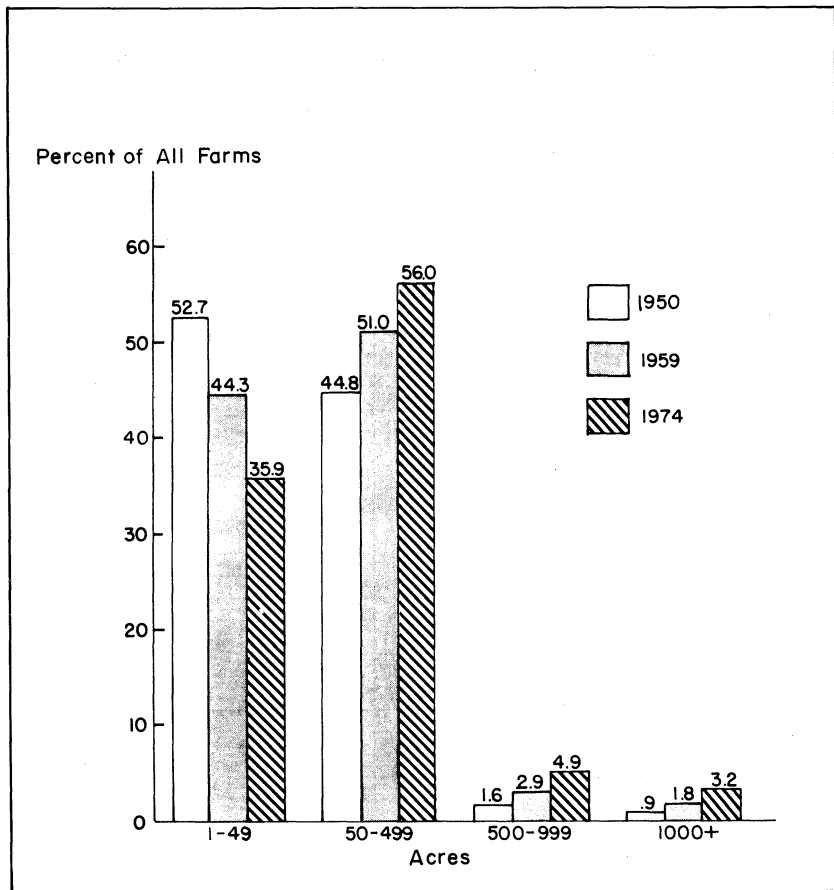


FIG. 11. Percentage of farms in various acreage of classifications, 1950, 1959, 1974.

farms are found in the central part of the State known as the Black Belt. Nine counties have an average farm size of over 400 acres, with Lowndes County having 726 acres per farm on the average. Seven counties have farms averaging 300-399 acres, while 22 counties average 200-299 acres per farm. The remaining counties, 23, had an average farm size of 100-199 acres. Twenty-one of these counties are located north of the Black Belt.

The distribution of farm numbers by acreage size classifications is shown in figure 11. The percentage of farms with 1-49 acres decreased from 52.7 percent in 1950 to 35.9 percent in 1974. Farms with 50-499 acres increased from 44.8 percent of the total farms in 1950 to 56.0 percent in 1974. Farms in the higher acreage classifications made up a smaller percent of the total, but they also showed increases.

Farm Labor

The reduction in farm numbers has affected the number of people living on farms, figure 12. In 1950, 31.4 percent of Alabama's population lived on farms. By 1970, only 4.6 percent lived on farms. In the United States, 15.3 percent of the people lived on farms in 1950 as

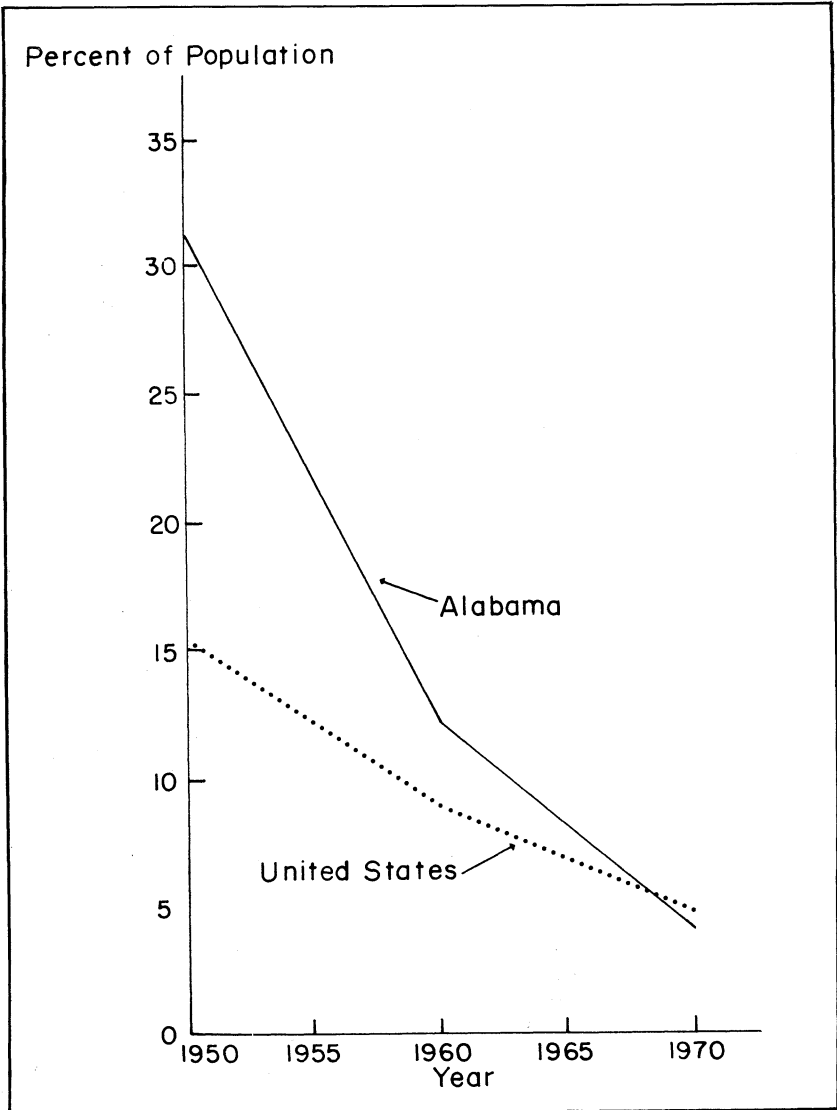


FIG. 12. Percentage of population living on farms, Alabama and United States, 1950-1970.

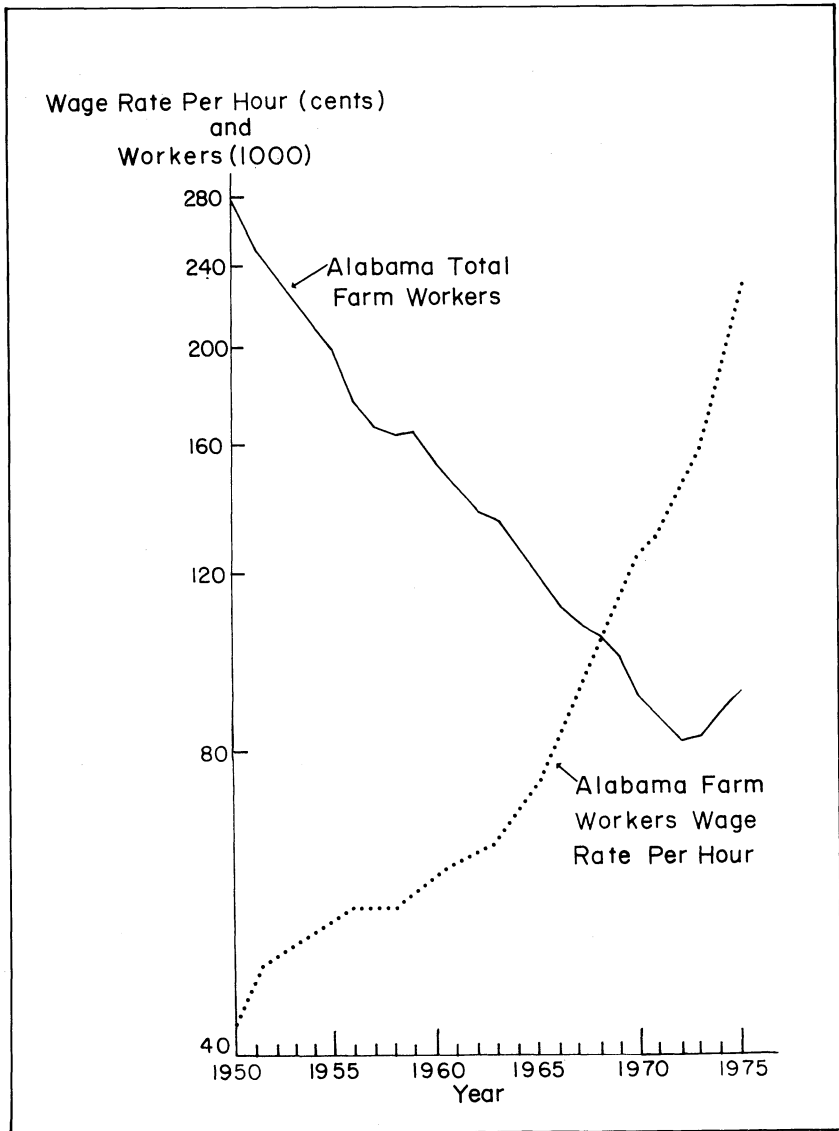


FIG. 13. Trends in wage rate of Alabama farm workers and in the number of Alabama farm workers, 1950-1975.

compared to 4.8 percent in 1970. The actual number of people living on farms in Alabama decreased from 960,493 to 158,363 in this 20-year period.

The wage rate for farm workers without room and board increased from \$.42 per hour to \$2.26 per hour during 1950-1975, figure

13. In 1950, 277,000 family and hired workers were employed on Alabama farms. By 1975, only 91,000 people were employed on farms. The rate of decrease has lessened in recent years.

Farm Land and Buildings

Land values have increased steadily since 1950. In 1950, the average value of land and buildings on Alabama farms was \$49 per acre. By 1960, the per acre value was \$91 and increased further to \$410 in 1976, figure 14. Between 1950 and 1976, the value of land and buildings per farm increased from \$4,809 to \$81,200.

