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# THE ECONOMICS OF VERY SMALL FARMS

— A FURTHER LOOK

D. J. Ansell, A. K. Giles and J. Rendell

Special Studies in Agricultural Economics  
Report No 9

1990

UNIVERSITY OF READING  
Department of  
Agricultural Economics & Management

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VERY SMALL FARMS  
- A Further Look

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## CONTENTS

	Page
Preface and Acknowledgements	
Summary	1
Some Extracts from Provincial Reports	3
Introduction	5
Section A: Analysis of Survey Results by Type of Holding	10
Section B: Provincial Reports	39
Introduction	39
Centres: Wye	43
Reading	49
Exeter	56
Cambridge	62
Nottingham	69
Manchester	74
Askham Bryan	82
Newcastle	86
Aberystwyth	90
Section C: The European Community Regions	108
Definitions of Terms Used in the Summary Tables	114
Annex 1: Reports on Special Studies in Agricultural Economics	116
Annex 2: Provincial Centres of Agricultural Economics	117
Erratum	119

## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The agriculture of the UK is characterised by large farm businesses, which produce most of the industry's output. For many years the share in total production of these larger enterprises has tended to grow. By 1989 almost three-quarters of the area of cereals was in farms with 50 ha. or more cereals and more than 40% of our dairy cows were in herds of 100 or more. In the light of this, it might seem that from the point of view of food the farms studied here are insignificant. Indeed, they have usually been excluded from official agricultural statistics on those grounds.

Very small farms, however, do occupy a distinctive role in our countryside. They are the homes of a large number of people. Those who live in them devote a significant part of their time and energy to farming activities. Some small farms make an important contribution to special, niche, markets; their owners may be pioneers - or fanatics. Most, however, cope with conventional farming enterprises, facing the ups and downs of the market in common with all farmers and having to undertake additional non-farm work in order to make ends meet. Clearly such farmers value their way of life and, in doing so, contribute to the rural communities of which they are part.

This report, which has been written and edited by Professor Giles and Mr. Ansell, helps to provide a factual background to the economic situation of such farms. It, together with the two earlier reports, gives an insight into how such businesses are affected by the changes taking place in agriculture in the European Community and the UK. As attention switches from policies designed to promote food production to policies which are of a more socially and environmentally sensitive nature, the significance of very small farms, which help to keep village communities alive, is of growing importance. The balance of agricultural and non-farming activities may affect the stability of this important group of rural business and their influence in the future development of rural Britain.

This University would, of course, not have been able to carry out its work as national co-ordinator of this study without the helpful collaboration of many individuals and institutions to whom we are grateful. Our thanks, therefore, go to members of the Economics (Farm Business) Division of MAFF, who have helped in initiating the study; to members of the Planning Group; to the investigational staff at all of the Centres involved, and in particular to the local co-ordinators and authors; and to John Rendell, now retired from this Department, but who has again undertaken the mammoth task of analysing the data. We have, as in previous years, included as much of the data as seems manageable in a simple report,

but would do our best to meet any requests for additional information that may be hidden in our computer.

As always in these matters special thanks must go to the co-operating farmers: many of them, up and down the country who - in their busy and sometimes worrying lives - have patiently given us their time and answered our questions. We will have met them for a second time before this study is in print and we are grateful to them.

Finally, we have to end on a sad note: for it was with the deepest sadness that we and our colleagues around the country heard of the sudden news, late in 1989, of Mike Pick's death. A graduate of this University and a loyal servant of MAFF, he had, in various ways, endeared himself to all who knew and worked with him. He had fought stubbornly against uncertain health, but his death was unexpected. In recent years he had a major influence on the new series of Special Studies in Agricultural Economics of which Number 1 was the first in the sequence of reports on Very Small Farms. When the four-year study is complete it will stand as a major part of the testimony to Mike Pick's interests and industry. He is and will be greatly missed.

Professor J. S. Marsh,  
Head of Department.  
April, 1990.

## SUMMARY

### Objectives

This report presents the results from the third year of a four-year study of Very Small Farms which has had as its objectives to provide information about:

- the farming activities practised,
- the profitability of those activities,
- the nature and content of non-farming employment and incomes,
- attitudes regarding past, present and future intentions.

### Methodology

The study has been conducted for all three years (1986, 1987 and 1988) by departments responsible for agricultural economics in nine universities and colleges in England and Wales,<sup>1</sup> and has embraced those farms which, because of their smallness<sup>2</sup> are not included in the annual Farm Business Survey.

Data have been collected from these farms, by interview, for each of the three calendar years. An identical sample of just over 500 holdings was involved in 1986 and 1987. In this third year the study has been based on a freshly drawn and enlarged sample of over 1,200 holdings.

The results for 1988 are presented here, as they have been in the two previous reports, in three different ways: for seven main farming types, for the nine investigating centres, and for four European Community regions.

### Main Conclusions

1. It has been a feature of this survey, over its three years, that whilst it has drawn attention to the variability of individual circumstances and motives for farming on this scale, it has reflected a distinct lack of variability in the general financial outcome for most of those involved.

The new and enlarged sample has served to confirm that, even within the changing fortunes of different sectors of farming, the picture remains virtually unchanged on these 'very small farms' with low agricultural investment levels, low intensity farming and low (almost non-existent) farming incomes.

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<sup>1</sup>Northern Ireland was included in this study for 1986 and 1987, and in Scotland a separate but similar study has been conducted for 1987 and 1988.

<sup>2</sup>The farms are below 4 British Size Units and, therefore, do not warrant the full-time employment of one person.

2. In England, average Net Farm Income on these farms in 1988 averaged a mere £300; in Wales, by the same token, there were losses. Off-farm income averaged £12,600 in England and £7,800 in Wales. With the labour of farmer and spouse being fairly evenly divided between on-farm and off-farm work, the disproportionate reward to on-farm work is self-evident.
3. It is tempting to draw attention to the substantial percentage changes in average farming incomes reflected in this survey from year to year, e.g. nationally speaking, just over £300 in 1986, over £800 in 1987 and back to around £100 in 1988. But such changes are, of course, small in absolute terms; and (as pointed out in the concluding remarks of Section A) are likely to occur where the figure is a residual between two other figures (output and costs) often changing independently and similar in magnitude to each other. To emphasise such changes would be inconsistent with our already stated general conclusions.
4. Even the gradually improving - and, in percentage terms, the dramatically improving - circumstances of very small dairy farms (with occupier's farming income of around £1,200 in 1986, £2,000 in 1987 and £4,500 in 1988) do not represent a move from anything but dire income levels - coupled, as they inevitably are on dairy farms, with less opportunity to work and earn off the farm. All other farm types, with a much more even distribution of labour effort on and off the farm (except in the case of horticulture), were able to generate substantially more non-farming income than were dairy farmers. But this was needed to compensate, in many cases, for a substantially lower farm income as well.
5. It is not intended to draw conclusions here about the differences reflected by the various data-collecting centres, with the often artificial farming divisions represented by their boundaries. Again, however, the differences are small in absolute terms although the influence of dairying in the more western areas is evident. The same influence is evident in the results from the four EC regions with the highest average 'occupier's income' (£1,706) occurring in the West Region, with the dairying figure (£4,929) the highest component of that regional average.

## The Future

There remains one more year of results to emerge from this four-year study: those for the 1989 calendar year. At the time of writing this report (i.e. the Spring of 1990) the field work is well underway. The data will again be analysed at Reading - during the second half of 1990 - and our final report, including a renewed socio-economic emphasis - will be written in time to appear in the early summer of 1991.



SOME EXTRACTS FROM THE PROVINCIAL REPORTS IN SECTION B

- 1988 Financial Year, Surveyed in 1989 -

'Anecdotes of investment successes were frequently encountered (in 1988) from those with significant off-farm incomes, which were absent from the present study (in 1989). One may postulate that the reversal of fortunes resulting from Black Monday and higher interest rates has created difficulties in this sector, and that the 'smallholder' rather than the commuting resident has emerged in relatively robust shape in the South East.'

M. J. M. Bent, Wye College.

'In addition to differences in soil type and climate, the main reason for the wide spectrum of results (from farm financial surveys) is due to the variation of technical efficiency with which farmers produce agricultural and horticultural products. An added variable that could be ascribed to the participants in this particular study was the purpose for which the farm was being occupied.'

J. Wright, University of Reading.

'It would appear that, in most cases, the very small farm is better regarded as being on the residential fringe of agriculture rather than as a first step on the farming ladder.'

M. M. Turner, University of Exeter.

'It would be wrong to assume that all of these farms have serious problems. Clearly some do, where, for example, the level of output is low and the holding provides the sole occupation for the farmer. For others, where the main source of income came from an off-farm occupation, the farming activity is much less important and the holding mainly residential.'

J. G. Davidson, University of Cambridge.

'By their very nature these holdings are not dynamic in their management .... in general (they) tend to be extensively farmed and the level of off-farm activity is more significant than time spent on the holding, both in terms of hours spent and income generated.'

S. J. Mellors, University of Nottingham.

'What is remarkable in many cases, is the ability of farm families to survive on very low incomes. It is significant also, that so many of these holdings were owner-occupied; on the one hand, it is simply because the farm is owned that many of these holdings remain solvent, whilst it is also true that owning one's own land seems to be an important concept in itself.'

C. Maddison, University of Manchester.

'There are those (in this survey) who are clearly improving their lifestyle by purchasing a smallholding and can only be considered to be farming for a hobby and not for monetary gain. In many cases these farmers would be financially better off letting their land. Equally, there are those who are working very long hours for very small monetary rewards. Some of these will make a financial success of their farming but for many, financial dependency on farming will not be possible.'

Susan Holley, Askham Bryan College.

'There were virtually no holdings where farm income was greater than non-farm income with the average from the farm being less than £800 ... (but) ... the labour input in many cases is substantial so (presumably) many farmers are motivated by non-financial considerations ... agricultural activities are carried out for pleasure and enjoyment ... (and) non-farm incomes may be considerable.'

D. Barnes, University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

'The farms visited in the course of the survey range from traditional family small holdings, yielding a modest living for their occupiers, to units purchased with outside resources and run for the purpose of indulging a vision or a philosophy. In the middle, and probably not typical, are farms which are merely sidelines or convenient bases for their occupiers whose main livelihood is non-agricultural.'

T. N. Jenkins, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

## INTRODUCTION

### Objectives and survey design

This is the third report,<sup>1</sup> in a series of four, which presents the results from a national study of Very Small Farms, covering the calendar years 1986-89.

As explained in the Preface, these 'very small farms' - ie significant agricultural holdings but of less than four BSUs in size<sup>2</sup> - may be relatively unimportant in terms of agricultural output but they are numerically significant (nearly 50,000) and they, and those who occupy them, do constitute an important part of the whole rural economy.

Despite the conduct of various studies into wider aspects of part-time farming,<sup>3</sup> relatively little has previously been known about the very small farm sector as such - other than that it existed, was wide spread and almost certainly embraced a wide range of farming and human circumstances. It was, therefore, to rectify this situation that this present study was launched in 1986. Financed by MAFF, as part of the on-going programme of agricultural economics work conducted by universities and colleges, the study had three broad objectives which were:

- to provide detailed information about the farming activities being practiced.
- to measure levels of farming profitability, and
- to identify other existing kinds of employment and income.

To these three, a fourth objective was added in the second year of the study, namely:

- to examine a number of socio-economic questions concerning the motivation and outlook of the particular farming population.

Details of the design and conduct of the study have been the responsibility of a small Planning Group which knew, from the outset, that

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#### <sup>1</sup>Previous reports:

Very Small Farms: An Economic Study. Special Studies in Agricultural Economics Report No. 1. 1988.

Very Small Farms: A Neglected Component? Special Studies in Agricultural Economics Report No. 5. 1989.

Both reports by D. J. Ansell, A. K. Giles and J. Rendell, published by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Management, University of Reading.

<sup>2</sup>British Size Units constitute a measure of size based on the productive potential for any farm business in terms of Standard Gross Margins. In practical terms, 4 BSUs is the size below which the business is deemed not to provide full-time employment for one person. Such farms are, by definition, excluded from the Farm Business Survey (FBS).

<sup>3</sup>See 'The Economics of Part-Time Farming'. Ruth Gasson. Longman Scientific & Technical. 1988.

the study would be breaking new ground. Here and there, therefore, initial intentions have been modified in the light of experience, but essentially the study has not deviated from the original plans, which, briefly,<sup>1</sup> were:

- to conduct a national study, to be carried out by the nine university and college departments responsible for agricultural economics in England and Wales.<sup>2</sup>
- to carry out a pilot study relating to the calendar years 1986 and 1987 on a 1% stratified, identical sample of the known 'very small farms' in the country.
- to repeat the study for 1988 and 1989 calendar years on a freshly drawn sample of farms, increased to 2% of the total.
- to add a socio-economic dimension to the study in the second year of each of the two-year studies, ie 1987 and 1989.
- to conduct the survey, in all four years, by means of a visit as soon as possible after the close of each accounting year, and to elicit the required information using a specially prepared worksheet, conceptually based on the Farm Business Survey but (unlike that Survey) not relying on audited accounts.
- for the study to be co-ordinated and reported on by the University of Reading.

