

Trends in Land Tenure in Three Townships Ward County, North Dakota¹ 1941 - 1943

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THREE TOWNSHIPS IN WARD COUNTY, namely, Tatman, Afton, and Anna, were selected for an exploratory study² of current trends in land tenure.

The areas studied had a total of 148 farms in 1941, 151 in 1942, and 144 in 1943. During this period, the proportion of full owners and the proportion of part owners increased. There also was an increase in the proportion of owner-operated land. The proportion of tenants decreased. All of these trends were by far more pronounced from 1941 to 1942 than from 1942 to 1943. This is shown in the following table:

Year:	All Farms	Full Owners	Part Owners	Tenants
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
1941	100.0	20.3	21.6	58.1
1942	100.0	27.8	31.1	41.1
1943	100.0	29.9	32.6	37.5

An analysis was made of the manner in which changes occurred in the proportion of operators in the three tenure groups. Between 1941 and 1942, for example, 24 operators were involved in a change in tenure status. Of these 18 were tenants, three were part owners and three were full owners. Two-thirds of these tenants became part owners, the others became full owners. All three part owners became full owners. All three full owners became part owners.

The three full owners who became part owners increased their size of farm. Two of the three part owners, after they became full owners, had the same size farm, but the third secured a smaller farm. Only one of the five tenants who became full owners increased the size of his farm, the others secured the same size farm. Of the tenants who became part owners, 11 increased their size of farm.

In 1943, 70 percent of the tenants had farms of 480 acres or

¹The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station assisted with the field work in Ward County.

²County A.A.A. records were used as the source of information.

less compared with 55 percent of the part owners and 81 percent of the full owners. The trend during this three-year period has been for an increasing proportion of full owners to fall in the group of farms 480

acres or less in size but for a decreasing proportion of part owners and tenants to fall in this group. The average size of farm is shown in the following table:

Year	All Farms	Full Owners	Part Owners	Tenants
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
1941	494	370	708	458
1942	548	382	771	492
1943	536	405	704	495

A large majority of both those farmers starting to farm and those quitting were the tenants on the smaller farms. Among the operators who remained at the same location but made some change in size of farm, 54 percent increased the size of their farm, 35 percent decreased the size and 11 percent increased the size of their farm in 1942 but decreased again in 1943. There was a decrease in the proportion of farms of 320 acres or less in size. There was a marked

increase in the proportion of farms 321 to 480 acres in size. The proportion of farms over 480 acres in size increased only slightly.

The regional study, of which these Ward County data are a part, indicated that not all parts of the Northern Great Plains experienced a decrease in tenancy during this period. Townships studied in two other Plains states showed an increase in tenancy.

Bounty Tomato, a new variety of tomato, developed and distributed by the Department of Horticulture of the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, was tested extensively by the Hawaii Agricultural Experiment Station in 1941 and 1942. That Station is making extensive use of Bounty as breeding stock in their own program of tomato improvement, for according to Director J. H. Beaumont of that Island Station they find that Bounty has large fruits, good set, earliness, and a self-topping character. In 1941 trials they found that the variety was particularly notable for its ability to set fruit during relatively warm weather. Further tests made in 1942 led them to conclude that Bounty was one of the best of the large fruit types for planting at low elevation during their warm months.

Thus it is that a new variety developed for the cold climate of North Dakota fits into the scheme of things in a climate where they can grow three crops of tomatoes in the all-around mild temperatures of the typical Hawaiian year. H. L. Walster.