The tenure arrangements of Alabama farm operations have changed substantially since 1950. As a percent of the total farms, 58.5 percent

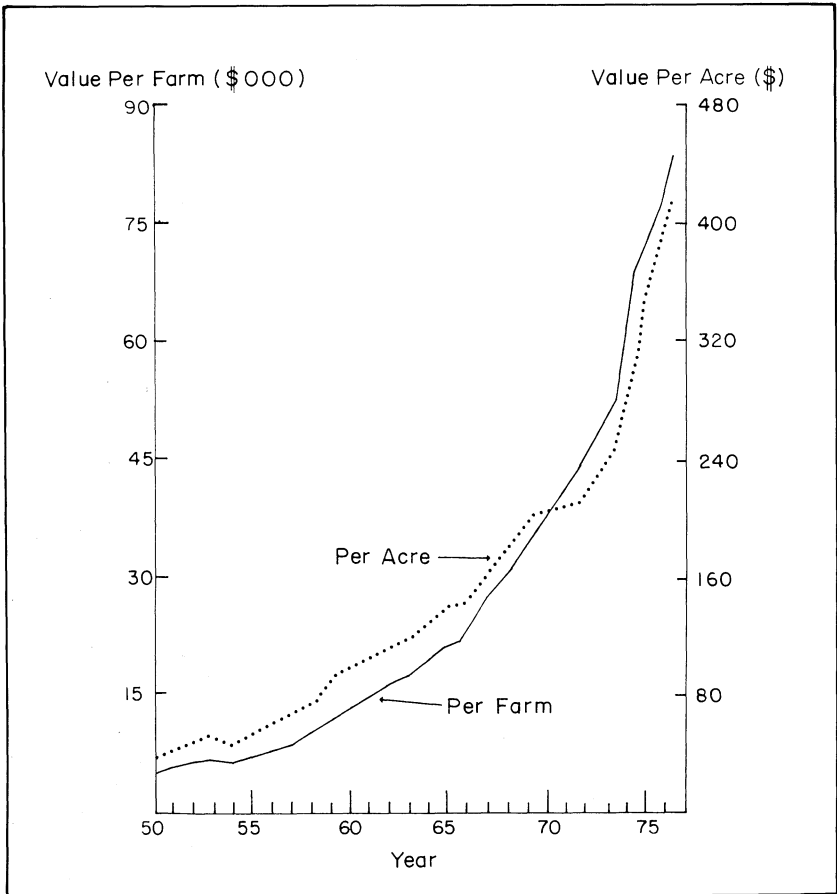


FIG. 14. Value of farmland and buildings, average per farm and per acre, Alabama, 1950-1976.

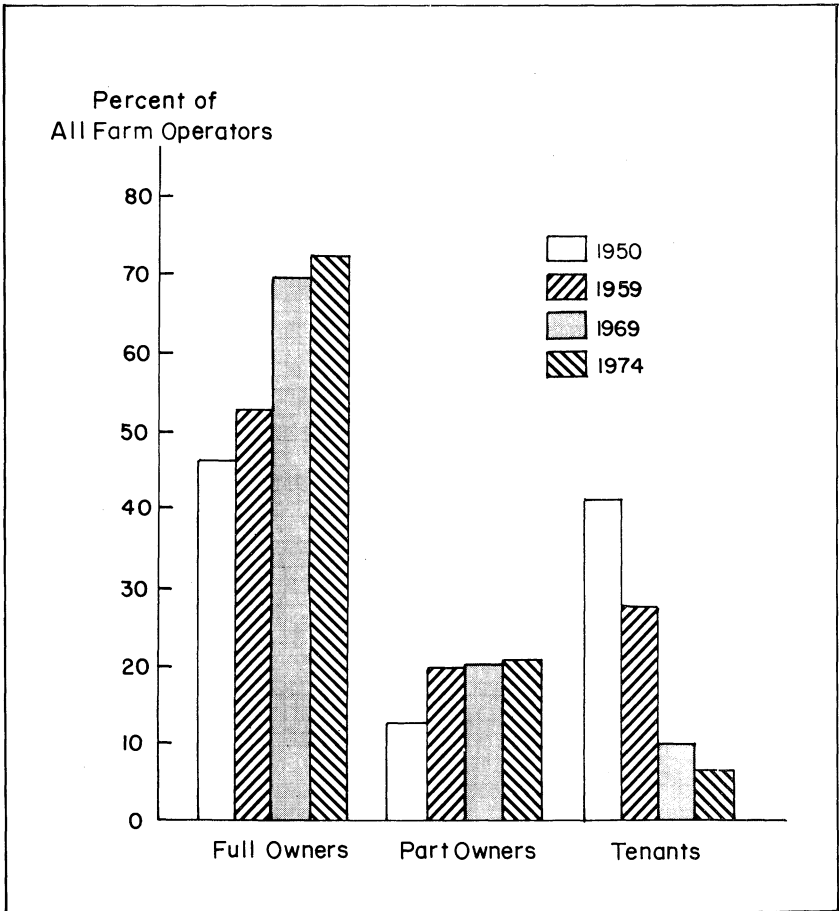


FIG. 15. Farms by tenure of operation, Alabama, 1950-1974.

of the farmers owned all or part of the farms in 1950 and 93.2 percent in 1974, figure 15. Tenant farming has declined from 41.5 percent in 1950 to 6.8 percent in 1974.

Fertilizer Use

Great increases in fertilizer applications have enabled present-day farmers to produce greater yields per acre. Fertilizer applications on Alabama farmland increased on the average from 261 pounds per acre in 1950 to 409 pounds per acre in 1975, figure 16. The application of mixed fertilizers increased from 87 to 264 pounds per acre during the same period. Similarly, the use of nitrates increased from 13 to 124 pounds per acre.

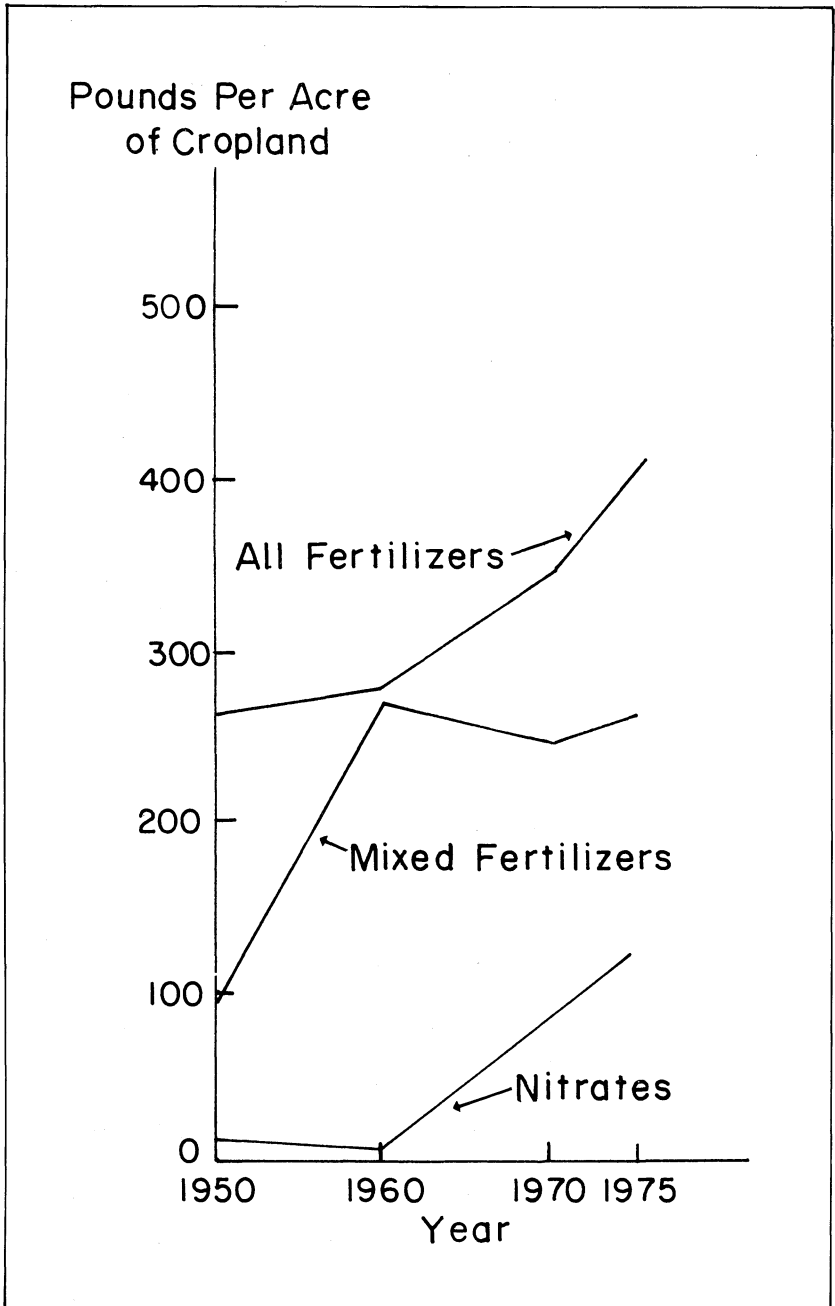


FIG. 16. Trends in commercial fertilizer application on Alabama farms, 1950-1975.

Production Expenses

Changes in total and component categories of farm production expenses are depicted in figure 17. Total farmer outlay for production items increased from \$240 million in 1950 to over \$1.2 billion in

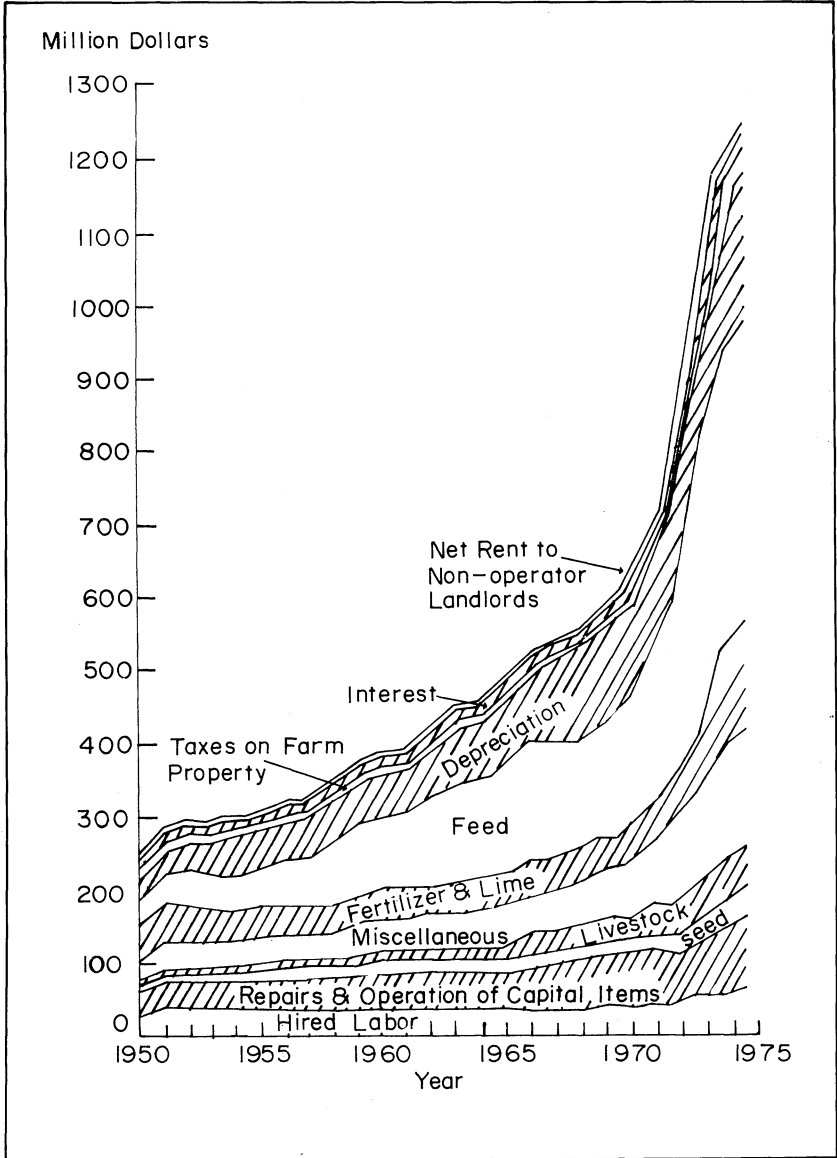


FIG. 17. Trends in Alabama farm production expenses, 1950-1975.