#### The four-year sequence of studies

With the work associated with this study stretching over four accounting years - and the material for each of those years (ie the events themselves, data collection and analysis, and publication of results) involving three different calendar years the following time-table of events may be of help to those interested in the continuity of the study:

	Accounting Year	Field Work & Analysis	Publication of Reports (Spring)
Year 1	1986	1987	1988
Year 2	1987	1988	1989
Year 3	1988	1989	1990
Year 4	1989	1990	1991

In the event, the 1986 survey embraced 475 bona fide very small farms in England and Wales, plus a further 97 in Northern Ireland: a total of 572. Allowing for the inevitable 'casualties' this resulted in an identical sample of 511 holdings for 1986 and 1987. With a similar study mounted in Scotland for the first time for the 1987 accounting year, the subsequent MAFF annual publication on Farm Incomes in the United Kingdom

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<sup>1</sup>A more complete account of the 'mechanics' of these surveys will be found in the first report in the series: Very Small Farms: An Economic Study (1988).

<sup>2</sup>A similar study was financed by DANI in Northern Ireland for 1986 and 1987; and by DAFS in Scotland for 1987 and 1988.

(1989 Edition) included for the first (and perhaps the only<sup>1</sup>) time an account of incomes on very small farms throughout the UK. That account, together with the usual FBS<sup>2</sup> report on farm incomes on farms above 4 BSUs provided the most comprehensive account of farm incomes in the UK ever provided.

### The third year: sample and results

In the 1988 calendar year, with which this report deals, data have been analysed from a total of 1,283 holdings in England and Wales.<sup>3</sup> Initial contacts numbered 2,348, giving an overall 'non-response' rate of slightly under 50%, although this varied from centre to centre.<sup>4</sup> Mainly for reasons of a necessary re-classification of holdings at the time of analysis, not all of these holdings were subsequently included in the final analysis of results contained in Sections A and C of this report (1,217), nor in the provincial reports in Section C (1,245). A summary of the final classification, by centre and farm type is shown below in Table I.1.

Whilst not wishing to anticipate the detailed findings in the main body of this report, it may be helpful to the reader - especially as the data is presented in the report in three different ways (by farming type, centre, and regions) - to indicate here something of the general findings to emerge from 1988. Table I.2 summarises the overall picture and shows comparable data (albeit from a different and smaller sample) for 1986 and 1987.

It will be seen from the figures in Table I.2 that average 'net farm income' on these farms has been, if not non-existent, at a very low level in England and Wales throughout all three years of the survey - and was lowest in 1988. Non-farm income (and therefore total income) has remained fairly static at around the £12,000 level. Time spent on and off the farm has not changed markedly except in the case of 'on farm' work in Wales.

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<sup>1</sup>The Northern Ireland study of very small farms has not been repeated in 1988 and 1989.

<sup>2</sup>Farm Business Survey.

<sup>3</sup>A similar study was conducted in Scotland on 100 farms in 1988. It will be reported on separately and is referred to in the 1990 Edition of 'Farm Incomes in the UK'.

<sup>4</sup>The principal reasons for non-co-operation were because farmers were 'too busy', 'not interested', or felt that their particular circumstances were irrelevant to the study.

**Table I.1: Farming Types by Centres**

Type:	Dairy- ing	LFA L/S	Lowland L/S	Pigs & Poultry	Crop- ping	Horti- culture	Other	Total
Centre								
Askham Bryan	1	23	33	7	7	7	21	99
Cambridge	0	0	21	9	32	24	24	110
Exeter	7	28	63	11	9	11	45	174
Manchester	9	21	63	14	7	12	37	163
Newcastle	0	31	32	4	1	3	21	92
Nottingham	0	6	35	4	6	12	22	85
Reading	2	1	92	7	7	20	47	176
Wye	4	0	24	5	4	10	24	71
Sub-Total	23	110	363	61	73	99	241	970
Aberystwyth	10	162	36	2	0	0	37	247
Total	33	272	399	63	73	99	278	1,217

**Table I.2: Average total farm and non-farm incomes and hours worked - England and Wales**

	Net Farm Income £	Non-farm Income £ (% unearned)	Total Income £	Farmer & Spouse Labour (hrs)	
				On farm	Off farm
1988					
England	300	12,600 (27%)	12,900	1,220	1,300
Wales	-200	7,800 (38%)	7,600	1,110	940
1987					
England	800	11,800 (29%)	12,600	1,360	1,200
Wales	1,000	5,500	6,500	1,480	890
1986					
England	600	11,200 (29%)	11,800	1,370	1,040
Wales	500	5,000 (42%)	5,500	1,650	920

[This table is based on year by year national summaries of the survey featured in the MAFF publication on Farm Incomes in England and Wales.]

Thus we find nothing in the third year of this survey to contradict the general findings from the first two years, namely:

- that income from farming these holdings is negligible.
- that whilst something like half the family man-hours (and sometimes more) are spent on the holdings, by far the major share of income is generated from non-farm sources.
- that there is no evidence of intensively farmed systems comparable with those of more conventional farms - small or large.

Furthermore, we detect no evidence to suggest that this general situation is likely to change. Indeed, as was written by us in our 1989 report, 'the scale of operations on these farms and their general lack of sophistication - coupled with the obvious physical tie of the holdings with its effect on the potential for off-farm earning - would all tend to militate against dramatic change'.

Behind the few average figures of Table I.2, however, there lies a huge range of different farming and geographical circumstances and the rest of this report endeavours to do some justice to this range. As in previous reports, the data are, therefore, presented in three separate sections: Section A discusses the results on a national farming type basis; Section B contains provincial results and comments from each recording Centre; and Section C provides data for the four European Community Regions embraced by this survey: East, West and North England and Wales.

Despite the range of circumstances reflected in the report, however, each sub set of the data remains, inevitably, a statement of the average or the broad dispersion around it. There is, therefore, one remaining but important point to be made here. It has already been alluded to in the Preface and early on in this Introduction. It is simply that behind the averages lie the individual farm circumstances and behind each set of individual farm figures there is a household and a family. In many cases 'farm' may not be the most appropriate word to be used in this context; but rural businesses and rural businessmen and businesswomen they all are. Combined with non-farming activities or not the businesses and their owners are part and parcel of the rural economy and community.

It has been the privilege of Investigational Officers up and down the country to come face to face with the people and the circumstances which lie behind the data. Much of 'the feel' for these more human aspects of the survey is reflected in the local provincial reports which appear in Section B: what has previously been referred to as 'the social nuances' of the respondents. A deliberate attempt has also been made to reflect something of these nuances in the 'extracts from provincial reports' which appear immediately before this Introduction. No one of them is intended to reflect the situation nationally, nor necessarily throughout the whole of the Province in which each was written. Together, however, this collection of statements do much to reflect the human face of this study which may, otherwise, have become submerged in its welter of data. That possibility, the authors believe, would have been regrettable.

## SECTION A: ANALYSIS BY TYPE OF HOLDING

### Introduction

This section of the report analyses the results of the survey by type of holding. The same typology is used as in the two previous Very Small Farm reports in this series. Farms are assigned to a particular group on the basis of their dominant enterprise gross margin. 'LFA livestock' farms are livestock farms situated within one of the 'less favoured areas' as prescribed by EEC regulations. The category 'other' subscribes farms which have no identifiable enterprise other than grassland let for keep, or are used by the occupier for recreational purposes or from which hay or silage have been sold.

The larger number of farms covered in this survey have permitted more cross tabulation and disaggregation of the data. Some of this information appears in the Appendices at the end of this section. The seven farm types which appear in this section of the report are Dairying, LFA livestock, Lowland livestock, Cropping, Pigs & Poultry, Horticulture and Other.

### A.1: Dairy Holdings

There were only 33 holdings which, in the end proved to be dairy holdings. They were located mainly in the western part of the country. The financial results for these holdings is presented in Table A.1. The level of farm profitability shows a significant improvement when compared with the results from the previous surveys. This is consistent with a general improvement in the economic climate for dairy farms. Results from the Farm Business Survey show that dairy farm incomes increased substantially in 1988 compared with previous years.

By contrast, the input of family labour is almost identical in this sample with the results of earlier surveys, and shows that the farm work undertaken is close to a full-time commitment. The labour hours shown in Table A.1 refers to work done by farmer and spouse.

There is a great deal of variation in many of the statistics between farms. This is shown in the Appendix tables A.1.1 to A.1.5. The lowest level of occupier's income for example was -£2,616 and the highest £25,632. Sixty eight per cent of the holdings had farming incomes of less than £5,000. Of those, about one half had non-farm incomes of less than £5,000. For the entire sample of dairy farmers, unearned income represented almost half of all non-farm income, and 80 per cent of the sample had non-farm **earnings** of less than £2,000, and worked less than 500 hours per year off the farm. This is a group therefore who, on the whole, make up a living partly from farming and partly from pensions (which makes up over half of unearned income). The age distribution of the sample is given in Appendix table A.1.5, and shows that 42 per cent of farmers were over 65, and 70 per cent were over 50. The 25 per cent of the sample who were under 50 were all relatively heavily committed to their farms in terms of work and all worked more than 1,000 hours a year on farm work.



**Table A.1: Dairy Holdings - Income and Labour**

No. of holdings	33
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	13.08
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	129
By-products and forage	408
Livestock products	8,900
Miscellaneous revenue	1,542
Total	10,979
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	3,040
Crop variable costs	403
Total	3,443
Gross Margin	7,536
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	562
Machinery	903
General farm costs	1,204
Rent and rental value	1,590
Total	4,259
Net Income	3,277
Occupier's Income - farming	4,521
Occupier's Income - non-farm	5,820
Total	10,341
Interest payments	283
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	839
Gross margin	576
Net income	250
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	1,673
Own labour - off-farm	617
Total hours worked	2,290
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	2.7
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	5.1
Total income/hr worked*	3.4

\*Excludes unearned income.

## A.2: Livestock Holdings in Less Favoured Areas

There were 272 such holdings in the survey, 162 were in Wales and the others mainly in the north of England. They represent 22 per cent of the total sample. Rather more than half of livestock output is derived from sheep production and the remainder from beef rearing systems. The financial results from these farms are shown in Table A.2 and Appendix tables A.2.1-A.2.5. For the sample as a whole, net income was just £85 per farm; a trivial amount given the substantial input of family labour. The mean value of total occupier's income was a little under £10,000, but the range in income was very wide. The minimum value for farm occupier's income was -£14,662 and the maximum was £19,063. The range of off-farm income was also wide, but 60 per cent had off-farm earnings of more than £5,000 per year. Only 8 per cent of farms had an occupier's farm income of more than £5,000. Thirty-three per cent of the sample had a combined income of less than £10,000.

It would seem that the survey confirms the assumption inherent in the use of a 4 BSU criteria for very small farms, which is that they do not generate full-time employment for one person. On 80 per cent of the holdings in this category, the farmer and spouse performed less than 2,000 hours of farm work per year. It is not the case, however, that most farmers had a full-time off-farm job. There were only 30 per cent who worked more than 2,000 hours per year off the farm. Unearned income is an important component of total occupier's income, accounting for one-third of total off-farm income, but in contrast to dairy farms, off-farm **earnings** are more significant. Half the sample had off-farm earnings of more than £2,000.

The age distribution of farmers in this type of category shows more farmers in the younger age groups, than dairy holdings, and 40 per cent are under 50. There is no evidence that younger farmers are more committed to their farms in terms of labour input than older one. There is however a difference between age groups in the amount of non-farm work undertaken. Three quarters of farmers over the age of 50 did little or no farm work but a higher proportion of younger men did.

Table A.2: Livestock Holdings in Less Favoured Areas - Income and Labour

No. of holdings	272
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	12.45
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	11
By-products and forage	72
Livestock products	3,817
Miscellaneous revenue	410
Total	4,310
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	999
Crop variable costs	236
Total	1,235
Gross Margin	3,075
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	430
Machinery	721
General farm costs	716
Rent and rental value	1,123
Total	2,990
Net Income	85
Occupier's Income - farming	998
Occupier's Income - non-farm	8,596
Total	9,594
Interest payments	463
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	346
Gross margin	247
Net income	7
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	1,241
Own labour - off-farm	1,191
Total hours worked	2,432
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	0.8
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	4.5
Total income/hr worked*	2.2

\*Excludes unearned income.

### A.3: Lowland Livestock Holdings

There were 399 lowland livestock holdings in the sample - by some way the most numerous group. They are to be found in all parts of the country. Three-quarters of their livestock output comes from beef systems and the remainder from sheep. Occupier's income from the holding averaged £780 and was very variable between farms. Thirty-six per cent of farms made losses (on occupier's farm income not net farm income) and only 11 per cent of holdings generated more than £5,000 of occupier's farm income. Non-farm income, however, was the highest among any of the groups, almost half the sample had off-farm income of more than £10,000. A rather high proportion of off-farm income was **earned** as opposed to **unearned** income than in either of the two previous farm types and with almost half the sample being under the age of 50 (compared with 25% in the case of dairying), the picture that emerges is one of a large number of lowland livestock farms being run as spare time activities. The sample, in fact, seems to divide itself into two parts. One half has relatively little off-farm work, the farmers are relatively old, and they survive on the farm income supplemented by pensions and investment income of modest proportions (£1,245 on average). The other half are younger, have full-time, off-farm jobs, and run their holdings in their spare time.

