

INCOMES of Farmers Judging from conditions as observed and
 in 1926 as Shown reported during the growing and harvest
 in 4,799 Statements season, 1926 seemed likely to be a year of
 increased income for farmers, continuing

the gradual improvement of the four preceding years. Farm prices were running lower than in the summer of 1925, but outlets appeared to be good and it was expected that increased volume of production together with the higher prices of meat animals and fruits and vegetables would more than offset the lower farm prices. In December, however, a summary statement of the estimated gross value of crop production confirmed a growing conviction among farmers that 1926 was not so good a year as had been counted on. Production was greater, but prices were so much lower that the estimate of total value was nearly a billion dollars less than the estimate for 1925.

At the end of the crop year, with the value of livestock production added to the value of crops estimated using weighted prices, the disparity between the years, and for the country as a whole was only 0.4 per cent in favor of 1925. But, as farmers know, the gross value of production greatly exceeds gross income.

For the industry as a whole, the estimated gross income from farm production in 1926-27, was \$12,080,000,000, or 74 per cent of the estimated gross value of farm production, the other 26 per cent having been used for feed and seed or wasted in one way or another. The percentage so used has varied from 25 per cent to 35 per cent in the past eight years. Further, 12 to 15.5 per cent of the gross value figure is regularly used by the farm families and amounted to \$2,531,000,000 in 1926-27. This is real income, but is not money to spend. Cash income from sales was \$9,549,000,000, or 58.6 per cent of the gross value of all farm production in the year 1926-27. In the past eight years it has not exceeded 60 per cent of gross value of farm production and was 55 per cent or less in four of the eight years. Compared with 1925-26, cash income from sales of 1926-27 was 4.6 per cent less.

Business expenses are met out of the sum called cash income from sales, as are the farmers' family and personal expenses. Payments to others for wages, taxes, rent, interest, and operating costs amounted in 1926-27 to about 70 per cent of the cash income. Thus 30 per cent of the cash income was available for ordinary living expenses not provided from the farm supplies, and other personal purposes. In the previous year, 33 per cent of a larger sum had been available for living and personal purposes. For the year 1926-27 the personal income of farmers, including noncash items, was 8 per cent less than in 1925-26 and the cash income available for personal purposes was 13 per cent less.

Some farmers, of course, made more in 1926 than in 1925, and farmers in some localities averaged quite as much. But reports from farmers for their own farms show plainly that 1926 was a less favorable year for them than 1925.⁷ (Fig. 125.)

Direct comparison of the years 1925 and 1926 is possible through the statements of 4,799 farmers for the same farm in each of these two years. The receipts of these farmers averaged \$13 more in 1926 than in 1925, expenses were \$37 more, inventory increase was \$84 less and the net results were \$108 less—\$986 in 1926 compared with \$1,094

⁷ See Tables 475-476 in statistical section, Farm Returns.

in 1925. In all the geographic divisions the average cash balance for these farms was smaller in 1926 than in 1925, as it was for the larger groups of which they are a part. The increase in average total expense was largely in the labor bill. There was considerable variation in the averages of all classes of expense in the geographical divisions even though the general averages changed little.

A sorting of reports from the South Central States, where the reported average net result was higher in 1926 than in 1925, shows that the improvement was attributed to farms and ranches where

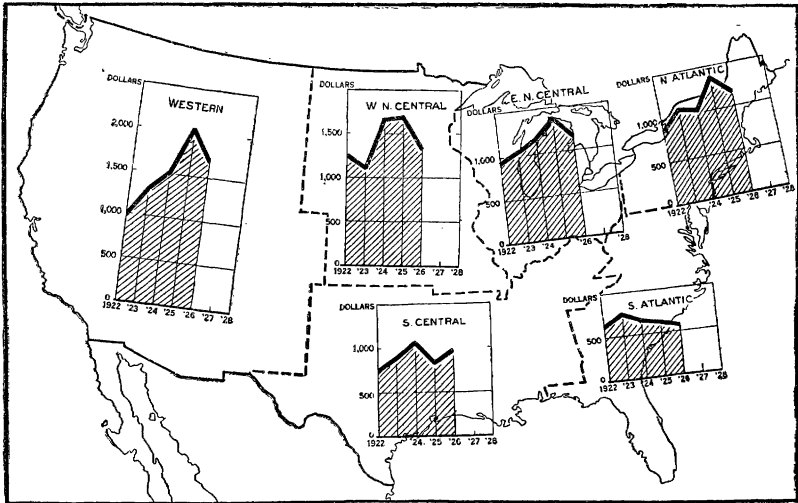


FIG. 125.—Trends of averages of farmers' reports. The values of the averages seem high only in comparison with those for the average of all farms, including tenants and croppers. The increase indicated in the South Central States for 1926 reflects the great improvement in the livestock and feed crop situation there. Cotton farmers had lower returns

livestock production was the dominant interest, and to inventory increases of crops and livestock. The cotton farmers in this division, as well as in the South Atlantic division, had much lower returns than in 1925.

S. W. MENDUM.

INSECTICIDE Studies Develop Many New Ways to Kill Pests

The use of insecticides is keeping pace with the growth and extension of agriculture. There is now hardly a crop subject to the attack of insects which is not treated in some fashion with chemicals to kill, repel, or restrict their depredations. In view of the large number of insect species involved, their different habits, and the varied crops upon which they feed, it is not surprising that insecticidal control measures are extremely diverse and that new situations are constantly demanding new or modified procedures.

The investigations of the Bureau of Entomology have been concerned with a large number of chemical compounds and mixtures. Efforts are constantly being made to extend the use of well known insecticides, to increase their effectiveness, and to discover new compounds or mixtures. The problem frequently demands the modifica-