1975. In 1975, the largest single category of expenses was feed purchases which accounted for one-fourth of all production expenses at \$369.1 million. In 1950, feed purchases made up only 12.3 percent of total production expenses.

Interest expense and livestock purchases have shown the largest percentage increase over the period. Interest payments increased 12 times from \$4.2 million in 1950 to \$53.8 million in 1975. Livestock purchases were over 12 times larger in 1975 than in 1950 (\$56.5 million and \$4.4 million respectively). Other expense categories also recorded substantial increases. Miscellaneous expense increased six times, depreciation increased five times, and the dollar outlay for seed purchases more than quadrupled. Even though farm wage rates per hour increased more than five times between 1950 and 1975, hired labor expense only doubled due to reduced employment of farm workers.

Alabama farmers have steadily adopted new technologies in the form of improved feed additives and high protein feed, seed varieties, herbicides, pesticides, and more efficient machinery. Even though prices of capital inputs have increased, their productivities are higher. Therefore, these prices are lower relative to the productivities and prices of the inputs replaced (land, labor, and animal power). Consequently, the input structure of agriculture has shifted from use of farm based resources to inputs developed and supplied by the nonfarm sector.

Productivity

Data on output per man-hour are not available for Alabama; thus, data measuring the productivity for the United States are used as an approximation. The farm output per man-hour rose at a faster rate than the industrial output per man-hour, figure 18. In 1950, the U. S. farm output per man-hour was 35 percent of the 1967 figure and the industrial output per man-hour was 67 percent. By 1973, the farm labor index had increased to 133 while industrial labor index had increased to 114.

The trend in farm output per unit of all inputs in the United States has been increasing, figure 19. The index increased from 78 in 1950 to 112 in 1973. This means that 12 percent more output was produced in 1973 than in 1950 from a specific level of inputs. In 1973, the farm output per unit of all inputs was 1.43 times greater than in 1950.

LEGAL ORGANIZATION OF FARMS

The dominant legal organization of Alabama farms is the single proprietorship. In 1969, 86.6 percent of all farms with sales of \$2,500

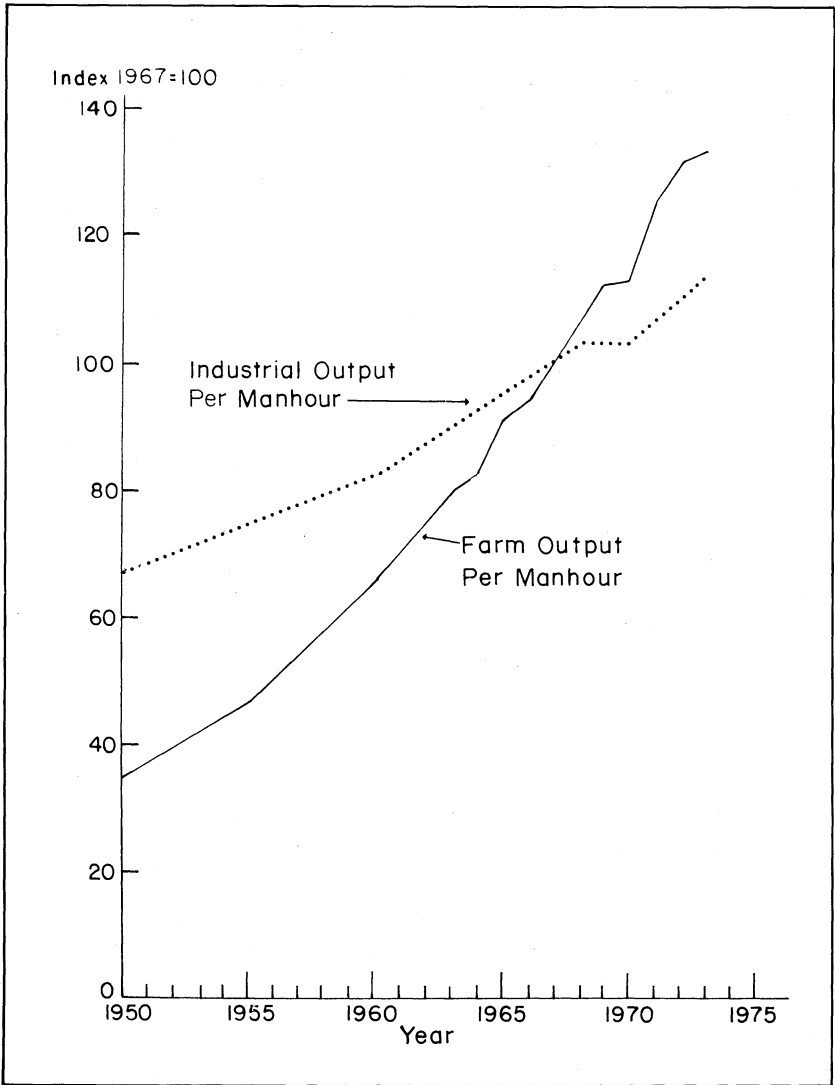


FIG. 18. Farm and industrial output per manhour, United States, 1950-1973.

and over were owned by individuals or families, figure 20. This increased to 92.4 percent in 1974. Farms owned by partnerships decreased from 12.0 percent to 6.5 percent during this period. Corporations owned .9 percent in both years. Although data on legal organization of farms with sales under \$2,500 were not reported, a very high percentage of these smaller farms undoubtedly were individual or family owned.

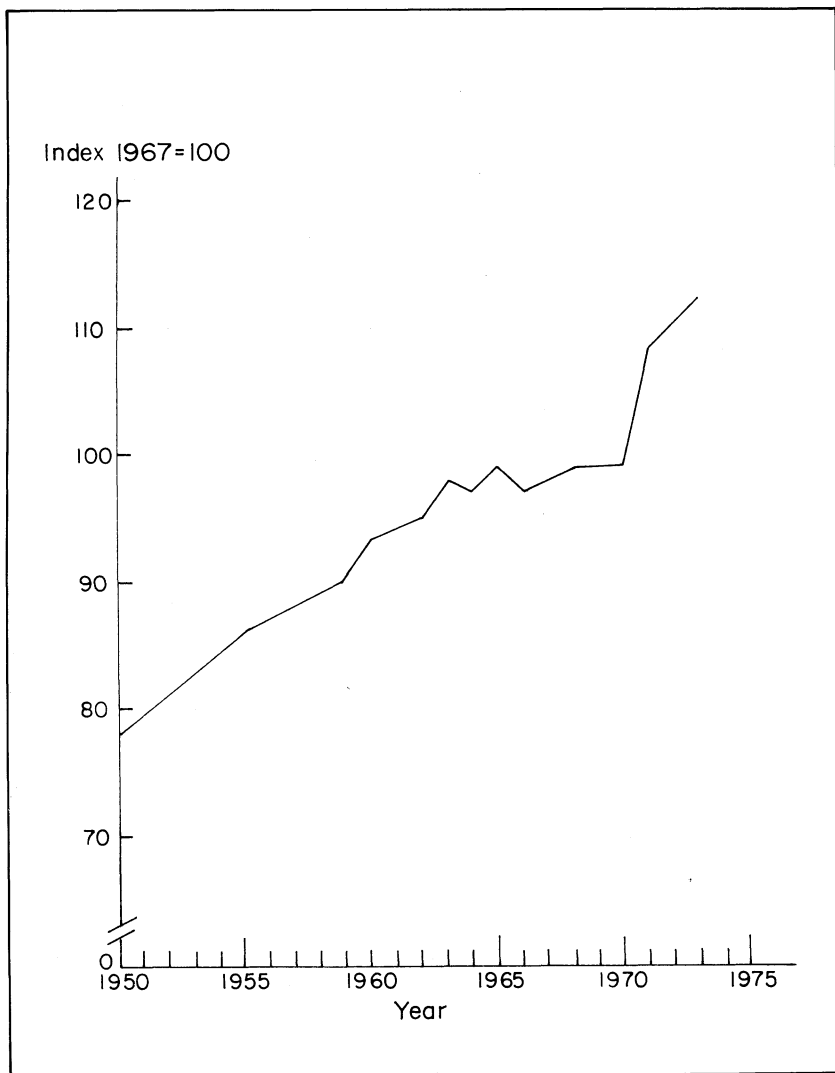


FIG. 19. Farm output per unit of all inputs, United States, 1950-1973.

CHANGES IN CROP AND LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISES

Allocation of land to the production of various agricultural enterprises is influenced by such factors as relative prices (past, present, and expected) of feasible alternative products, technological developments, relative input prices, custom and habit, weather, and government programs. Also, several of these factors affect yield attainment for the various enterprises. These factors have contributed to

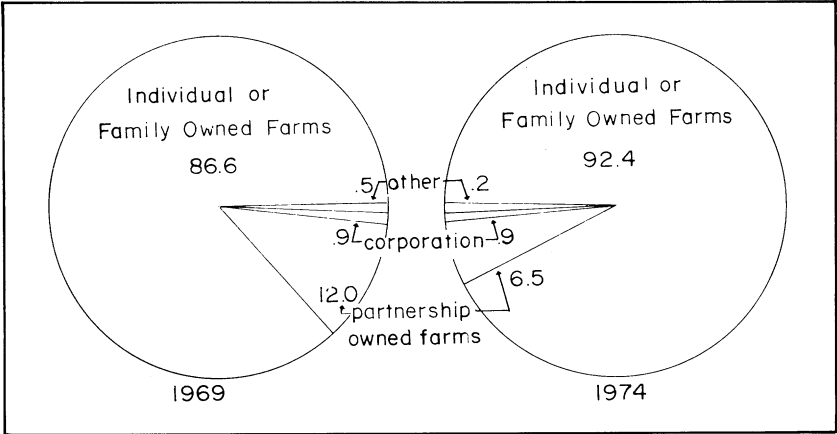


FIG. 20. Proportion of farm numbers with sales of \$2,500 and over by type of organization, Alabama 1969 and 1974.