The inability of such farms to generate significant income is illustrated by the fact that the highest recorded value of occupier's farm income was just under £16,000 and only 10 per cent of farms recorded occupier's farm income of more than £5,000.

It should not be imagined however that very small lowland livestock farms are notably less efficient than larger ones. The Farm Business Survey showed owner-occupied lowland livestock farms achieving an average level of occupier's income of £78 per hectare in 1988 compared to the £72 per hectare achieved by farms in this sample. Systems of farming based on grazing livestock are inherently unprofitable in lowland areas whatever their size.

Table A.3: Lowland Livestock Holdings - Income and Labour

No. of holdings	399
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	10.74
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	128
By-products and forage	182
Livestock products	4,451
Miscellaneous revenue	1,172
Total	5,933
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	1,673
Crop variable costs	285
Total	1,958
Gross Margin	3,975
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	876
Machinery	1,016
General farm costs	838
Rent and rental value	1,331
Total	4,061
Net Income	-86
Occupier's Income - farming	780
Occupier's Income - non-farm	14,673
Total	15,453
Interest payments	1,394
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	553
Gross margin	370
Net income	-8
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	1,362
Own labour - off-farm	1,367
Total hours worked	2,729
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	0.57
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	8.20
Total income/hr worked*	4.39

\*Excludes unearned income.

#### A.4: Cropping Holdings

Cropping farms represented only 5.6 per cent of the sample. Thirty-two out of 73 were in the Cambridge province and the rest scattered thinly through the other areas of the country. Sixty-three per cent of their crop output is cereals. There is a substantial difference between the amount of contracting undertaken by this group of farmers and those in the sample which has provided the basis for our two previous reports. Miscellaneous revenue, which is mainly contracting, at £710 (see Table A.4) is only half of the value that was calculated from our previous sample in 1987. Crop output however is significantly higher.

Overall one-quarter of cropping holdings made a loss and three-quarters made less than £2,500. As with the previous group the sample seems to be divided into a group of older farmers doing relatively little off-farm work (see Appendix Table A.4.2) supplementing their pensions and investment income by 'pottering' on their farms, and a group of younger men working principally off-farm, and devoting some spare time to farming.

Of the 73 farms in this category, only 11 per cent were able to obtain an occupier's income from their farms of more than £5,000, only five more than £7,500 and one more than £10,000.

However, when related to their size, measured in terms of land, small farms in this category do no worse than large ones. Farm Business Survey results show that owner-occupied cropping farms in 1988 achieved an occupier's farm income of £53 per hectare. In this survey, cropping farms achieved £72 per hectare.

**Table A.4: Cropping Holdings - Income and Labour**

No. of holdings	73
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	12.19
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	4,039
By-products and forage	357
Livestock products	854
Miscellaneous revenue	710
Total	5,960
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	419
Crop variable costs	1,574
Total	1,993
Gross Margin	3,967
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	543
Machinery	1,117
General farm costs	829
Rent and rental value	1,450
Total	3,939
Net Income	28
Occupier's Income - farming	875
Occupier's Income - non-farm	7,396
Total	8,271
Interest payments	723
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	489
Gross margin	325
Net income	2
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	1,178
Own labour - off-farm	1,502
Total hours worked	2,680
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	0.74
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	3.84
Total income/hr worked*	2.48

\*Excludes unearned income.

## A.5: Pigs and Poultry

Holdings in this category are smallest in terms of area but have the highest output. Rather surprisingly, in an age when small flocks of poultry were thought to have disappeared, 70 per cent of the livestock output is from poultry. Profits are positive but modest and, on average, non-farm income accounts for over 80 per cent of total income. Ninety-two per cent of farms had off-farm income, and 64 per cent had off-farm income of more than £5,000. Only one-quarter of off-farm income was unearned income, the remainder being spread about equally between employed and self-employed earnings.

Only 22 per cent of pig and poultry holdings had farm income exceeding £7,500 and only 4 per cent, over £10,000. Nevertheless, there were a considerable number of farm families who worked many hours on the farm. On 40 per cent of holdings labour inputs of farmer and spouse exceeded 2,000 hours per year - equivalent to a full-time labour input. The rewards for this high input of labour were meagre, as is clear from Table A.5 and Appendix tables A.5.1-A.5.5.

The sample falls into two parts as far as off-farm activity and earnings is concerned. Half the sample had no off-farm earned income and 40 per cent had more than £10,000 of earned income. This dualistic nature to the small farm situation has already been commented upon.

Average age of this group was 51, and the sample divided equally either side of this value. Relatively few of the over 50s had full-time, off-farm jobs, but most of the under 50s did.



Table A.5: Pig and Poultry Holdings - Income and Labour

No. of holdings	63
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	5.56
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	62
By-products and forage	220
Livestock products	10,625
Miscellaneous revenue	1,528
Total	12,435
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	6,403
Crop variable costs	104
Total	6,507
Gross Margin	5,928
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	1,483
Machinery	1,123
General farm costs	1,355
Rent and rental value	749
Total	4,710
Net Income	1,218
Occupier's Income - farming	1,558
Occupier's Income - non-farm	10,804
Total	12,362
Interest payments	2,030
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	2,238
Gross margin	1,067
Net income	219
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	1,599
Own labour - off-farm	1,230
Total hours worked	2,829
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	0.97
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	6.43
Total income/hr worked*	3.34

\*Excludes unearned income.

## A.6: Horticultural Holdings

There were 99 horticultural holdings, producing, almost exclusively, horticultural produce, making small profits, but allocating two-thirds of their family labour to the holding. They are to be found mainly in the south and east of England, and there were none in Wales. Eighty-five per cent of the sample had off-farm income and in 40 per cent of cases this exceeded £10,000. The highest recorded value for occupier's on-farm income was £9,863 and on only 13 per cent of all farms did occupier's income exceed £5,000.

These low incomes are not associated with negligible labour inputs as was indicated above. Over three-quarters of the sample worked for more than 1,000 hours per year on their holdings and over half, more than 2,000 hours per year.

Output per hectare, however, is low at £2,361. Results from horticultural holdings, in the Reading province in 1988 gives the following figures for output per hectare on horticultural holdings:-

Outdoor hortic. mainly vegetables	£6,793
Outdoor hortic. mainly fruit	£3,274
Glasshouse holdings (more than 90% of crops protected)	£215,437
Glasshouse holdings (50-90% of crops protected)	£13,969

One has to conclude, therefore, that these small horticultural holdings, 65 per cent of which are run by farmers over the age of 50, are not operated as intensively as larger ones. Land area, is not the critical factor in horticulture that it is in many other forms of food production, so it is possible that the high dependence on off-farm sources of income has more to do with preference than with necessity. Many intensive horticultural holdings would be less than the 3.68 hectares which is the average size of holdings in this sample. This is not to imply that the economic climate for horticultural producers is anything but harsh. A large number of small producers have left the industry in recent years. This group is one which is clinging on, through pluri-activity in most cases.

Table A.6: Horticultural Holdings - Income and Labour

No. of holdings	99
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	3.68
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	7,845
By-products and forage	20
Livestock products	261
Miscellaneous revenue	554
Total	8,680
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	303
Crop variable costs	2,823
Total	3,126
Gross Margin	5,554
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	1,620
Machinery	1,181
General farm costs	1,220
Rent and rental value	663
Total	4,684
Net Income	870
Occupier's Income - farming	1,290
Occupier's Income - non-farm	10,054
Total	11,344
Interest payments	683
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	2,173
Gross margin	931
Net income	237
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	2,173
Own labour - off-farm	931
Total hours worked	3,104
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	0.59
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	7.82
Total income/hr worked*	2.76

\*Excludes unearned income.

#### **A.7: Other Holdings**

This final group of holdings, which constitutes the second biggest group have no discernible agricultural enterprise of any significance. Such income as is derived from the use of farm resources is through letting land for grazing, or selling small quantities of hay. Often the land is used for recreational purposes only.

The average age of this group of farmers is higher, and there are is a greater proportion who are pensioners. There are few owners of such holdings who allocate a major proportion of their working time to the holdings and half the sample work very little time off it. This is a group of retired farmers and more prosperous members of the community with a preference for a rural lifestyle.

Table A.7: Other Holdings - Income and Labour

No. of holdings	278
Utilized agricultural area per holding (ha)	8.62
<u>Gross Output</u>	<u>Average £ per holding</u>
Crops	0
By-products and forage	108
Livestock products	-5
Miscellaneous revenue	1,852
Total	1,955
<u>Variable Costs</u>	
Livestock variable costs	165
Crop variable costs	21
Total	186
Gross Margin	1,739
<u>Fixed Costs</u>	
Wages	296
Machinery	304
General farm costs	317
Rent and rental value	1,006
Total	1,923
Net Income	-184
Occupier's Income - farming	683
Occupier's Income - non-farm	13,163
Total	13,846
Interest payments	995
	<u>Average £ per hectare</u>
Total output	227
Gross margin	202
Net income	-21
	<u>Hours per holding</u>
Own labour - on-farm	434
Own labour - off-farm	1,186
Total hours worked	1,620
	<u>£ per hour</u>
Occupier's income/hr/farm work	1.5
Occupier's income/hr/non-farm work*	7.6
Total income/hr worked*	6.0

\*Excludes unearned income.

## Conclusions

This section has set out the data collected in the survey by the predominant enterprises on the holdings. The picture that emerges has several arresting features. These can be summarized as follows:-

1. There is an enormous diversity in each farm type between holdings, in terms of such key variables as on- and off-farm income, hours worked on- and off-farm. Small scale farming is not a single phenomenon with common characteristics. It embraces a diversity of different economic financial and social phenomena.
2. Despite this diversity there are circumstances which keep re-occurring. Incomes from farming are low; total incomes are low when compared with national levels in other parts of the economy. A substantial amount of work is done on the farm by most small farming families. Farm work is a considerably higher proportion of total work than farm income is of total income.
3. This is an ageing section of the population. The average age of the sample and its distribution confirm this. This poses a question as to whether we have a temporary phenomenon here? Will these types of farm disappear when their present owners retire or die? Some will, but it seems likely that a substantial number will continue and be passed on to the next generation, most members of which have already got off-farm jobs and will continue to farm them on a part-time basis.
4. Comparisons between this set of results and those from the previous survey show some interesting contrasts. Hours worked on and off the farm for all farm types are very close in the two surveys. Gross output is also quite close, for most farm types, except cropping for which there are special reasons. The residual, however, between output and costs which is profit or income is highly variable. Dairy incomes are much higher than was previously estimated. In three different years (and two samples) we have estimates of occupier's farming income on dairy farms which move from £1,244 in 1986, £2,112 in 1987 to £4,521 in 1988. Lowland livestock occupier's income was £871 in 1986, £1,642 in 1987 and £780 in 1988. Other farm types show varying degrees of volatility in farm income. Some of this is explainable in terms of changes in the economic environment in which these farms operate. Dairy incomes, for example, have recovered in the last year or two. In other cases it is a reflection of the fact that if there are two variables, costs and revenues, changing independently, but nevertheless quite close in aggregate terms, then the residual, profit, will be subject to larger variations than the variations in either one of the other two. In a small business this can rapidly change a small profit into a loss.

**APPENDIX A.1: DAIRY HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.1.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less							
than £0	0	0	4	4	4	0	12
£1-2499	0	0	11	7	0	4	22
£2500-4999	10	6	4	6	4	4	34
£5000-7499	0	4	0	0	0	4	8
£7500-9999	0	4	0	4	0	0	8
£10000 & over	6	0	6	0	0	4	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.1.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	15
500-999	3	0	3	0	0	0	3	9
1000-1499	17	0	0	3	7	7	0	34
1500-1999	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
2000-2499	12	0	0	0	3	0	0	15
2500-2999	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
3000 & over	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.1.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Income						Total
	Less than 0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	3	12	0	0	0	0	15
500-999	3	0	6	0	0	0	9
1000-1499	9	6	6	6	0	6	33
1500-1999	0	0	0	0	3	3	6
2000-2499	0	3	6	0	3	3	15
2500-2999	0	0	3	0	0	3	6
3000 & over	3	3	9	0	0	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.1.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	67	9	0	0	0	0	76
500-999	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
1000-1499	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1500-1999	0	3	0	0	0	3	6
2000-2499	0	0	0	6	0	3	9
2500-2999	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
3000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.1.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
35-49	0	0	12	3	6	3	0	24
50-64	6	6	6	3	6	3	0	30
65 & over	9	3	15	0	3	0	12	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
35-49	12	0	0	0	6	6	0	24
50-64	18	3	0	3	3	0	3	30
65 & over	39	0	0	3	0	0	0	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>



