

■ Farms and Land in Farms

The United States had 2.04 million farms in 1994, down about 1 percent from 1993. A farm is defined as any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year. The number of farms declined from 1 to 2 percent per year from 1984 through 1994; the overall decline for the period was 13 percent. This decline continues the downward trend started in 1936. Farm operator households now represent about 2 percent of total U.S. households.

Land in farms continues to decline slowly; the total of 975 million acres in 1994 is down 0.3 percent from a year earlier and down 4.2 percent from 1984. Land in farms has declined every year since reaching its peak at 1.206 billion acres back in 1954.

The number of farms has declined at a faster rate than land in farms; the average size of farms increased from 436 acres in 1984 to 478 acres in 1994.

Table 2-1.

Number of farms, land in farms, average farm size:
United States, June 1, 1984-94

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Farms</i>	<i>Land in Farms</i>	<i>Average Farm Size</i>
	<i>In 1,000</i>	<i>In 1,000 of acres</i>	<i>In acres</i>
1984	2,334	1,017,803	436
1985	2,293	1,012,073	441
1986	2,250	1,005,333	447
1987	2,213	998,923	451
1988	2,197	994,543	453
1989	2,171	991,153	457
1990	2,140	987,420	461
1991	2,105	982,766	467
1992	2,094	979,963	468
1993	2,065	977,733	473
1994 ²	2,040	974,800	478

¹A farm is any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year.

²Preliminary.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. *Farm Numbers and Land in Farms*