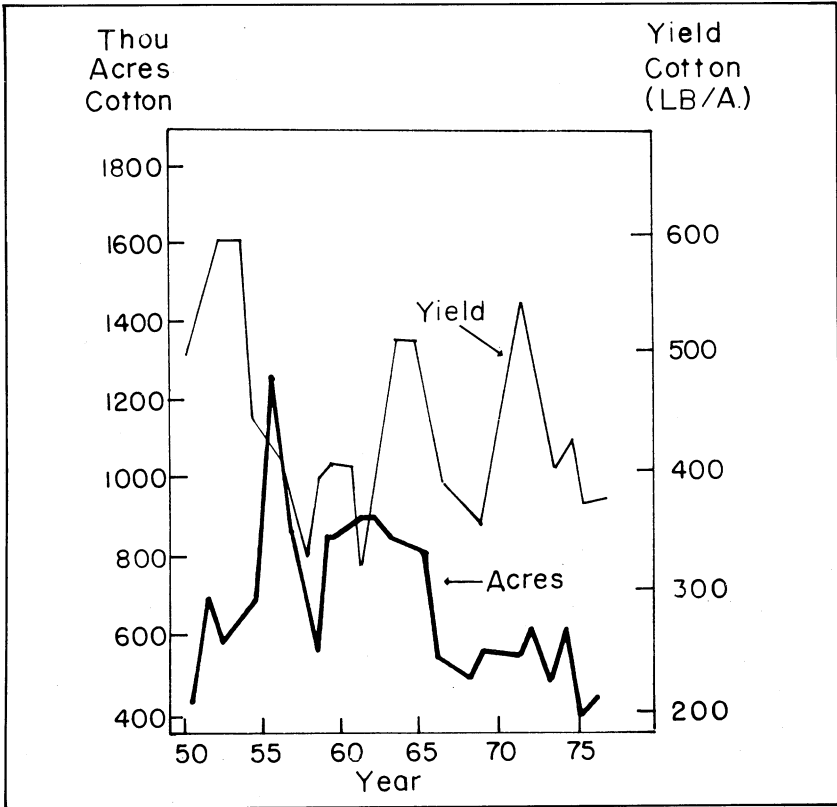


FIG. 21. Cotton harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

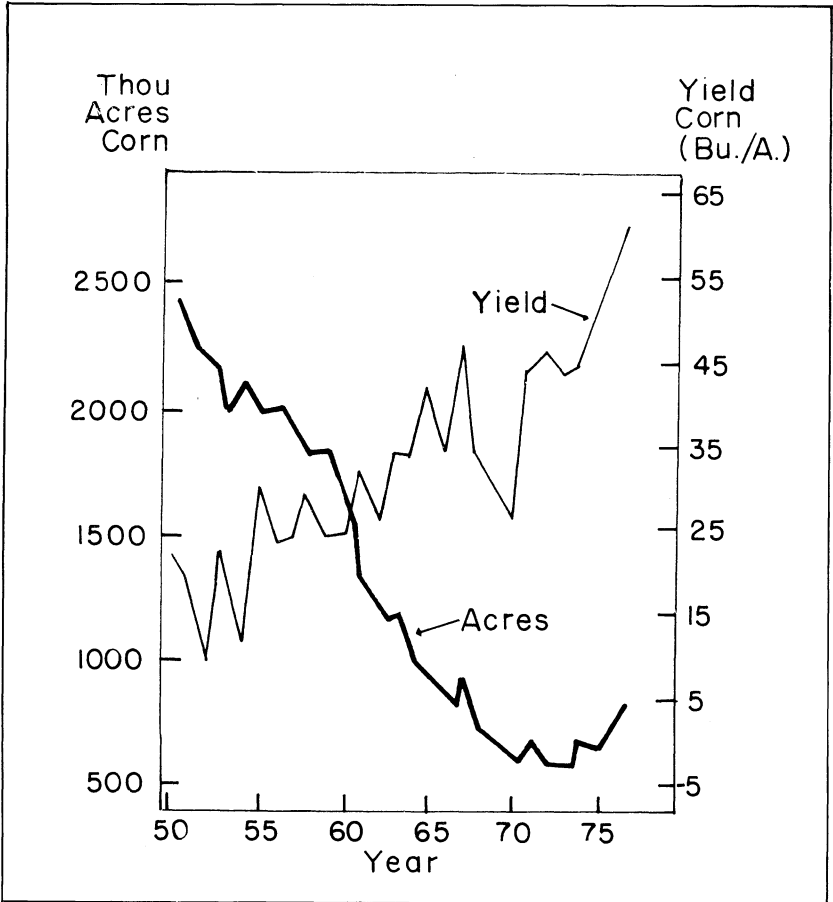


FIG. 22. Corn harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

several interesting shifts and trends in production and yields of agricultural enterprises in Alabama since 1950. Production of some enterprises has increased while production of others has declined. Crop yields have generally increased although at varying rates.

Crops

Cotton

The traditional "King" of Alabama agriculture, cotton, has faded since 1950 although acreage increased slightly in the early 1950's, figure 21. During this period, harvested cotton acreage declined from a high 1,620,000 in 1953 to a low of 400,000 acres in 1975, a 305 percent decline. These figures compare to a peak harvested acreage of 3.8 million acres in 1911.

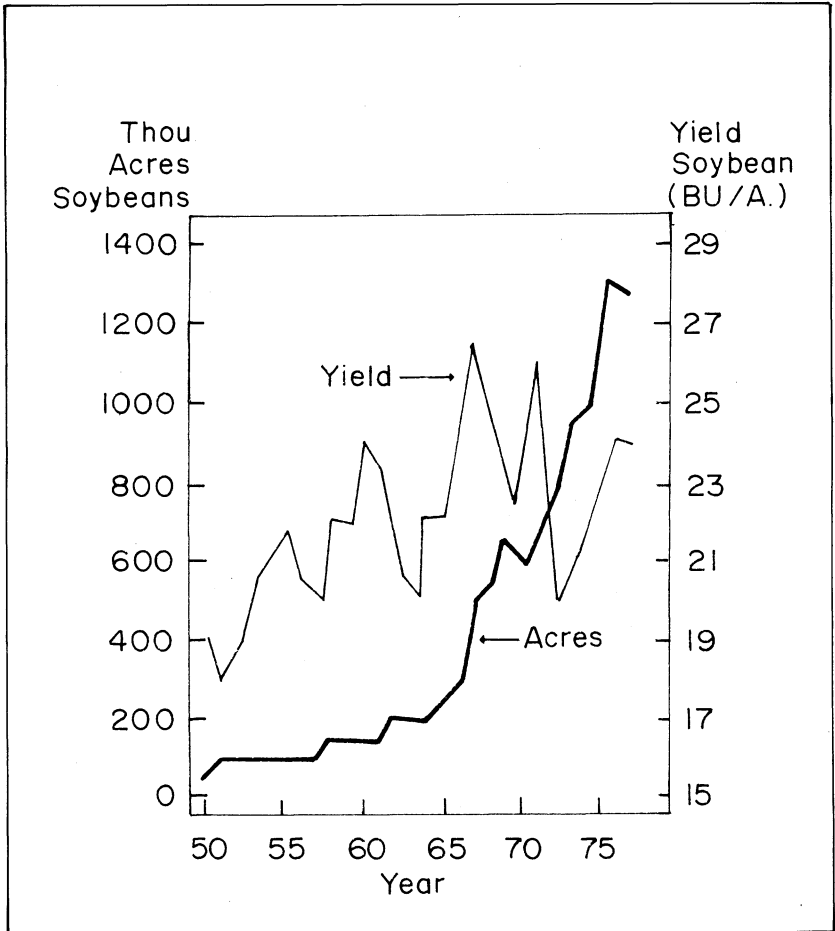


FIG. 23. Soybean harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

Cotton yield per acre has fluctuated greatly over this period. Yield increased from a low of 212 pounds per acre in 1950 to a high of 551 pounds per acre in 1971, a 160 percent increase. Between 1950 and 1976, cotton yield increased by 80 percent, 212 to 382 pounds per acre. Yield per acre averaged 450 pounds between 1970 and 1976.

Corn

Corn is another of Alabama's traditional crops which has experienced declines in harvested acreage since 1950. Corn acreage harvested declined at a fairly constant rate of 80,000 acres per year from 1950 to 1969, figure 22. However, acreage harvested stabilized

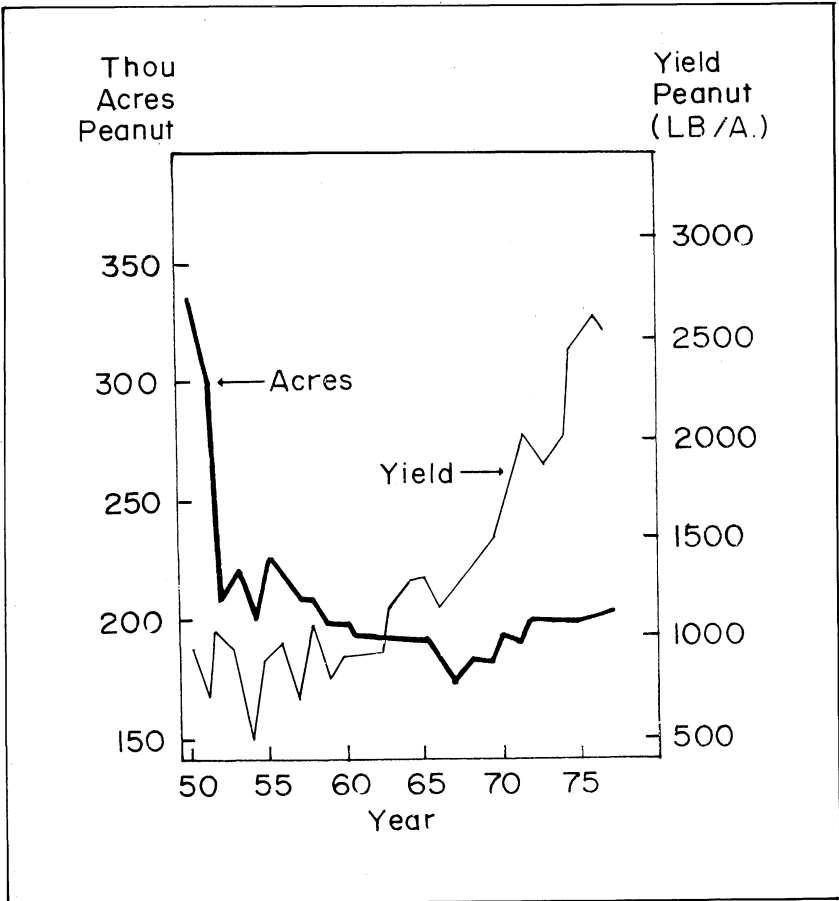


FIG. 24. Peanut harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

at approximately 625,000 between 1969 and 1975, and rose to 796,000 acres in 1976.

While corn acreage harvested declined, corn yield increased at a trend rate of about 1.3 bushels per acre per year. Yield increased from a low of 11 bushels per acre in 1952 to a high of 62 bushels per acre in 1976. Average yield between 1970 and 1976 was 46 bushels per acre.

Soybeans

Much of the decline in crop acreage devoted to cotton and corn production over this period that remained in agriculture was utilized for soybean production. Harvested acreage of soybeans increased from 68,000 acres in 1950 to a high of 1.31 million acres in 1975.