**APPENDIX A.2: LIVESTOCK HOLDINGS IN LESS FAVOURED AREAS**

**Appendix Table A.2.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	
Less than £0	0	4	8	4	3	12	31
£1-2499	1	4	11	14	4	14	48
£2500-4999	1	2	2	4	0	3	11
£5000-7499	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
£7500-9999	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
£10000 & over	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.2.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	8	1	1	1	2	1	3	17
500-999	6	1	2	3	5	2	4	23
1000-1499	13	1	2	4	3	1	3	27
1500-1999	7	1	0	2	2	1	1	14
2000-2499	7	0	0	1	1	0	1	10
2500-2999	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
3000 & over	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.2.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Income						Total
	Less than 0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	6	9	2	0	0	0	17
500-999	5	24	4	2	0	0	24
1000-1499	7	13	3	1	1	0	25
1500-1999	5	6	3	0	0	1	15
2000-2499	4	3	1	1	1	0	10
2500-2999	1	1	1	0	1	0	4
3000 & over	2	0	1	1	1	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.2.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	46	2	1	0	0	0	49
500-999	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
1000-1499	0	0	3	1	0	1	5
1500-1999	0	0	2	3	0	6	11
2000-2499	0	0	0	4	2	7	13
2500-2999	0	1	1	2	1	3	8
3000 & over	0	0	1	0	1	8	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.2.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	1	3	3	1	1	1	0	10
35-49	5	7	8	5	3	1	2	31
50-64	6	8	7	3	4	1	2	32
65 & over	6	4	8	5	3	1	1	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	10
35-49	4	1	3	5	8	4	6	31
50-64	16	1	2	3	3	1	4	32
65 & over	26	0	0	1	0	0	1	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**APPENDIX A.3: LOWLAND LIVESTOCK HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.3.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less than £0	1	1	5	3	5	21	36
£1-2499	1	3	9	7	3	16	39
£2500-4999	1	2	3	2	1	5	14
£5000-7499	0	2	1	1	1	2	7
£7500-9999	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
£10000 & over	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.3.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	7	1	0	1	5	1	5	20
500-999	7	1	1	4	4	2	2	21
1000-1499	6	1	2	3	3	2	3	22
1500-1999	6	1	0	1	3	1	1	13
2000-2499	6	0	1	1	0	1	0	9
2500-2999	4	1	0	0	1	1	0	7
3000 & over	5	1	0	1	1	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.3.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Income						Total
	Less than 0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	6	11	1	1	0	0	19
500-999	9	9	2	1	1	0	22
1000-1499	12	7	2	1	0	1	23
1500-1999	5	5	2	1	0	0	13
2000-2499	1	3	2	2	0	0	9
2500-2999	2	1	2	1	0	0	7
3000 & over	3	3	2	0	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.3.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	40	5	0	0	0	0	45
500-999	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
1000-1499	0	0	2	1	0	2	5
1500-1999	0	0	0	3	3	7	13
2000-2499	0	0	0	3	1	11	15
2500-2999	0	0	0	0	1	5	6
3000 & over	0	0	0	1	1	11	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.3.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	7
35-49	8	8	10	4	4	2	3	39
50-64	5	8	6	4	3	2	3	31
65 & over	5	5	4	4	2	2	1	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	1	0	0	2	3	1	0	7
35-49	6	1	3	6	9	4	9	38
50-64	13	1	1	5	6	2	3	31
65 & over	21	1	0	0	1	0	0	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**APPENDIX A.4: CROPPING HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.4.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less							
than £0	0	0	2	7	5	10	24
£1-2499	2	0	12	9	9	19	51
£2500-4999	5	2	2	0	0	5	14
£5000-7499	0	0	0	2	2	2	6
£7500-9999	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
£10000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.4.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	7	1	0	3	5	7	7	30
500-999	9	0	1	1	8	1	4	24
1000-1499	1	1	1	1	4	0	2	10
1500-1999	8	0	0	4	0	1	0	13
2000-2499	6	1	0	0	0	1	3	11
2500-2999	3	0	0	4	0	0	0	7
3000 & over	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.4.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Income						Total
	Less than 0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	11	12	4	3	0	0	30
500-999	12	11	0	0	0	0	23
1000-1499	3	4	2	1	0	0	10
1500-1999	3	7	3	0	1	0	14
2000-2499	1	5	1	0	2	2	11
2500-2999	1	3	3	0	0	0	7
3000 & over	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.4.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	36	3	0	0	0	0	39
500-999	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
1000-1499	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
1500-1999	0	0	3	2	2	8	15
2000-2499	0	0	0	7	8	2	17
2500-2999	0	0	0	2	2	5	9
3000 & over	0	0	1	0	1	10	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.4.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	4	3	3	0	1	1	0	12
35-49	8	13	3	0	4	1	4	33
50-64	13	4	3	8	3	1	0	32
65 & over	5	4	1	5	3	3	1	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	3	0	0	1	4	3	1	12
35-49	7	0	1	7	7	3	8	33
50-64	7	1	1	7	4	6	6	32
65 & over	20	2	0	0	0	0	0	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**APPENDIX A.5: PIGS AND POULTRY HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.5.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less than £0	2	4	8	2	2	14	32
£1-2499	0	2	4	8	2	16	32
£2500-4999	0	2	4	2	0	8	16
£5000-7499	2	2	2	0	2	2	10
£7500-9999	2	2	2	0	0	2	8
£10000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.5.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	8	2	0	0	6	5	5	26
500-999	9	0	0	2	5	0	5	21
1000-1499	5	0	0	0	5	0	2	12
1500-1999	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
2000-2499	6	0	2	0	1	0	3	12
2500-2999	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	8
3000 & over	9	2	6	2	0	0	0	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.5.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Less than 0	Income from Farming					Total
		£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	8	13	3	2	0	0	26
500-999	8	11	2	0	0	0	21
1000-1499	5	2	3	0	0	1	11
1500-1999	2	0	2	0	0	0	4
2000-2499	3	3	2	3	0	2	13
2500-2999	5	0	2	0	2	0	8
3000 & over	6	3	2	3	5	0	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>101</b>

**Appendix Table A.5.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	47	2	0	0	0	0	49
500-999	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
1000-1499	0	4	0	0	0	4	8
1500-1999	0	0	0	3	0	2	5
2000-2499	0	0	0	2	2	13	17
2500-2999	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
3000 & over	0	2	0	0	0	11	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.5.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	3	0	1	0	2	0	5	11
35-49	9	9	5	0	5	3	5	36
50-64	8	3	2	2	6	3	6	30
65 & over	5	8	3	1	0	2	3	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	0	2	1	2	3	1	2	11
35-49	5	0	5	3	11	2	10	36
50-64	21	2	1	0	3	2	1	30
65 & over	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>



**APPENDIX A.6: HORTICULTURAL HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.6.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less							
than £0	4	1	6	1	1	16	29
£1-2499	4	1	4	6	3	17	35
£2500-4999	3	6	6	1	0	7	23
£5000-7499	2	3	3	0	0	0	8
£7500-9999	2	2	1	0	0	0	5
£10000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.6.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	3	0	0	1	2	0	3	9
500-999	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	14
1000-1499	6	0	0	2	0	1	2	11
1500-1999	7	0	0	2	2	1	0	12
2000-2499	6	3	2	3	1	0	0	15
2500-2999	6	0	1	0	1	0	0	8
3000 & over	24	2	2	1	0	1	6	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.6.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Income						Total
	Less than 0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	2	6	1	0	0	0	9
500-999	6	5	3	0	0	0	14
1000-1499	4	4	3	0	0	0	11
1500-1999	3	4	4	1	0	0	12
2000-2499	3	8	3	0	1	0	15
2500-2999	0	4	1	1	2	0	8
3000 & over	9	7	6	5	3	0	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.6.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	57	0	0	0	0	1	58
500-999	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1000-1499	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1500-1999	0	0	0	2	2	4	8
2000-2499	0	0	0	1	1	11	13
2500-2999	0	0	0	1	0	4	5
3000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.6.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	5
35-49	4	4	4	3	5	1	8	29
50-64	2	9	4	5	6	4	13	43
65 & over	2	1	3	4	4	2	6	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	5
35-49	9	2	1	6	1	4	6	29
50-64	22	3	6	3	6	1	2	43
65 & over	21	1	0	0	0	0	0	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

**APPENDIX A.7: OTHER HOLDINGS**

**Appendix Table A.7.1: On and Off-Farm Income - Frequency distribution**

On-farm Income	Off-farm Income						Total
	0	£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Less							
than £0	1	3	6	7	3	22	42
£1-2499	1	6	11	5	2	20	45
£2500-4999	1	2	1	1	1	3	9
£5000-7499	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
£7500-9999	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
£10000 & over	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.7.2: On and Off-Farm Work - Frequency distribution**

On-Farm hours/ annum	Off-farm hours/annum							Total
	Under 500	500- 999	1000- 1499	1500- 1999	2000- 2499	2500- 2999	3000 & over	
Under 500	41	1	1	7	10	5	10	75
500-999	5	0	1	1	2	0	2	11
1000-1499	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	4
1500-1999	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
2000-2499	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
2500-2999	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
3000 & over	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.7.3: Occupier's Income from Farming and Hours Worked on the Farm**

Hrs worked per year on farm	Less than 0	Income					Total
		£1- 2499	£2500- 4999	£5000- 7499	£7500- 9999	£10000 & over	
Under 500	27	41	6	1	0	0	75
500-999	5	1	4	1	0	0	10
1000-1499	2	0	1	0	1	1	5
1500-1999	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
2000-2499	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
2500-2999	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
3000 & over	1	0	1	0	0	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.7.4: Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Employment and Hours Worked Off-Farm**

Hrs worked per year off farm	0	£1-2499	£2500-4999	£5000-7499	£7500-9999	£10000 & over	Total
Under 500	57	1	0	0	0	1	59
500-999	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1000-1499	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1500-1999	0	0	0	2	2	4	8
2000-2499	0	0	0	1	1	11	13
2500-2999	0	0	0	1	0	4	5
3000 & over	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>

**Appendix Table A.7.5: Farmer's Age and Hours Worked On and Off-Farm per year**

Age	Under 500	500-999	1000-1499	1500-1999	2000-2499	2500-2999	3000 & over	Total
Hours worked on-farm								
20-34	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
35-49	20	4	1	1	1	1	1	29
50-64	22	4	3	1	1	0	1	32
65 & over	31	3	0	1	0	0	1	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>
Hours worked off-farm								
20-34	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	3
35-49	4	0	1	4	8	4	8	29
50-64	14	1	0	3	7	2	5	32
65 & over	33	1	0	1	0	1	0	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

## SECTION B: PROVINCIAL REPORTS

### Introduction

Reference has already been made in the Introduction to this report to the practical difficulties of commenting in a coherent way on such a varied set of circumstances as have been embraced by the study. No single presentation of the results could encompass that degree of variety and still offer anything resembling a completely meaningful picture. Perhaps Section A, based on farming types, comes closest to doing so, but even that approach cannot avoid the wide overlay of varying soils, climate and topography which accompany any one farming type in the United Kingdom. Section C, based on the Regional classifications of the European Community, involving the threefold division of England, plus Wales, is perhaps the furthest away from providing a meaningful farming classification.

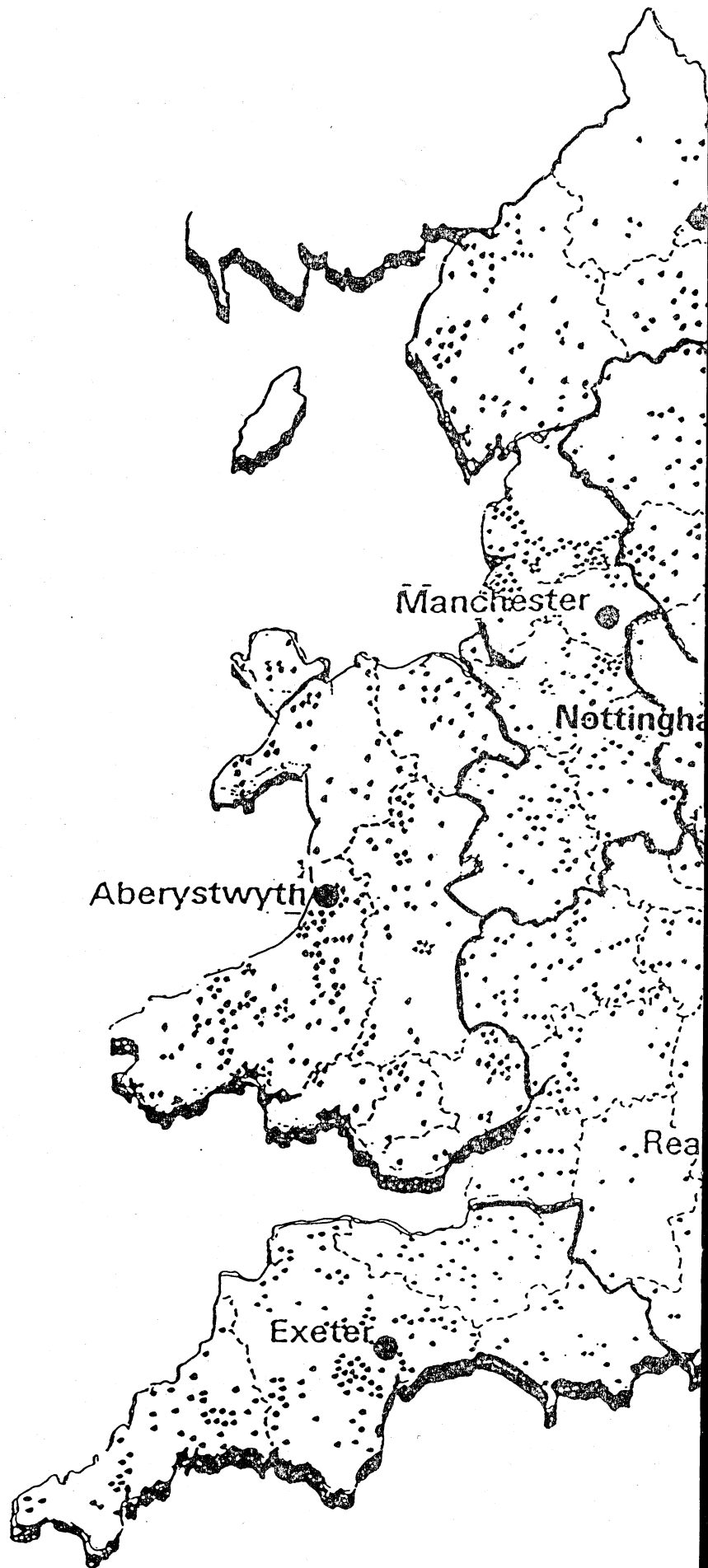
This Section of the Report (B) is perhaps the compromise between Sections A and C, based on the Provinces within which farm economics survey work has traditionally been conducted in the UK. In some cases, these Provinces encompass a degree of the farming patterns adopted in Section A (but in others certainly not), and to a limited extent they also reflect the 'points of compass' approach of the EC Regions. There is no doubt, for example, that the Eastern Province, centred at the University of Cambridge, reflects a dominantly arable sector of farming, and that it is clearly lodged in the EC's Eastern Region of England; or, similarly that the University of Exeter's South Western Province is at the opposite end of the spectrum, both in farming and locational terms. By contrast the East Midlands (Nottingham) and the Southern Provinces (Reading) each span two EC Regions and each encompass a variety of farming types on a significant scale. In one case only, Wales, does the Province coincide exactly with an EC Region. The reader will also discover that in some Provinces the 'very small farm' population is evenly distributed throughout the area whilst in others it is more concentrated (Figure 1).

It is against this background that this Section has been composed, consisting of separate accounts, written by the co-ordinators of the survey in each of the 'provinces' represented, and highlighting, therefore, some of the detail and local flavour to emerge from the survey in each area. Local authors were invited to prepare their reports using the following broad sub-headings:

- Geographical distribution of holdings,
- Characteristics of holdings,
- The Occupant,
- Financial results,
- Conclusion.

Where necessary the reports have been edited to conform to this standard pattern of presentation and tables have been numbered sequentially throughout the Section. All of this, however, has not resulted in a set of stereotyped provincial reports. On the contrary, they vary in length, in detail and in emphasis. Sometimes these differences reflect the degree of confidence that Centres have had in the size and composition of their local samples; sometimes, the personal styles and inclinations of the authors

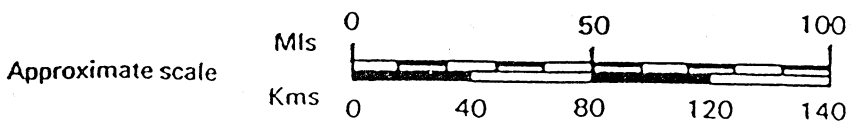
FIGURE 1 LOCATION OF FARMS



Newcastle-upon-Tyne



- KEY
- Provincial areas —————
  - Provincial centres ●
  - County boundaries - - - - -



concerned, and, sometimes, the different objectives that individual reports were designed to meet, e.g. to provide part of this report, or to provide, also, a self-contained report for local publication. It will be seen, also, that while most of the reports address themselves to the common issues, some delve into areas that are not featured in all of the reports - such as 'reasons for non-co-operation', 'differences between census based and actual farming type classification', and, in the case of Aberystwyth, a variety of 'socio-economic' issues. A major aim of the editing, therefore, has been to retain as much as possible of the original local text and it is hoped that local authors will recognise what is accredited to them as closely resembling what they wrote.

There could be no neat and wholly logical order in which to present these reports, but the temptation to resort to an agriculturally meaningless alphabetical order was resisted. In the event it was decided to start on the 'bottom right hand corner' of the UK, with the report from Wye College, followed, moving from east to west, by the Reading and Exeter reports, then to follow the same east-west path through the Midlands, from Cambridge to Nottingham and Manchester; followed by the two most northern reports from Askham Bryan and Newcastle, and, finally, by Aberystwyth. These reports are now presented to speak for themselves. But for the benefit of those who may have an interest in Provincial comparisons, Tables B.51 to B.59 are presented at the close of this Section.<sup>1</sup> Results have been shown there, Centre by Centre, for each farming type, but only where sample numbers were not less than five. It should be remembered, however, that Provincial boundaries, like country boundaries, are artificial in any farming sense. The most relevant comparisons must be between the farming types, described in the previous Section.

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<sup>1</sup>Any occasional discrepancies between the data contained in these Provincial Tables and the local reports will be due to a refinement of the global data at a late stage of analysis.



## **SOUTH EASTERN PROVINCE:**

Area: Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex and Surrey

Provincial Centre: Wye College, University of London

Local Author: M. J. M. Bent

Sample Size: 82

### **Geographical Distribution of Holdings**

The holdings surveyed were evenly distributed throughout the province, although three areas that were noticeably unrepresented were Romney Marsh, the South Downs and the High Weald. The first two areas are typified by large arable and mixed arable/livestock farms. Although smaller mixed stocking farms are common on the Weald, few of these would be small enough for inclusion in this survey. Much of the province has relatively easy access to London via the A3, A23, M2, M20, M25 and a comprehensive rail network. As a result, many country properties have been purchased by commuters. However, the effect of this on levels of off-farm income and hours worked on the farm is less apparent in this survey than in the sample for the 1986-7 survey.

### **Characteristics of Holdings**

The sample of 82 holdings was recruited on the basis of their farming type classification according to the June Census (1987). Reclassification, as shown in Table B.1, was undertaken on the basis of data actually collected. It can be seen from this data that some shift in classification had occurred over this period. In general, grazing livestock farms have moved towards non-classification, whilst pig and poultry farms and horticultural holdings have retained their classification or been reclassified as not a small farm. Reasons for these reclassifications include the recognized limitations in the methodology applied to farm type classification, changes in ownership and consequent changes in cropping and stocking, and the gradual reduction in activities of the older operators in the sample.

The size of holding ranged from 0.4 ha to 49.5 ha with an average of 10.4 ha; whilst utilisable agricultural area varied from 0.2 ha to 48.2 ha. The distribution of total area by farm type is shown in Table B.2.

Seventy-six of the holdings were totally owned, four were wholly tenanted and two were mixed tenure. Twenty-eight holdings (34%) let land on a temporary basis to others, the average area let was 8.55 ha representing 86% of the utilisable area on these holdings.

The values of owned holdings excluding the house ranged from £1,500 to £148,000. "House" values ranged from £18,000 (mobile homes) to £1.2 million, with an average of £280,000. Values of complete holdings,

including glasshouses and permanent crops, ranged from £27,250 to £1.3 million, with an average of £280,000. Removing the highest valued property from these calculations does not dramatically alter average values.

Table B.1: Small farm type

	Original	Reclassification						
	Classi- fication	Dairy	Lowland Livestock	Pigs & Poultry	Crops	Horti- culture	Other	Not S.F.
Dairy	5	3	1	0	0	0	1	0
Lowland Livestock	32	0	20	0	2	0	7	3
Pigs & Poultry	10	0	0	5	0	0	1	4
Crops	10	0	2	0	2	2	4	0
Horticultural	15	1	0	0	0	8	2	4
Other	10	0	1	0	0	0	9	0
Total	82	4	24	5	4	10	24	11

Table B.2: Area of holdings by farm type

Farm Type	Area (Hectares)				
	0-2.49	2.5-4.99	5.0-7.49	7.5-9.99	10.0 +
Dairy	1	1	0	1	1
Lowland Livestock	6	1	1	5	14
Pigs & Poultry	4	2	0	1	2
Horticulture	8	1	1	2	1
Crops	0	1	0	1	2
Not Classified	2	4	3	7	9
Total	21	10	5	17	29
Average UAA as % Total Area	82	84	76	86	78

The above property values demonstrate the effects of the commuter demand for country residences in the South. In contrast to the value of the land and house, capital invested in buildings and works, glasshouses, permanent crops and machinery is relatively limited on the majority of holdings. Buildings and works averaged £3,300 per holding and machinery valuation averaged £4,000. Exceptional holdings included one with glasshouses valued at £53,000 and another with permanent crops at £13,000.

## The Occupants

In the Small Farm Survey 1986-7, it was noticeable that younger occupiers of property in the South East required high incomes to service borrowing for property acquisition. As a result, a high proportion of their income came from off the holding and they spent relatively little time working on the holding. In the current sample, more of those under 50 years old appeared to be relying on the holding than previously and their total incomes are lower. Table B.3 shows the range of total income from all sources by age group, the proportion of the total income (operator and spouse) from the holding and the percentage of their working time spent on the holding.

**Table B.3: Income and proportion of time spent on farm**

Age	No.	Average Total Income (£000)	Min Total Income (£000)	Max Total Income (£000)	% Time on Farm	% Income from Farm
20-34	7	8	-8	38	35	1
35-49	25	13	-28.5	142	44	20
50-64	25	9	-20	51	60	13
65+	25	7	-1.2	32	66	24

Table B.4 compares these results with those obtained from the 1986 sample.

**Table B.4: Income and proportion of time spent on farm (86 v. 88 Surveys)**

Age	Average Income 1986 (£000)	Average Income 1988 (£000)	% Time on Farm 1986	% Time on Farm 1988	% Income from Farm 1986	% Income from Farm 1988
20-34	8	113	35	4	1	37
35-49	13	54	44	43	20	8
50-64	9	31	60	47	13	5
65+	7	5	66	99	24	32

## Financial Results

For larger holdings a principle measure of activity may be output per hectare. On small, intensive holdings this can be misleading because of the small areas involved. Two holdings have output per ha of £637,000 and £230,000; the former is an intensive turkey producer, the latter produces

salad crops and bedding plants under glass. The Net Farm Incomes for these holdings are respectively £15,000 and £12,711.

Total outputs averaged £11,300. Apart from three holdings with no output, output varied from £175 to £127,500. Excluding the eleven holdings reclassified as "Not Small Farm" reduces the average total output to £5,115, with a maximum of £38,005. Average outputs and costs for each farm type are given in Tables B.5 and B.6. As sample averages may be heavily affected by the inclusion of one large observation, values showing the maximum observation as a percentage of the sample are given. If this value is 50% it suggests that removal of one observation would halve the sample average, whilst 100% indicates that the maximum observation accounts for all the output or cost for that particular farm type. In other words, it is a crude measure of skew.

Table B.5: Output per holding by farm type

		Dairy	Lowland Livestock	Pigs & Poultry	Crops	Horti- culture	Other
Dairy	Av (£)	422	95	0	0	0	0
	Max (%)	30	80	-	-	-	-
Grazing Livestock	Av (£)	93	2741	238	1394	0	0
	Max (%)	81	19	58	78	-	-
Pigs & Poultry	Av (£)	0	210	13488	0	45	0
	Max (%)	-	27	47	-	48	-
Crops & Forage	Av (£)	121	452	1013	4658	78	788
	Max (%)	72	26	30	39	56	20
Horti- culture	Av (£)	0	141	0	0	12011	320
	Max (%)	-	59	-	-	28	100
Other	Av (£)	0	1096	755	1688	232	273
	Max (%)	-	24	62	100	89	51
Total	Av (£)	636	4734	15495	7739	12367	1565
	Max (%)	45	13	49	51	27	20

Removing the 34% of holdings that were predominantly let out for the year increases the total output per holding to about £7,500. In this sample horticultural produce and poultry are major outputs, the former being more widespread amongst the sample than the latter. The various "non-agricultural" sources of income account for an average of about 10% of total output, but this appears to be concentrated on a few holdings.

Not surprisingly the costs reflect the importance of a small number of intensive livestock enterprises and a few horticultural businesses. By comparison, both paid and unpaid labour and machinery costs are more evenly distributed.

Table B.6: Costs per holding by farm type

		Dairy	Lowland Livestock	Pigs & Poultry	Crops	Horti-culture	Other
Livestock	Av (£)	376	1263	7311	1087	1168	89
Costs	Max (%)	33	25	60	98	97	48
Crop	Av (£)	0	166	64	754	3894	1064
Costs	Max (%)	-	26	100	50	43	70
Labour	Av (£)	14	684	1836	962	2274	105
Paid	Max (%)	98	39	65	87	35	56
Labour	Av (£)	10	398	2879	25	938	117
Unpaid	Max (%)	100	44	100	100	100	61
Machinery	Av (£)	151	824	3029	2059	1108	415
	Max (%)	45	13	73	57	36	25
General	Av (£)	579	857	1159	1383	2902	530
Costs	Max (%)	53	12	49	81	69	29
Rent	Av (£)	418	706	851	1056	729	733
	Max (%)	60	15	45	53	23	22
Total	Av (£)	1549	4898	18228	7326	13014	2095
	Max (%)	49	12	41	70	36	16

Net Farm Incomes for the whole sample ranged from -£17,953 to £20,800 with an average of £1,727. Table B.7 shows the distribution of off-farm sources of income according to level of Net Farm Income.