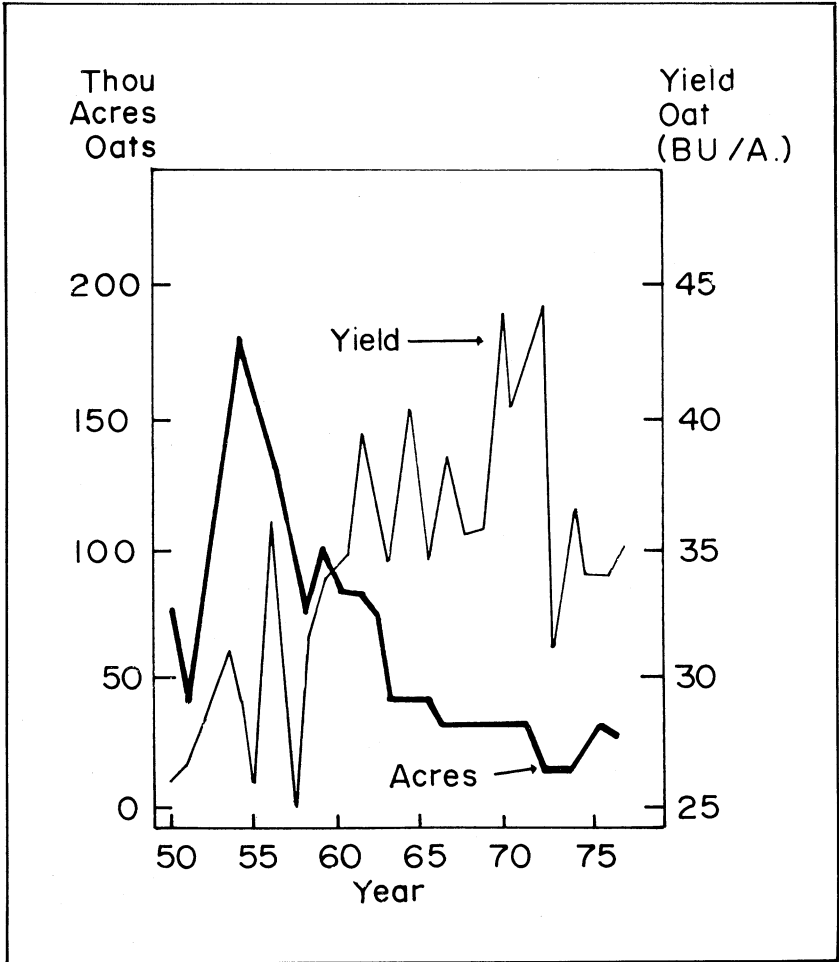


FIG. 25. Oats harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

Harvested acreage increased more than twice as rapidly between 1964 and 1976 as it did between 1950 and 1963, figure 23.

Soybean yields per acre have been erratic although there has been a slight upward trend over this period. Yield was 19 bushels per acre in 1950 and 24 bushels per acre in 1976. Average yield between 1970 and 1976 was 23 bushels per acre.

Peanuts

Peanut acreage also declined between 1950 and 1976, figure 24. Alabama farmers harvested 335,000 acres in 1950 and 212,000 acres

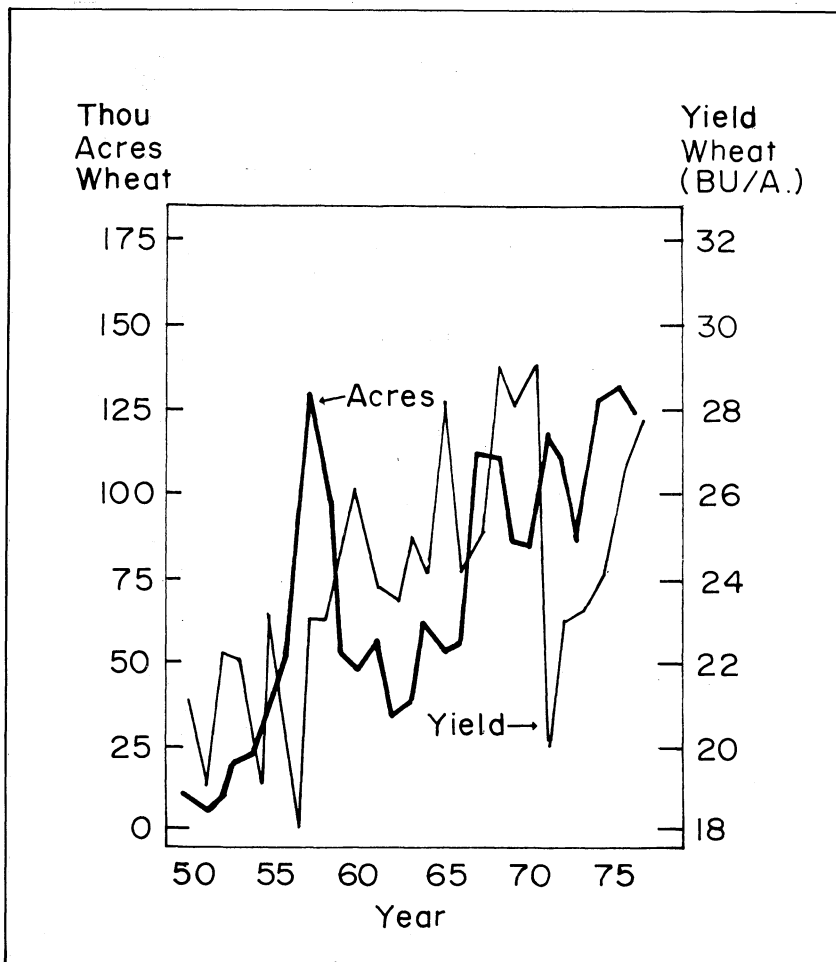


FIG. 26. Wheat harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

in 1976. The most rapid decline came between 1950 and 1952. Since then, harvested acreage has been fairly stable at 190,000 acres.

Peanut yield generally increased over the period especially after 1962. Yields ranged from a low of 550 pounds per acre in 1954 to a high of 2,650 pounds per acre in 1975. During the 1970's yields averaged 2,100 pounds per acre.

Oats

Oat harvested acreage has evidenced a net decline since 1950 although acreage increased in the early 1950's then declined rapidly

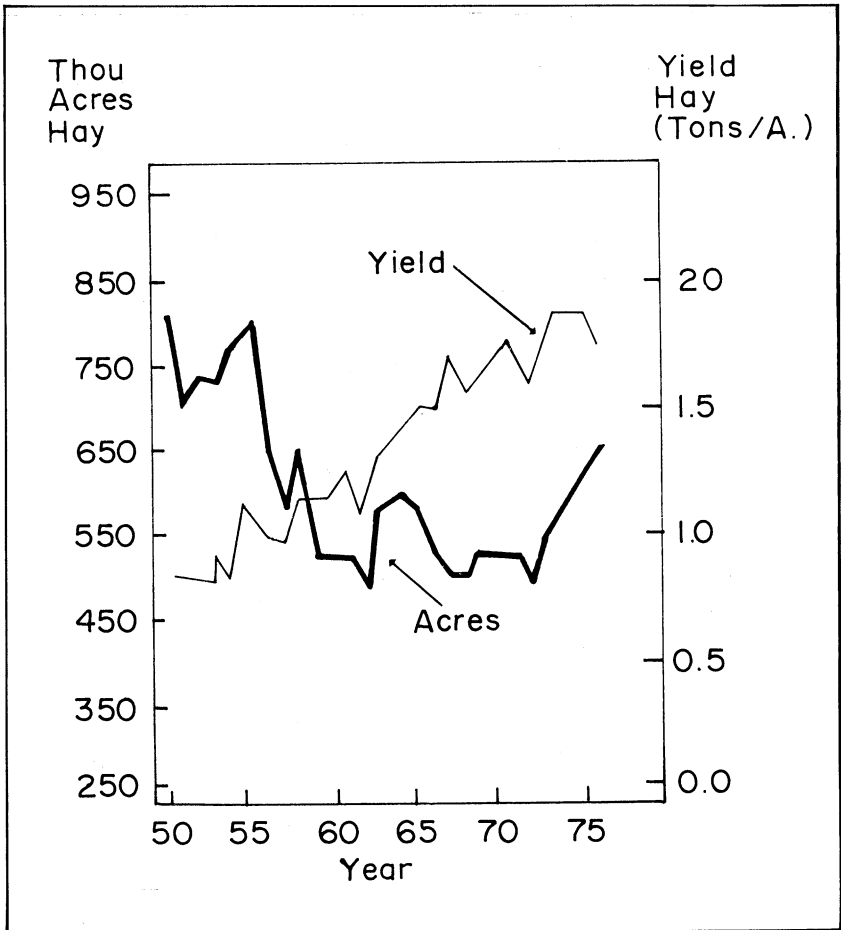


FIG. 27. Hay harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

until 1963 when the decline became less pronounced, figure 25. Harvested acreage was 72,000 in 1950, increased to a high level of 185,000 acres in 1954, and declined to 30,000 acres in 1976.

Oat yield per acre evidenced a general positive trend between 1950 and 1971 despite much variation. In recent years, yield per acre has declined. Average yield per acre was 34 bushels in 1974 and 1975, and 36 bushels in 1976.

Wheat

The trend in wheat acreage harvested between 1950 and 1976 was positive despite wide variability. Acreage harvested varied from a low

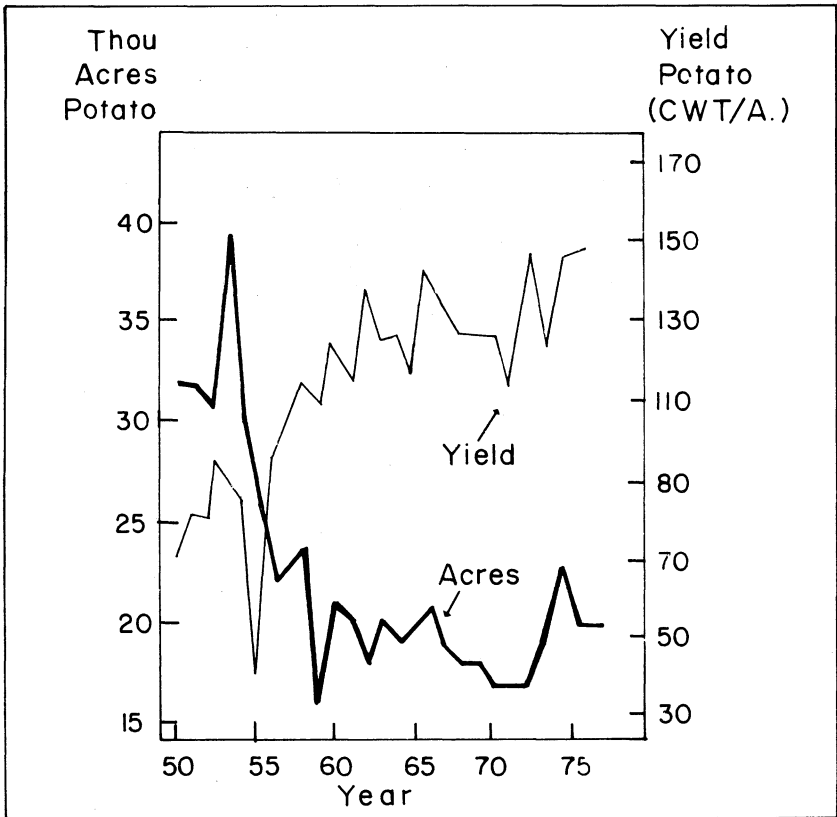


FIG. 28. Potato harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

of 7,000 acres in 1951, to a high of 135,000 acres in 1975, figure 26.

Wheat yield per acre during this period varied from a low of 15.5 bushels per acre in 1950 to highs of 29 bushels per acre in 1969 and 1971. Yield was 27 bushels per acre in 1976 and averaged 25 bushels per acre between 1970 and 1976.

Hay

Hay harvest acreage varied between 801,000 acres in 1950 and 650,000 acres in 1976, figure 27. Hay yield in tons per acre varied from .85 in 1950 to 1.70 in 1976, a 100 percent increase.

Potatoes

Potato harvest acreage declined between 1950 and 1976, figure 28. The greatest change came between 1950 and 1959 when harvest

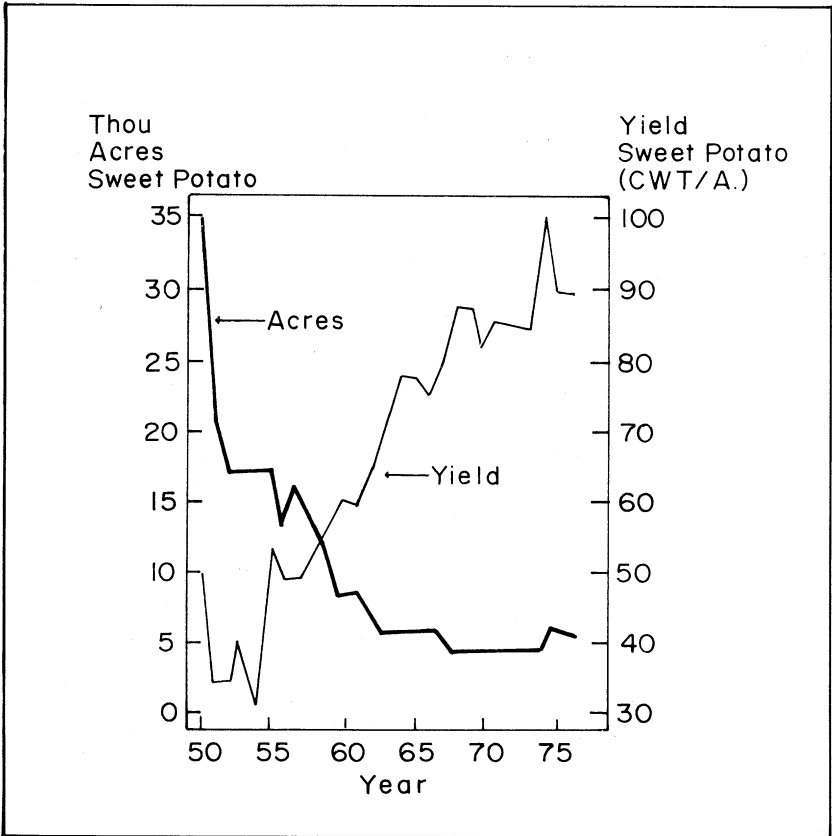


FIG. 29. Sweet potato harvested acreage and yield, Alabama, 1950-1976.

acreage decreased from 32,400 acres to 16,500 acres. Harvests have been fairly stable since 1960 at 17,000 to 20,000 acres.

Potato yield per acre evidenced a positive trend over this period. Except for a large decline in 1955, potato yields increased from 70 hundredweights per acre in 1950 to 142 hundredweights in 1976. Average yield was 130 hundredweights between 1970 and 1976.

Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potato acreage harvested declined from 35,000 acres in 1950 to 5,500 acres in 1976, figure 29. Harvested acreage declined relatively fast in 1950 and 1951 and then declined less rapidly between 1952 and 1963. Harvested acreage has remained relatively stable since 1964 at about 5,000 acres.

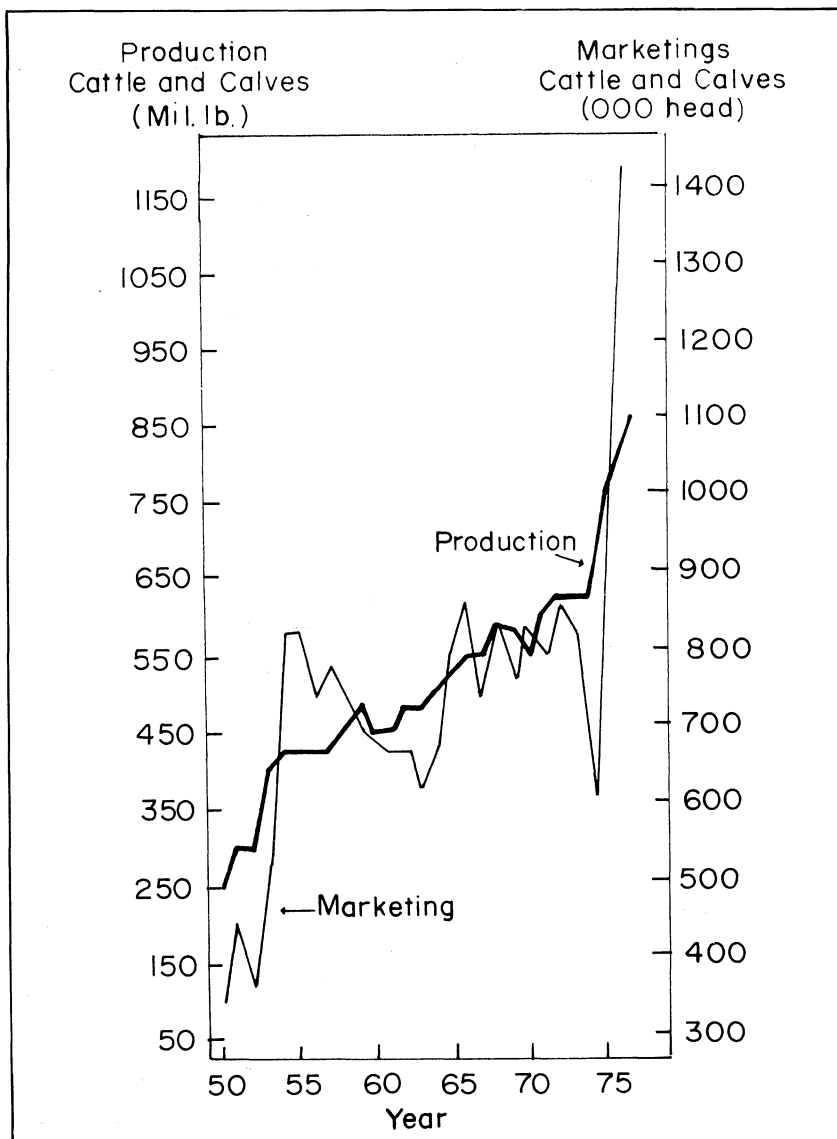


FIG. 30. Cattle and calve production and marketings, Alabama, 1950-1976.

Sweet potato yields per acre almost doubled between 1950 and 1976, 50 hundredweights to 90 hundredweights. Yields ranged from a low of 33 hundredweights per acre in 1954 to a high of 100 hundredweights per acre in 1974. Between 1970 and 1976, yields averaged 88 hundredweights.

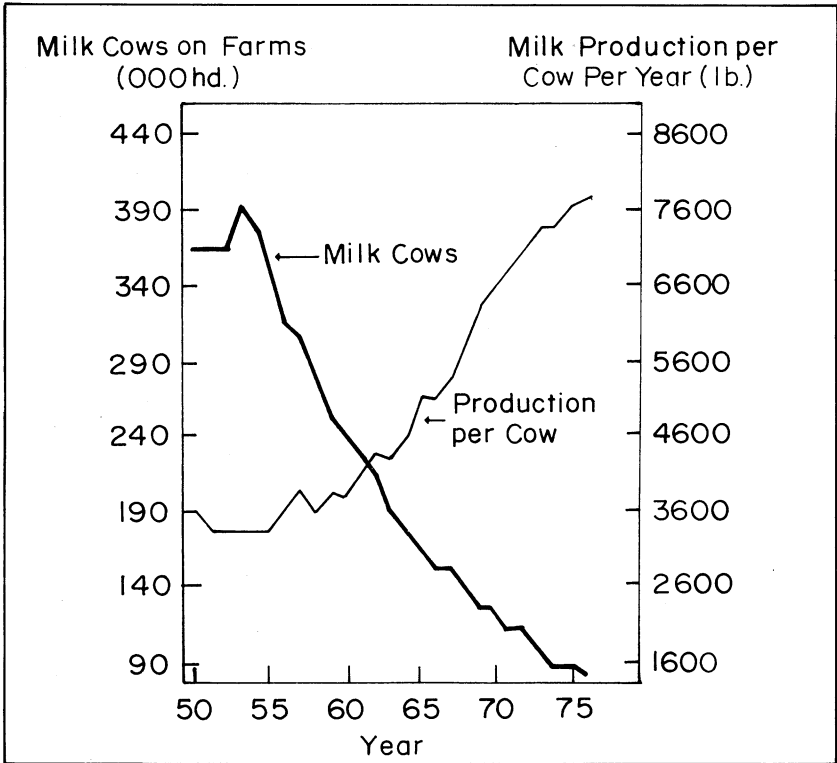


FIG. 31. Milk cows on farms and milk production per cow per year, Alabama, 1950-1976.

Livestock

Cattle and Calves

The number of cattle and calves marketed increased from 359,000 head in 1950 to 1,430,000 head in 1976, a 298 percent increase, figure 30. At the same time, cattle and calf production in pounds increased from 247,215 to 853,925 thousand pounds, a 245 percent increase. As would be expected, marketings evidenced greater variability than production over the years analyzed. Production increased at a trend rate of slightly over 14 million pounds per year while marketings increased rapidly between 1952 and 1954, showed less variability until 1974, and then varied widely in 1975 and 1976.

Milk

There has been a pronounced downward trend in milk cow numbers since the early 1950's, figure 31. During this period, milk cows on

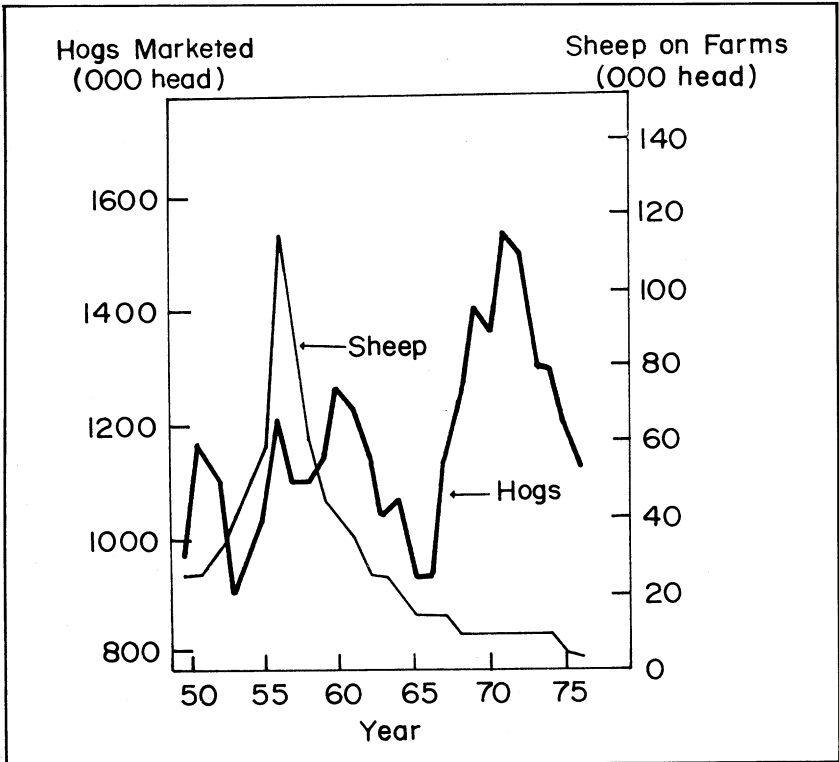


FIG. 32. Hogs marketed and sheep on farms, Alabama, 1950-1976.

farms declined from a high of 387,000 head in 1953 to a low of 88,000 head in 1976, a 340 percent change. While milk cow numbers have declined, milk production per cow per year has increased by 117 percent, 3,570 pounds to 7,750 pounds. This increase in production per cow dampened the impact of the declining cow numbers on total production.