Table B.7: Net farm income and other income sources (£000)

	Other Income						Total
	0	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20+	
<u>NFI</u>							
15+	-	2	2	1	-	-	5
10-15	1	2	-	-	1	-	4
5-10	1	1	1	-	-	2	5
0-5	3	16	3	3	1	3	29
-5-0	7	9	7	5	2	7	37
<-5	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Total	13	31	13	9	4	12	82

## Conclusions

In the 1986-7 survey of Very Small Farms, four main groupings of holding were suggested. These were Amenity, Retirement, High Performance Commercial and Low Performance Commercial. High Performance Commercial holdings were excluded from the second year of the survey. Two sub-groups were discernible in the Low Performance Commercial holdings, namely those that were in the early years of establishment and those where the operator was soon to retire. The low number of these latter holdings was reflected in the high proportion of off-farm income and time spent off farm (Table B.4). It was impossible from non-co-operators' responses to substantiate the uneasy feeling that a number of part-time or medium performance holdings were being missed. Results from this sample paint a different picture from the previous extremes. Incomes both off-farm and on-farm are much lower and a higher proportion of time is spent on the holding than in the last study.

During visits in 1988, the hurricane of 1987 was a major point of interest. Anecdotes of investment successes were frequently encountered from those with significant off-farm incomes, which were absent from the present study. One may postulate that the reversal of fortunes resulting from Black Monday and higher interest rates has created difficulties in this sector, and that the "small holder" rather than the commuting resident has emerged in relatively robust shape in the South East.

## SOUTHERN PROVINCE

Area: Avon, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire,  
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Gloucestershire,  
Hereford and Worcester, Warwickshire and the West Midlands,  
Wiltshire and Greater London (Part)

Provincial Centre: University of Reading

Local Author: J. Wright

Sample Size: 176

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

The geographical distribution of the sample of 176 farms by county is shown in Table B.8. The distribution bears a close resemblance to the known spread of small farms within the province with the majority of the holdings in the northern and western parts of the province and rather fewer in the south and east. Most of the horticultural holdings were situated in North Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, particularly the Vale of Evesham. The other farm types identified were distributed throughout the province, although most of the lowland livestock farms were situated in the west, reflecting the preponderance of that farm type among full-time farms in that part of the province.

**Table B.8: Geographical distribution of the holdings**

County	Number of holdings	% of the Total
Avon	12	7
Berkshire	9	5
Buckinghamshire	19	11
Gloucestershire	28	16
Greater London (part)	2	1
Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	24	14
Hereford and Worcester	47	27
Oxfordshire	8	4
Warwickshire and the West Midlands	18	10
Wiltshire	9	5
Total	176	100

### Characteristics of holdings

The original classification by farm type which formed the basis of recruitment was made by reference to 1987 June census data, but the actual

farm type, based on data collected in the course of the survey, resulted in a reclassification as shown in Table B.9.

**Table B.9: Classification of holdings by farm type**

	Dairying	Livestock	Cropping	Pigs & Poultry	Horti-culture	Other
Target sample	5	90	25	15	25	20
Actual sample	2	93	7	7	20	47

The result of this reclassification exercise meant that in terms of holdings surveyed, only the livestock farms and horticultural holdings were adequately represented, and the category of "other" holdings was largely over-represented. Allowing for the constraints in the methodology applied to farm type classification, the indications are that the owners of this particular group of small farms have moved from operating well-defined systems on their holdings to more loosely defined ones and which appear as "other" in the classification table. This trend would appear to be particularly prevalent on the cropping farms.

Although for the purposes of this survey, the definition "very small farm" related to the size of the business, the holdings surveyed were also small in the physical sense, as the figures in Table B.10 demonstrate.

**Table B.10: Size of holdings by farm type (hectares)**

Farm Type	Average Size	Range in farm size
Dairying	14.8	2.1 to 27.5
Livestock	10.2	0.4 to 33.1
Cropping	13.1	3.4 to 22.3
Pigs and Poultry	7.1	1.0 to 16.8
Horticulture	6.7	0.3 to 67.8
Other	8.4	0.4 to 41.7
All holdings	9.4	0.3 to 67.8

Over 60% of the holdings were less than 10 hectares and a quarter of these were less than 2 hectares in size. The largest holdings were found in the dairying, livestock and cropping groups, while the smallest holdings were found among the horticultural and pig and poultry units.

Almost 90% of the land (and over 80% of the holdings) farmed by co-operators in the survey was owner occupied - a much higher percentage than



is known to exist on full-time farms. Only 14 of the 176 holdings were wholly rented, and a similar number were of mixed tenure.

### **The Occupants**

During the recruitment phase of the survey, there was evidence that a high proportion of the occupiers of small farms were either in, or approaching old age. This facet was borne out in the analysis of the age structure of those farmers who took part in the survey which revealed that almost a quarter of the farmers interviewed were over 65 years old, and almost 60% were over fifty. By contrast, only 7% were under thirty five, and there was very little evidence of young people using a small farm as the first rung of the 'farming ladder'.

On two thirds of the holdings in the sample, the occupants (i.e. the farmer and spouse) were involved in some form of off-farm employment, and on over half of the holdings more time was spent in such employment than was spent working on the farm. Apart from the unclassified group of farms, where a high proportion of the occupants were retired (and, hence, very little off-farm employment was recorded), the co-operators spending the least proportion of their time on off-farm activities were those in the dairying, pig and poultry and horticultural groups.

### **Financial Results**

#### **i) Farm income**

Average figures can often be misleading, and a significant feature of most farm surveys is the tremendous variation in results. In addition to differences in soil type and climate, the main reason for the wide spectrum of results is due to the variation in technical efficiency with which farmers produce agricultural and horticultural products. An added variable that could be ascribed to the participants in this particular study was the purpose for which the farm was being occupied. Although only four co-operators had no non-farm income, the remainder of the sample exhibited widely varying degrees of dependency on income from their holdings, and this would, in many cases, dictate the intensity and efficiency with which the farms were managed.

Table B.11 shows the average financial results for the six type groups, together with a summary for all 176 holdings. Given the small number of holdings in three of the six groups, the results should be interpreted with care.

The average level of financial output per hectare on all the type groups was low and well below that recorded on full-time holdings of the same type. This suggests a low level of agricultural activity, and the use of systems managed on traditional extensive lines, although there were several exceptions to this, notably in the pig and poultry and horticultural groups.

Other output formed a significant element of total gross output on five of the type groups, and accounted for 40% of the total output of the sample as a whole. Items included under this heading include receipts for

the letting of land (by far the most important element), building rents, contract work receipts, etc. These items were particularly important among the group of 'other' farms where they accounted for almost all the output.

**Table B.11: A summary of the financial results**

	Dairying	Live-stock	Crop-ping	Pigs & Poultry	Horti-culture	Other	All Holdings
No. of holdings	2	93	7	7	20	47	176
Average size (Ha)	14.8	10.2	13.1	7.1	6.7	8.4	9.4
	<u>£ per farm</u>						
Gross output:							
Crops	1750	298	4297	633	5696	62	1036
Milk	689	60	-	-	-	-	39
Livestock	234	4124	1353	6131	460	22	2514
Other	4475	2450	84	3268	814	3016	2363
Total	7148	6932	5734	10032	6970	3100	5952
Variable Costs:							
Livestock costs	528	2195	476	4677	587	459	1548
Crop costs	115	198	1008	65	1937	50	381
Total	643	2393	1484	4742	2524	509	1929
Gross Margin	6505	4539	4250	5290	4446	2591	4023
Fixed Costs:							
Wages	2807	1816	352	2229	1280	637	1400
Machinery costs	884	775	959	1536	599	193	634
Depreciation	437	676	325	406	324	184	474
Land & property	1612	1569	1298	775	864	1302	1366
Other	1293	1040	1152	2513	941	578	965
Total	7033	5876	4086	7459	4008	2894	4839
Net Farm Income	-528	-1337	164	-2169	438	-303	-816

In general, input levels were low, both in absolute and per hectare terms and tend to reinforce the comments made earlier regarding the degree of intensity with which the holdings were being farmed. Although most of the labour input was supplied by the farmer and spouse, one rather surprising feature of the survey was the level of paid labour. Although not traditionally thought of as employers, almost half of the small farmers in this particular survey incurred a wages bill. While in many instances this took the form of casual help, often of an infrequent nature, there were a number of holdings where the labour element was significant. With the exception of the group of pig and poultry farms, machinery costs were low, suggesting a low degree of mechanisation and the depreciation charges

confirm observations 'in the field' that what machinery there was was often old.

Of the total sample, 71 (40%) recorded a positive net farm income, although the average level recorded of just over £2,400 can only be described as modest and represents a poor return on the occupiers' labour input. The losses recorded on the remaining 60% of the sample resulted in a negative net farm income in four of the six type groups, with an overall loss of just over £800 per farm. The heaviest losses were incurred on the pig and poultry farms which is perhaps not so surprising bearing in mind the poor market conditions prevailing for both pig and poultry farmers in the period covered by the survey.

ii) Non-farm income

Table B.12 sets out the average levels of non-farm income, but the averages conceal a wide variation and some of the relatively high figures in the table are the result of the inclusion in the study of a number of exceptionally high earners in both the employed and self-employed categories. This was also the case with unearned income, derived mainly from investment income, together with income from state and occupational pensions, etc. This was particularly so in the group of unclassified ("other") holdings where many of the occupants were either retired or 'hobby' farmers.

Table B.12: Non-farm income

Farm Type	Dairying	Live-stock	Crop-ping	Pigs & Poultry	Horti-culture	Other	All Holdings	
Earned Income:			£ per farm					
Employed	0	6178	4760	2129	5757	5788	5447	
Self-employed	0	11821	42	11571	4750	10257	9847	
Sub-total	0	17999	4802	13700	10507	16015	15294	
Unearned income	4242	3928	2194	2339	3940	6236	3944	
Total	4242	21927	6996	16039	14447	22251	19238	

In the whole sample, only four co-operators had no non-farm income and were totally dependent on income from their holding. On over 80% of the holdings there was some unearned income, although in many cases, this was of a relatively modest nature e.g. child benefit. In the case of earned income, on almost 70% of the holdings either the farmer or spouse (and, in some cases, both partners) were contributing income to the household.

### iii) Assets

As with the other financial measures already discussed, there was a wide variation in the value of the holdings. However, the value of agricultural buildings on many of the holdings was low and in many cases they had been 'written off'. The only exception was in the pig and poultry and horticultural groups where a number of levels of 'commercial' investments were identified. Similarly, investment in machinery and equipment, at just over £4,600 per farm, was also low. Surprisingly, the highest investment per farm was on the group of livestock farms where the average was just over £6,700. By far the lowest machinery stock was found on the unclassified group of farms where the average investment was less than £1,750 per farm.

Although the rate of appreciation in the value of rural property has slowed down recently, there is little doubt that investment in the holdings encountered in the survey has proved sound and provided a comfortable hedge against inflation.

### **Conclusions**

Although the reason for people being involved in small scale farming are many and varied, it has been possible to identify three broad categories into which the small farmers taking part in this survey could be placed.

#### i) Genuine small farmers

Although very few of the occupants of small farms were solely dependent on the income generated by their farms, this group of farmers were attempting to maximise output from their holdings, often, though, within constraints imposed by off-farm employment. Although many were operating at low levels of intensity, this did mean that the occupants were able to take outside employment to supplement the low (and, in many cases, non-existent) farm income. Part-time farmers would perhaps be a more accurate description for this group. There was some evidence of minority agricultural enterprises, e.g. goats, rabbits, etc., together with involvement in farm-related, non-agricultural activities, e.g. camp sites, tourism, etc. It was mainly on some of the pig and poultry units and in the horticultural sector that 'commercial' levels of activity were identified and then only on a small number of holdings.

#### ii) Retired and semi-retired farmers

Farmers in this group, often occupying the remaining portion of what was formerly a larger holding, had spent a lifetime in agriculture, often on the same farm. Their aspirations and material needs were low, and they continued to farm the land as much for interest and enjoyment as for any other reason, and in a number of cases the majority of the land was let. Unearned income, in some instances quite substantial, helped to run the farms and provide an adequate standard of living. It was in this group that a few cases of genuine hardship were observed, although that phenomenon among the retired is not peculiar to the agricultural sector.

iii) 'Hobby' farmers

For most of the co-operators in this group, the primary reason for occupation of a 'small farm' was residential and any farming activity was of secondary importance. Where the land was not let, the general level of agricultural activity was low, although there were a few instances of quite genuine attempts to do something positive with the land. The level of non-farm income among this group was very high, to the extent that occupation of the holding was not dependent on the profitability of agricultural activities.

## SOUTH WESTERN PROVINCE

Area: Cornwall and Scilly Isles, Devon, Dorset and Somerset

Provincial Centre: University of Exeter

Local Author: M. M. Turner

Sample Size: 177

The agricultural holdings which formed the focus of this study are those classified as part-time, being considered too small to provide sufficient work for one adult male. In the South West there were 11,677 such holdings recorded in the 1988 June census (Table B.13), more than four out of every ten significant holdings. In addition, there were in the region at that time almost ten thousand minor holdings, which are normally outwith the agricultural census. As the survey has subsequently confirmed the sub-4 BSU holdings are far from homogeneous, however, and one indication of this diversity is the large number on which no discernible direct farming activity was taking place: about one in seven of all significant holdings (3,731) were recorded as having a BSU factor of zero. Among other objectives, the survey was intended to provide a clearer and more detailed picture of this sector of the rural scene.