Hogs and Sheep

Hog marketings varied between a low of 907,000 head in 1953 and a high of 1,535,000 in 1971 during the 1950-1976 period, figure 32. Between 1950 and 1976, hog marketings evidenced a positive trend while increasing 23 percent.

Sheep on farms declined from 18,000 head in 1950 to 3,600 head in 1976, a 400 percent change. During this period, the number of sheep on farms peaked, at 110,000 in 1956 and declined to a low of 3,600 in 1976.

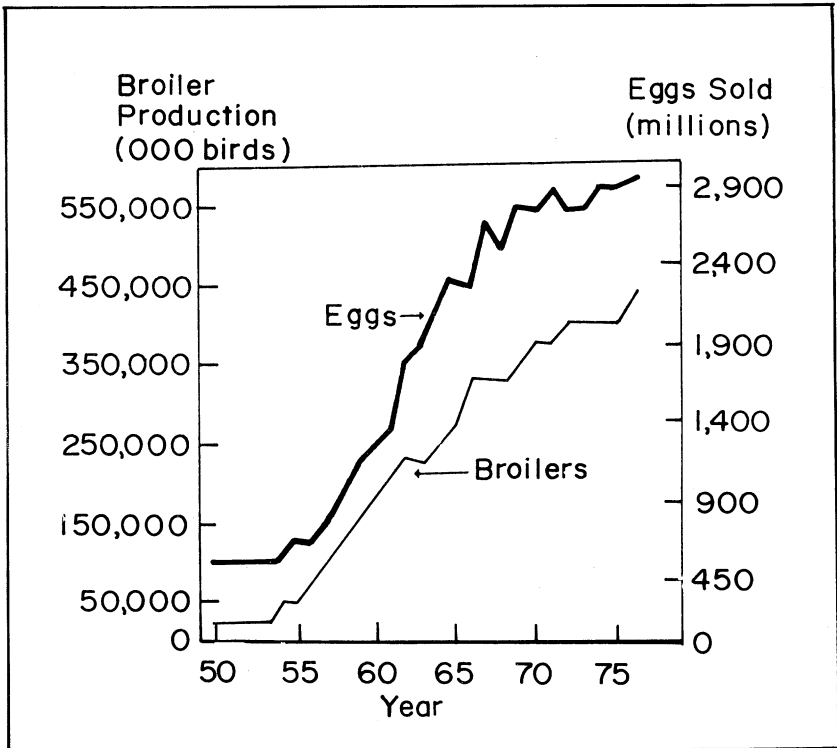


FIG. 33. Broiler production and eggs sold, Alabama, 1950-1976.

Broilers and Eggs

Broiler and egg production in Alabama has expanded since 1950 with broiler production increasing phenomenally, figure 33. Annual production increased from slightly over 13 million birds in 1950 to 430.2 million birds in 1976, a 3,209 percent increase. Similarly, eggs sold from farms increased from 510 million in 1950 to 2,904 million in 1976, a 469 percent increase.

Turkeys

Production and sales of turkeys varied considerably between 1950 and 1976, figure 34. Turkey sales varied from a low of 272,000 pounds in 1975 to a high of 23.5 million pounds in 1966. Sales were fairly stable between 1950 and 1962 within the 2.4 and 7.1 million pounds range. However, sales increased rapidly to the high level of 1966 then declined rapidly until 1970 when sales were in the 300,000 and 400,000 pound range.

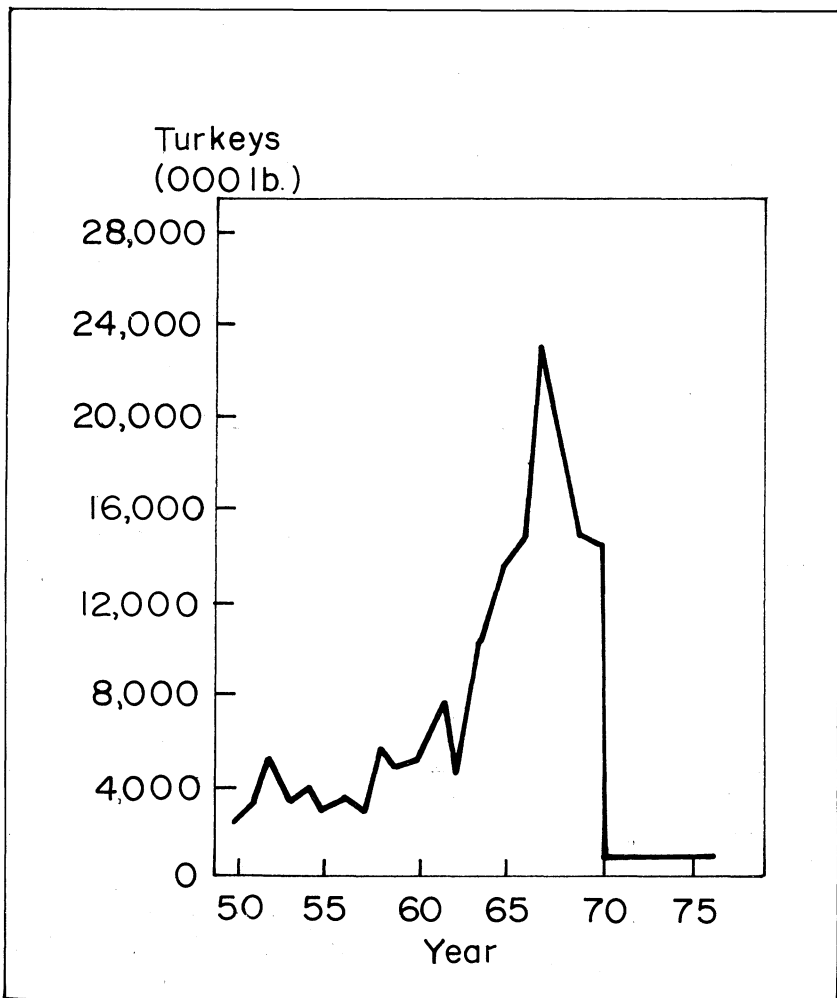


FIG. 34. Turkeys sold, Alabama 1950-1976.

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF MAJOR CROPS IN TERMS OF HARVESTED ACREAGE

Harvested acreage of the major crops grown in Alabama changed significantly between 1950 and 1975, figure 35. Corn, 48 percent, cotton, 26 percent, hay, 16 percent, and peanuts, 6 percent, constituted the majority of Alabama's 5.1 million acres devoted to major crops in 1950 while oats, wheat, potatoes, and sweet potatoes comprised the balance, 4 percent. By 1975, total harvested acreage had declined to 3.4 million acres with soybeans, 39 percent, corn, 19

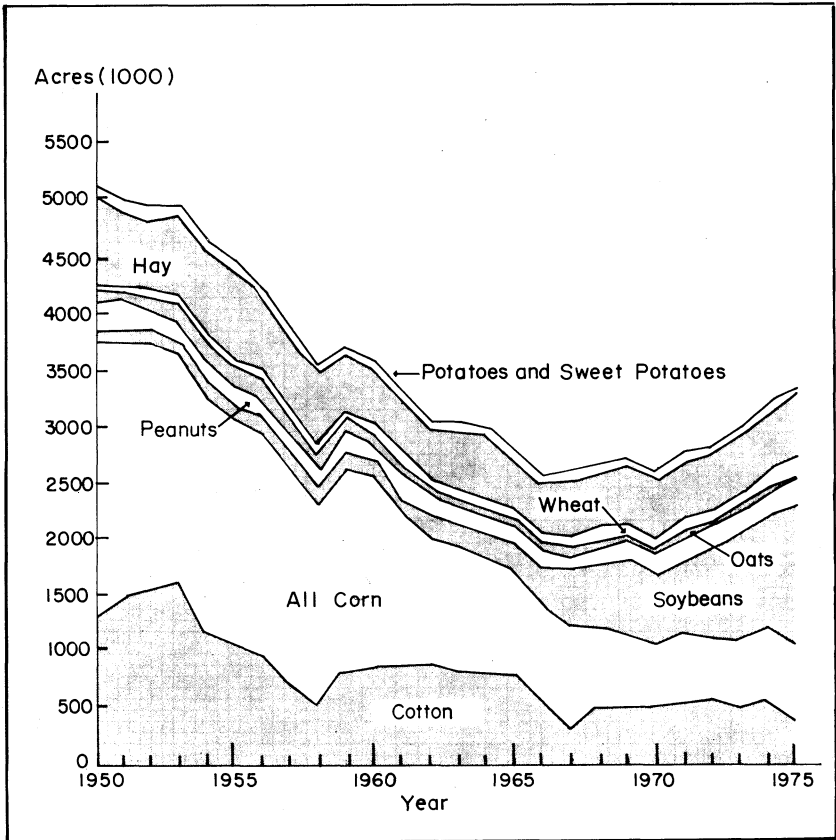


FIG. 35. Relative importance of major crops in Alabama in terms of harvested acreage, 1950-1975.

percent, hay, 18 percent, cotton, 12 percent, and peanuts, 6 percent, being the respective largest contributing crops. In this case, oats, wheat, potatoes, and sweet potatoes contributed the balance, 6 percent. Between these years, harvested acreage of major crops declined to a low of 2.5 million acres in 1966, a 100 percent change from 1950. However, between 1966 and 1975, harvested acreage increased by 33 percent.

CHANGES IN ALABAMA'S SHARE OF NATIONAL PRODUCTION

Some of Alabama's major crops and livestock have had dramatic changes in planted acreage and numbers of livestock. The revenue from these crops and livestock has changed, also. This section shows the percentage of the national production that occurred in Alabama.

Alabama's percentage of national corn production decreased from 2.0 percent in 1950 to .6 percent in 1975, figure 36. Similarly, cotton production decreased from 5.7 percent to 3.8 percent. Production of peanuts decreased from 16.1 percent to 13.9 percent. Soybean production increased almost four times from .6 percent to 2.1 percent during this period.

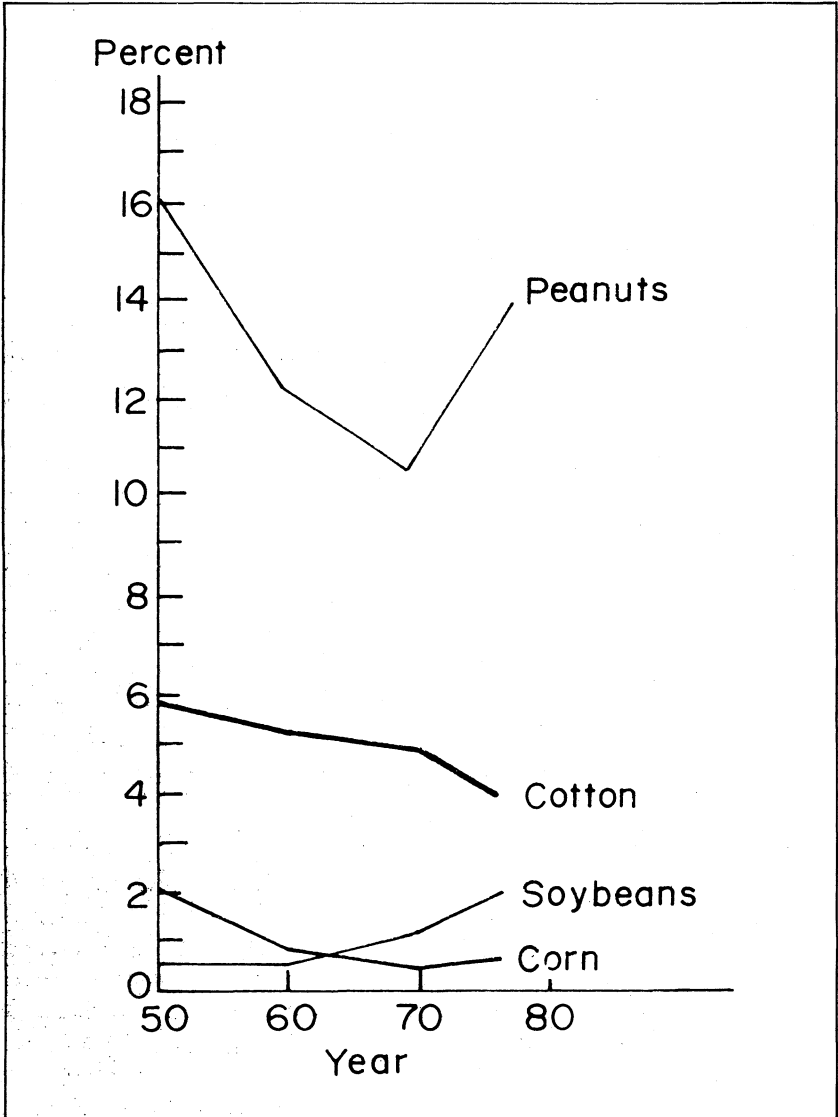


FIG. 36. Alabama's share of national crop production, 1950-1975.

Cattle and calves produced increased from 1.2 to 2.2 percent of the national total while hog production remained fairly stable at 1.5 percent, figure 37. As a percentage of national output, Alabama's broiler and egg industries have shown the most growth. Alabama's percentage of broiler production increased from 1.9 to 13.5 percent while egg production increased from 1.0 to 4.6 percent.

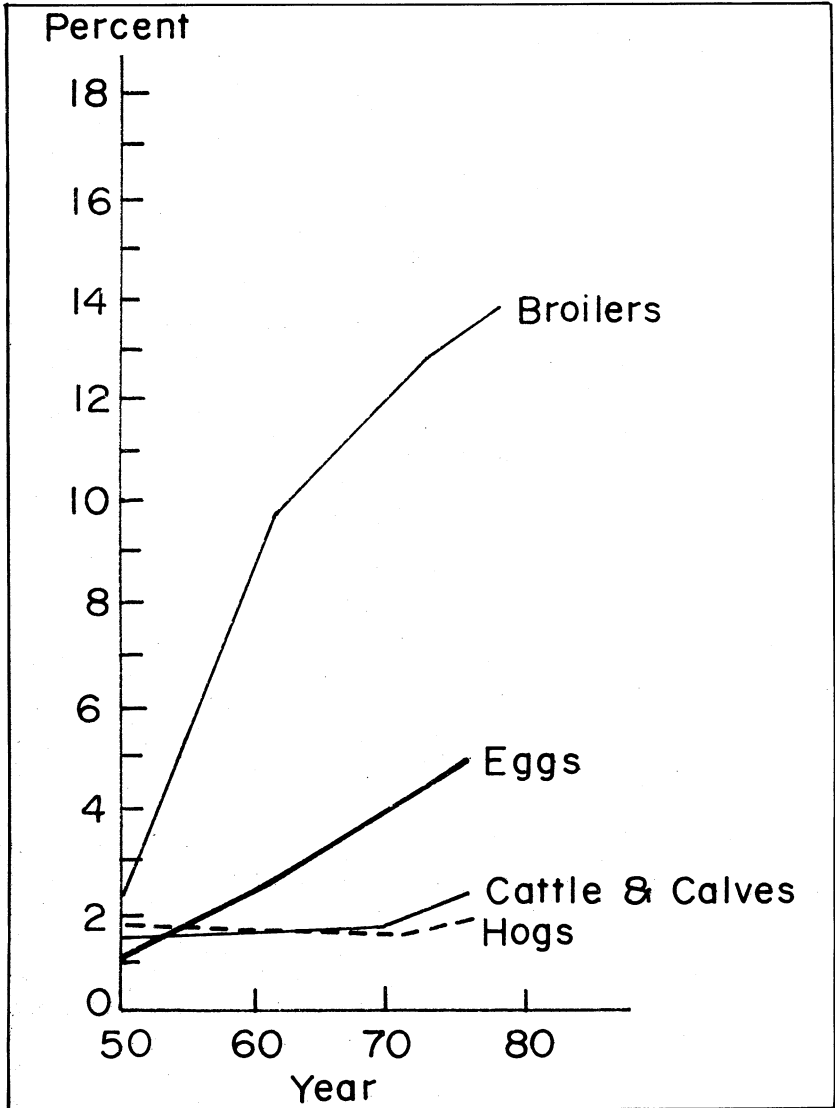


FIG. 37. Alabama's share of national livestock production, 1950-1975.

SUMMARY

Changes in Alabama agriculture have been widespread and dramatic. This bulletin summarizes some of the changes that have occurred and are occurring in Alabama's farm income, resources, and output.

Gross and net income per farm were below national averages. Trends in the source of cash receipts from the sale of crops, livestock, and products reflect changes in the composition of agricultural output. Livestock and livestock products have become more important as a source of income due to the increased production of cattle and broilers. Cotton and corn have decreased in relative importance while soybeans have increased. A greater percentage of farms have shifted into higher economic classes.

During the 1950-1974 period, farm numbers decreased from 211,500 to 60,000. The average size of a farm increased from 98.8 acres to 198.2 acres during this period. In 1950, 31.4 percent of Alabama's population lived on farms compared with only 4.6 percent in 1970. The value of land and buildings in Alabama farms increased from \$49 per acre in 1950 to \$410 in 1976. Production expenses have increased at a high rate, also.

The single proprietorship continues to be the dominant form of legal organization of Alabama farms. In 1974, 92.4 percent of all farms with sales of \$2,500 and over were owned by individuals or families. Partnerships owned 6.5 percent and corporations owned .9 percent of the farms.

Changes in crops and livestock enterprises have been due to many factors. The results are that fewer inputs are needed to produce the same level of output. Crop yields have generally increased although at varying rates. Livestock numbers, particularly cattle and broilers, have increased.

Total harvested acreage in Alabama declined from 5.1 million acres in 1950 to 3.4 million acres in 1975. Acreage allocated to cotton and corn has decreased while acreage used for soybeans has increased.

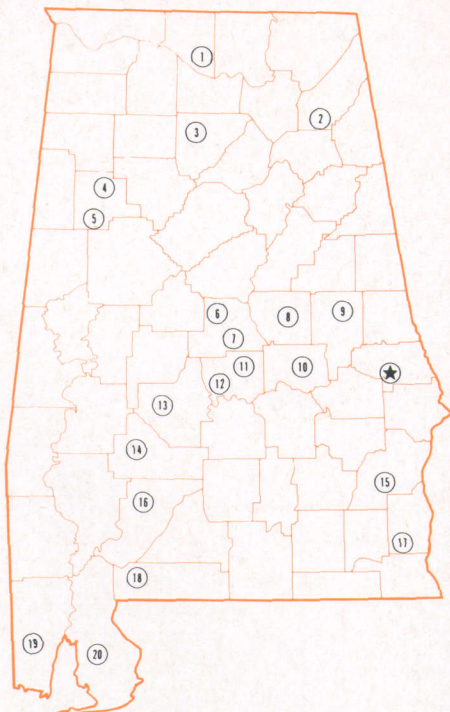
Trends in Alabama's share of national production of crop and livestock categories also indicate increased specialization. Alabama's share of broiler production has increased from 1.9 percent of national production in 1950 to 13.5 percent in 1975. Egg production increased from 1.0 to 4.6 percent during this period. Alabama's percentage of cattle and calves production and soybeans production has increased. However, Alabama's share of national output of other major crops and livestock categories has declined.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- (1) ALABAMA CROP AND LIVESTOCK REPORTING SERVICE. Alabama Agricultural Statistics. Montgomery, Ala.
- (2) AUBURN UNIVERSITY (ALA.) AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION. 1968. One Hundred Years Alabama Crop, Livestock, and Income Data. Auburn, Ala.
- (3) CENTER FOR BUSINESS RESEARCH. Economic Abstract of Alabama. University of Alabama.
- (4) ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE. U. S. Department of Agriculture. Farm Income Statistics. Washington, D.C.
- (5) _____ . Farm Real Estate Market Developments. Washington, D.C.
- (6) _____ . State Farm Income Statistics. Washington, D.C.
- (7) UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. Agricultural Statistics. Washington, D.C.
- (8) U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. Statistical Abstract of the United States. Washington, D.C.
- (9) U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS. United States Census of Agriculture, Alabama. U. S. Govt. Print. Off., Washington, D.C.
- (10) VANLANDINGHAM, JANICE B., JOHN E. DUNKELBERGER, AND CALVIN L. VANLANDINGHAM. 1975. Alabama Population Change. Auburn Univ. (Ala.) Agr. Exp. Sta. Bull. 471. Auburn, Ala.

Alabama's Agricultural Experiment Station System AUBURN UNIVERSITY

With an agricultural research unit in every major soil area, Auburn University serves the needs of field crop, livestock, forestry, and horticultural producers in each region in Alabama. Every citizen of the State has a stake in this research program, since any advantage from new and more economical ways of producing and handling farm products directly benefits the consuming public.



Research Unit Identification

★ Main Agricultural Experiment Station, Auburn.

1. Tennessee Valley Substation, Belle Mina.
2. Sand Mountain Substation, Crossville.
3. North Alabama Horticulture Substation, Cullman.
4. Upper Coastal Plain Substation, Winfield.
5. Forestry Unit, Fayette County.
6. Thorsby Foundation Seed Stocks Farm, Thorsby.
7. Chilton Area Horticulture Substation, Clanton.
8. Forestry Unit, Coosa County.
9. Piedmont Substation, Camp Hill.
10. Plant Breeding Unit, Tallassee.
11. Forestry Unit, Autauga County.
12. Prattville Experiment Field, Prattville.
13. Black Belt Substation, Marion Junction.
14. Lower Coastal Plain Substation, Camden.
15. Forestry Unit, Barbour County.
16. Monroeville Experiment Field, Monroeville.
17. Wiregrass Substation, Headland.
18. Brewton Experiment Field, Brewton.
19. Ornamental Horticulture Field Station, Spring Hill.
20. Gulf Coast Substation, Fairhope.