**Table B.13: Classification of holdings in South West England by size of business 1988**

	Number of Holdings	% of Total	% of significant Holdings
Holdings below 4 BSU			
i) 0.1 BSU and above	7946	21.3	28.9
ii) Zero BSU	3731	9.9	13.6
Total	11677	31.2	42.5
Holdings above 4 BSU	15744	42.2	57.5
All significant holdings	27451	73.4	100.0
Minor holdings	9933	26.6	
All agricultural holdings	37384	100.0	

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

When the contacted holdings are grouped by broad farming type it is evident that there was considerable variation in response rate (Table B.14). The best response was found among those classified as either dairying or pigs and poultry, the worst on the mainly cropping group.

Overall, recruitment was considered satisfactory for a survey of this type with an effective response of 57.5 per cent. The reasons for non-cooperation are worth noting. Of the 131 holdings concerned, nearly a third (43) were ineligible for inclusion in the study sample: 22 holdings were not (or no longer) farmed as a separate, identifiable business, and 21 holdings had changed ownership during 1988 and, therefore, were unable to provide information for a full year. Of the remainder, about half cited the ubiquitous 'too busy' or 'not interested' as reasons for not participating, whilst on 29 holdings it proved impossible to contact the operator within the time period available.

**Table B.14: Response rate by farm type**

Farm Type	Target Sample	Contacts Made	Actual Sample	Effective Response
Dairying	10	18	14	77.8
LFA livestock	30	50	33	66.0
Lowland livestock	75	137	79	57.7
Pigs and poultry	15	30	24	80.0
Cropping	15	42	11	26.2
Horticulture	10	15	8	53.3
Other	20	16	8	50.0
Totals	175	308	177	57.5

#### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

As Table B.15 shows, the sample farms are distributed throughout the four counties, albeit with a westerly bias since nearly half are in Devon and 23 per cent in Cornwall. It is evident from the map (Figure 1) that the location of the holdings reflects the diversity of farming localities in the region, from the lowlands to moorland-edge on Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin moor. However, it is not possible with a sample of this size to draw sound inferences with regard to their proximity (or otherwise) to the major centres of population. The importance to the occupier of the holding's specific location will be considered during the second year of the study.

**Table B.15: Geographical distribution of sample**

County	Number of farms in sample	% of total
Cornwall	41	23.2
Devon	87	49.1
Dorset	17	9.6
Somerset	32	18.1
South West	177	100.0

## Characteristics of Holdings

The problems with holding classifications by farming type encountered during the pilot survey were repeated. Inevitably, the small scale of most enterprises on these holdings renders formal classification based on stocking and cropping patterns on a single day an unstable and impermanent exercise. Moreover, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that on a substantial proportion of these holdings the occupiers are trying out alternative farming systems; failure (either relative or absolute) in one enterprise often prompts the ready adoption of a different system. The survey holdings were reclassified from their census groups (June 1987) and, as can be seen in Table B.16, a further 37 farms joined the unclassifiable "other" group besides numerous other inter-type changes. Three holdings were found to be too large for inclusion in the sample as very small farms.

**Table B.16: Sample classification by original and actual farming type**

Group	Original Farming Type	Actual Farming Type							
		D	LFA	LS	PP	C	H	O	NSF*
Dairying (D)	14	5	1	2	1	-	1	4	-
LFA livestock (LFA)	33	1	24	-	1	1	-	4	2
Lowland livestock (LS)	79	1	1	58	3	3	1	12	-
Pigs and Poultry (PP)	11	-	-	2	3	2	-	3	1
Cropping (C)	24	-	2	1	3	3	3	12	-
Horticulture (H)	8	-	-	-	-	-	6	2	-
Others (O)	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-
Totals	177	7	28	63	11	9	11	45	3

\*Not a small farm on reclassification.

## The Occupants

Not unexpectedly the sample farmers, and their farm households, showed considerable variation as Table B.17 indicates. While three out of ten farmers were aged 65 or more and a further three out of ten were between 50 and 65 there were, nevertheless, a substantial number of occupants with young children where the holding was functioning very much as the family home. Details of family structure on 169 farms reveal 58 children under 16 and another 56 children over 16, most of whom were young and had not yet left home. Nearly one in five of the farmers was female, a much higher proportion than might be expected on full-time holdings reflecting a common pattern, with the husband working off the farm and the wife running the agricultural activities on the holding.

The study collected details of the hours worked by the farmer (and, where appropriate, by the spouse) both on and off the farm. The combined figure varied from no work at all in several cases to a few holdings where well in excess of 5,000 hours was found. The overall average was an annual



2,369 hours total work by farmer and spouse, of which 1,262 hours (53%) were on the farm. There was some variation between farming types but four groups (lowland livestock, pigs and poultry, cropping and horticulture) averaged between 2,800 and 3,000 hours.

**Table B.17: Personal characteristics of sample farmers:  
age group, sex and family structure**

Age Group	Less than 35 yrs	35-49 yrs	50-65 yrs	65 yrs & over	
Number	11	62	51	52	
% of sample	6.8	35.0	28.8	29.4	
Sex:		Male	Female	No farmer	
Number		143	33	1	
% of sample		80.8	18.6	0.6	
Family Structure:	Farmer & Spouse	Children < 16 yrs	Children > 16 yrs	Parents	Other
Numbers (on 169 farms)	302	58	56	17	11

### Financial Results

The tremendous variation in the scale and direction of farming activities which is so characteristic of this section of farming influences also the levels of income obtained. Whilst the broad farming types adopted permit a reasonably structured analysis, even so the group averages conceal very marked differences between individual holdings - differences that result predominantly from personal objectives rather than from inherent characteristics of the holding, the livestock or the available capital. The primary function of many of these holdings is residential and, in these circumstances the farming activities (such as occur) are of a secondary, even minor, importance. In contrast, however, there are other holdings (fundamentally, perhaps, very similar) where the agricultural activities are pursued with enthusiasm, dedication and, frequently, real ability. The average financial results must be regarded, therefore, as broad indicators of farm and non-farm activity rather than precise estimates of income.

The survey results presented in Table B.18 show firstly the essentially modest average levels of net income obtained from farming activities: only the pig and poultry holdings contributed substantially to total income. For the sample as a whole net income from farming averaged £514 per holding. Secondly, two additional measures of income are given: occupiers' income, which was markedly higher in all cases, and what is termed cash income. This is net income plus all imputed costs (labour, rental value and depreciation) minus interest charges on all loans (whether incurred for farming or other purposes). On this basis, all groups recorded a positive income with an overall average of £1,631 per farm.

Table B.18: Average incomes by farming type

Farm Type	(1) Net Income from Farming	(2) Occupier's Income from Farming	(3) Cash Income from Farming	(4) Non-farming Income*	(5=3+4) Total Income
	£ per holding				
Dairying	894	2241	3049	5230	8279
LFA livestock	652	1728	1384	6947	8331
Lowland livestock	411	1587	2023	9534	11557
Pigs and poultry	2354	3470	133	8743	8876
Cropping	406	2935	3773	6829	10602
Horticulture	1170	2083	3318	3721	7039
Other	-75	934	544	10078	10622
All	514	1687	1631	8529	10160

\*Where known.

Non-farming income, comprising earned income (from both employment and self-employment) and unearned income averaged £8,529 for the sample as a whole, but ranged from £5,230 on dairying holdings to £10,078 on the unclassified "other" group. For a number of reasons it was not possible to obtain complete information of non-farm income from every co-operator; the average figures shown are based on those holdings which provided the data. Taking total income as the sum of cash income from farming and non-farming income this sample of very small farms received on average £10,160 in 1988, of which 88 per cent came from non-farming sources. The relative significance of non-farming income was lowest for the horticultural group (at 53%) and highest for the pigs and poultry holding (at 99%).

Any review of the capital invested on these small farms is dominated by the value of the holding for residential purposes. The increase in domestic house values in the region during 1987 and 1988 had its effects throughout the market and many, if not all, of these holdings could be regarded as desirable country properties at the upper end of the residential sector. On average the property valuation amounted to more than £202,000, which includes the house, buildings and nearly 12 hectares of land; machinery added another £2,800 to the capital requirements. It is futile, however, to contrast the agricultural return achieved with this level of capital invested since for many - perhaps even the majority - of the owners there are objectives other than that of achieving a reasonable return on capital invested.

### Conclusions

The very small farms on which this study is based are numerically very important in the South West, forming more than three out of every ten agricultural holdings. Their diversity in terms of farming systems, intensity and profitability reflects, primarily, the diverse nature of the occupiers and their objectives and aspirations. Although nearly sixty per

cent of the sample co-operators were over 50 years of age there were a significant number of younger farmers and families with dependent children also. Despite farming activities being pursued with serious intent (and genuine enthusiasm) on a proportion of these holdings the primary function of many is residential, often coupled with hobby farming to utilize the land and provide some income. In economic terms farm incomes are generally low, but cash incomes provide, on average, a very useful (even essential) supplement to other non-farming sources of income. Some 60 per cent of non-farming income is earned, of which one third is derived from self-employment. Although there were a few cases of rural poverty the overall impression of the small farm sector in the South West is of generally comfortable, though not extravagant, living standards with considerable amenity benefits. There are a few occupiers with serious long term farming aspirations for whom, anecdotally at least, the evidence is not encouraging. It would appear that, in most cases, the very small farm is better regarded as being on the residential fringe of agriculture rather than as a first step on the farming ladder.

## **EASTERN PROVINCE**

Area: Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Bedfordshire,  
Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire (Part),  
Greater London (Part)

Provincial Centre: University of Cambridge

Local Author: G. Davidson

Sample Size: 119

### **Geographical Distribution of Holdings**

At first sight the Eastern region is not an obvious area in which to mount a survey of very small farming businesses. The region is more usually associated with much larger (mainly arable) farming businesses, which continue to increase in size and become more and more important in terms of total production. However the location of the very small farms in the national survey, drawn at random throughout England and Wales, does not entirely support this widely held view. Of the selected holdings, some 10 per cent were located in the Eastern region.

The sample farms were spread uniformly throughout the region, apart from a greater concentration of holdings in central Bedfordshire and around Wisbech in the northern part of Cambridgeshire. Both these areas are traditionally associated with horticultural smallholdings, producing mainly vegetables in Bedfordshire and fruit in the Wisbech area.

### **Characteristics of Holdings**

When the sample was sub-divided into different types of farming systems using June Census data, the main categories found on the survey reflect the general farming patterns to be found in the region. Cropping farms comprised the single most important group, accounting for 38 per cent of the regional sample, followed by Lowland Livestock and Horticultural farms in approximately equal numbers; together these latter two groups accounted for a further 40 per cent of the sample. Pig and Poultry farms accounted for less than ten per cent of the total sample. Perhaps this is not surprising. The expansion of an intensive livestock enterprise (at least beyond the 4 BSU stage) is much less likely than a land-using enterprise to be constrained by the area of a farm. The relative importance of Lowland Livestock farms in a region which is predominantly arable is rather more difficult to explain. In some instances, in particular where holdings were located close to urban areas, the provision of grazing for horses and ponies offered a better return from land than the production of crops. In other cases it appeared that grassland let to horse owners on a seasonal basis combined more effectively with off-farm employment on holdings which are increasingly becoming part-time.

## Financial Results

It should be said, at the outset, that while a description of the location of the sample holdings and the use being made of the land area on these farms is relatively straightforward, it is much more difficult to report the financial results for these very small farms in a completely meaningful way. The main problem is the very wide range of individual farm situations which go to make up the average results. Although this is not unusual on surveys of farming enterprises, for this particular study the range was such that, in certain instances, the inclusion or exclusion of relatively few farms was often sufficient to have a significant effect on the survey results. For example, when visited it was apparent that several of the holdings were fairly substantial business enterprises. For the most part these larger businesses had diversified into activities which were on the fringe of or totally outside agriculture. In contrast there were other holdings where farmers were relying on off-farm employment (or possibly pensions) to provide the bulk of their annual income. On some of these farms there appeared to be a deliberate policy to farm the holding extensively rather than intensively, with the intention of reducing the physical and managerial input required of the farmer. In a very small number of cases this policy was taken to the extreme and the land left derelict. The effect of these various diverse types of holdings on the survey inevitably has its influence on any statement of average results.

## Survey Results

When the whole sample is included in the analysis (Table B.19), the results show an average total output per holding of almost £10,000 and a net farm income of just over £1,700. When measured on a per hectare basis both are considerably better than the output and income on the average large farm in the Eastern region. Nevertheless total income was clearly inadequate. However, when the nine per cent of holdings identified as large businesses (that is farms with a total gross margin in excess of £15,000) are excluded from the analysis, the average total output per holding is almost halved at a little over £5,000, and net farm income declines by almost 75 per cent to a mere £440. Both output and net farm income are now much more in line with levels of output and income on larger farms in the Eastern region. However given the small scale of operation of the sample farms, there would at best be a very small income for the farmer. In fact the distribution of income is such that slightly more than half the holdings in this large sub-sample have a nil or negative net farm income. When the sample farms in this group are further sub-divided into categories by main enterprises (that is those which account for more than 50 per cent of total output) the comparisons show only small between-group differences.

## The Occupants and Alternative Analyses

A consistent feature of the analyses undertaken is that for the average farmer the return to labour whilst working on the holding is very low, but much more substantial when employed off the holding - on average a return of £1.50 per hour or less for work on the holding compared with just over £6.00 per hour for off-farm employment. The results of the analysis

Table B.19: Very small farms in Eastern counties: Results by farming systems, 1988

Group	All Farms	GM >£15,000	GM <£15,000	Crops >50%	Horticulture > 50%	GM <£15,000 TYPE Grazing livestock > 50%	Miscellaneous Income >50%
Number of holdings	119	10	109	31	22	15	16
Mean area (hectares)	6.0	6.0	6.0	8.0	3.5	8.2	5.4
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Output from crops	6161	42616	2816	3856	7446	167	396
Output from livestock	3068	17520	1743	180	90	5276	60
Miscellaneous output	593	1595	501	142	108	134	1645
Total output	9822	61731	5059	4177	7644	5577	2101
Total costs	8095	48478	4617	4838	5965	5377	1824
Net farm income	1727	13253	442	(-) 661	1679	200	277
Annual interest payments	940	794	953	248	374	909	2188
Occupier's income <sup>1</sup>	1476	16051	(-) 88	642	2237	922	712
Farmer hours worked on holding	1143	2391	1029	799	1867	1064	325
Spouse hours worked on holding	208	483	182	134	295	220	156
Farmer hours worked off holding	840	140	905	1192	622	897	924
Spouse hours worked off holding	198	89	208	261	115	333	81
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farmer earned income	5184	1500	5522	4677	3226	4713	9800
Spouse earned income	1103	2675	959	624	477	1611	1078
Unearned income	2028	1806	2048	1413	2013	1435	2025
Total disposable income	9791	22032	8441	6325	7401	7373	11373
Value of house, land and buildings	144713	277900	132494	107342	95602	149367	186906
Average age of farmer	55.1	48.5	55.7	55.9	56.6	54.3	55.9

<sup>1</sup>Occupier's income = net farm income plus estimated rental value minus annual interest payments.

by farm type do little to explain why the average small farmer is prepared to accept a situation where the return to labour for work on the holding is so low. In contrast the average return to labour for the group of large businesses is similar to the average return for off-farm employment and generally explains why farmers work full-time on these holdings. In an attempt to identify further at least some of the factors which influence the decision by farmers to operate a small farming business, the results for certain alternative groupings are given in Table B.20. In selecting these different categories of farms it has been necessary to make certain arbitrary assumptions. For example the group of farms described as 'retirement holdings' are selected on the age of the farmer and includes all those aged 65 and over. Moreover the categories are not mutually exclusive as this approach is an attempt to show the results for groups of similar farms rather than make between-group comparisons. The main points to emerge from these different groupings are considered briefly below:

(i) The large business

This group includes farms which had an average gross margin in excess of £15,000. Clearly the most striking feature of the results is the scale of business activity. The average output for this small group of ten farms is ten times greater than the average output for the remainder of the sample. For the most part these larger businesses have diversified into activities which are not strictly agricultural, such as the provision of gardening requisites. The holdings provide a full-time occupation for the farmer, with on average very little time spent working off the holding, and a net income per farm which is substantially greater than for any other group in the sample. Clearly the option to diversify in this way depends in part on the location of the holding; most of these large businesses were situated close to a major centre of population, a factor which may also influence the high average freehold value of the holdings.

(ii) Single occupation holdings

A second group of 46 holdings (39% of the sample) were those with an average gross margin of less than £15,000, which provided the sole (though not necessarily full-time) occupation for the farmer. This group had a much lower level of business activity, and generated a very small net income per farm in return for the substantial amount of time the farmer spent working on the holding. With a lack of off-farm employment to augment the return from the holding, the total disposable income, on average less than £5,000, was a very modest living for the relatively large proportion of the sample which are in this group.

(iii) Spare-time farms

In contrast to the farms which provided the sole occupation, there was another group of holdings, which made up 19 per cent of the sample, where the farmer spent less than 20 per cent of his working year employed on the holding. The results show a relatively low level of output and costs almost in balance. For these farmers the major part of their annual income came from off-farm employment, suggesting that

Table B.20: Alternative groupings - Very Small Farms Survey, 1988

Group	All Farms	Gross Margin >£15,000	Farm sole occupation Gross margin <£15,000	<20% working time spent on holding	Tenanted land only	Farmer's age 65 and over
Number of holdings	119	10	46	23	25	31
Mean area (hectares)	6.0	6.0	6.8	4.9	7.0	7.5
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Output from crops	6161	42616	3305	1064	4045	2361
Output from livestock	3068	17520	2412	186	1917	2495
Miscellaneous output	593	1595	368	567	119	236
Total output	9822	61731	6085	1817	6080	5092
Total costs	8095	48478	5520	2025	4399	4466
Net farm income	1727	13253	565	(-) 235	1681	627
Annual interest payments	940	794	171	2478	0	0
Occupier's income <sup>1</sup>	1476	16051	1467	421	1681	1230
Farmer hours worked on holding	1143	2391	1471	178	755	1141
Spouse hours worked on holding	208	483	176	60	164	75
Farmer hours worked off holding	840	140	0	2189	633	45
Spouse hours worked off holding	198	89	53	384	71	0
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farmer earned income	5184	1500	0	12709	3071	243
Spouse earned income	1103	2675	389	2020	1140	0
Unearned income	2028	1806	4141	1493	2506	4822
Total disposable income	9791	22032	4822	13968	7635	6295
Value of house, land & buildings	144713	277900	126495	201201	12880	107121
Average age of farmer	55.1	48.5	62.3	50.5	61.8	71.6

<sup>1</sup>Occupier's income = net farm income plus estimated rental value minus annual interest payments.



many of these holdings are mainly residential. This suggestion was to some extent confirmed by the high freehold valuation for the holdings, and an above average level of annual interest payments which appears to relate more to house purchase than business borrowings.

(iv) Part-time holdings

On almost 13 per cent of the sample, here described as part-time holdings, the farmers spent between one quarter and one half of their working time employed on the holding. The results for this group show expected trends. The level of on-farm business activity was higher than that of the spare-time farmers (although not reflected in net farm income). The level of off-farm earnings was lower.

(v) Tenanted holdings

A total of 25 farmers (21% of the sample) were farming only rented land. There is an interesting comparison to be made between the tenant farmers and the group for whom the holding provided a sole occupation. The level of output for the two groups was almost identical. However a lower level of costs on the tenanted farms has resulted in a much improved net income per farm, only bettered by the income of the large businesses. Although the farmers in both groups worked a similar total number of hours in the year, the tenants spent only slightly more than half their working time on the holding and the remainder in off-farm employment, with the result that the tenant farmers had, on average, a much higher total disposable income. The major drawback for the tenant farmers, who have not enjoyed the benefits of the boom in property prices, is a lack of freehold capital.

(vi) Holdings with farmers aged 65 and over

Though few employed persons work for gain beyond the age of 65, this cutoff point does not appear to apply as precisely to farmers. On the survey 26 per cent of the farmers were in the 65 and over age group. However, when their results are compared with other groups, the level of farming activity appears undiminished. Therefore it is probably not correct to assume that the very small farms of farmers in this age group are necessarily retirement holdings. There were indications from other analyses that the level of farming activity does increasingly decline from the age 70 and over. A more obvious indication of retirement is that the over 65 group have largely given up working off the holding, probably as pensions become available to supplement or partly replace their on-farm income.

## Conclusions

A survey of very small farming businesses in the Eastern region showed that, on average, the farms had relatively low levels of output and generated little, if any, income for the farmers. However it would be wrong to assume that all these small farms have serious problems. Clearly some do, where, for example, the level of output is low and the holding provides the sole occupation for the farmers. For others, where the main

source of income came from an off-farm occupation, the farming activity is much less important and holding mainly residential. The survey also included a small group of much larger businesses (on small farms) which had diversified into mainly non-agricultural areas. However the opportunities for off-farm employment or business diversification are probably much greater in the southern part of East Anglia and other areas close to Greater London than in the more remote, rural areas of the country.

Within the Eastern region holdings appear to be acquired and occupied for a variety of reasons, many of which are non-agricultural.

## EAST MIDLANDS PROVINCE

Area: Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire,  
Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire (Part), South Humberside

Provincial Centre: University of Nottingham

Local Author: S. J. Mellors

Sample Size: 90

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

The East Midlands' sample of 90 holdings was obtained with some difficulty. An overall response rate of 37 per cent was achieved over the recruiting period, which compares favourably with other studies of this type. The varied lifestyles of the occupants meant they were difficult to contact and consequently recruitment took very much longer than anticipated.

Geographically the only significant group was the 25 holdings around the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire coal mining area, representing 28 per cent of the sample. The rest of the farms were fairly well scattered throughout the region, although Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire together, had fewer holdings than any other county. A similar picture occurred in the previous study of smallholdings, although there is no obvious reason for this pattern of county distribution. (Table B.21).

Table B.21: County distribution by size of holding

County	Size of Holding (Ha)					All
	0-1	2-5	6-10	11-15	15+	
Derbyshire	0	7	5	5	6	23
Leicestershire	3	4	7	1	5	20
Lincolnshire	7	9	6	3	5	30
Northamptonshire	0	0	3	1	1	5
Nottinghamshire	2	3	3	0	4	12
Total	12	23	24	10	21	90

### Characteristics of Holdings

The area covered by this survey totalled 968.10 ha, giving an average size for each unit of 11.13 ha. One third of the total area was let, mostly on a keeping basis, and in many cases there was no income derived from this as the farmer taking the keep normally undertook to maintain the

hedges and ditches in lieu of rent. Those holdings which were involved in food production had grassland making up 84 per cent of the area farmed, with crop production and horticulture accounting for 12 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. Only one farm had dairy stock these being the remnants of a small dairy herd rendered unviable by the introduction of quotas in 1984. Table B.22 broadly summarises the types of holding found in this survey.

**Table B.22: General farming systems**

Broad Description	Nos
Mostly let	21
Mostly cropping	20
Livestock	41
Other	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>

### The Occupants

The larger number of co-operators in this survey again proved to be very different from each other in both their personal and financial circumstances.

The average age of those taking part was 56, and Table B.23 shows the distribution around this average according to farming type.

**Table B.23: Age distribution by farm type**

Typegroup	Occupier's Age in Years				All
	-35	35-50	50-65	65+	
LFA livestock	1	3	0	2	6
Lowland livestock	2	14	11	8	35
Pigs and poultry	1	1	0	2	4
Cropping	1	2	3	1	7
Horticulture	0	3	7	1	11
Other	2	3	10	12	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>90</b>

Many occupants originally farmed on a larger scale but, at or approaching retirement, had built a suitable home, and sold off all but enough land to maintain an interest. Others were professional people who made the choice to move to the country in order to indulge a hobby or for a

better environment to live in. Some of these hobbies were related to country life particularly those connected with horses (livery, riding schools, breeding etc.).

The great majority of co-operators were owner occupiers and as far as could be ascertained under the constraints of this particular survey only a handful had loans outstanding against the purchase of the property. Where the main reason for occupation was residential the primary objective was to preserve the value of the land with very little interest in its commercial exploitation.

Table B.24, below, summarises the work patterns of the occupants.

**Table B.24: Work patterns: Occupier's and spouse's labour**

Hours	On Holding (No)	Off Holding (No)	Total (No)
0-500	37	43	22
501-1000	12	7	6
1001-2000	21	17	11
2001-4000	18	22	31
4001+	2	1	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>

These figures embrace a wide range of individual circumstances and one holding employing a large labour force in garden centre and landscaping activities, has been excluded from the analysis of hours worked.

The average level of activity on all holdings by occupier and spouse was 1,192 hours. If those where the occupier and spouse did no work on the holding (18) are taken out, the figure rises to 1,474 hours. Most of the co-operators tended to exaggerate the amount of time they spent on manual work, generally including all time spent on the holding rather than the hours when work was actually done.

Work done off the holding accounted for an average of 1,174 hours per annum for all co-operators. More significantly when the hours of those people who were working are analysed the level rises to 2,089 hours. This indicates that in the main, those in employment are working full-time or very nearly full-time off the holding.

Paid labour was present on 30 holdings (33.3%) at an average of 621 hours. In many instances it was used as a replacement for the occupier where illness, old age or disability meant that they could not perform the necessary tasks themselves.

## Financial Results

Tables B.25 and B.26 below summarise the income situation on this sample of farms. On average the holdings created a very low level of income from farming activities (£475) and so the support gained from the valuable off-farm income (£8,798) was vital to their continued existence. Of the 90 co-operators, 3 declared that they had no other income whatsoever and 5 said they had another income but were not prepared to disclose it. Included in the sample were several very high earners whose presence distorted the overall picture. If the top eight earners (10%) of those who had another source of income were excluded, the average off-farm income fell to £6,940. The majority of those involved had more than one source of income. The most common, given that the average age of the occupants was 56, was the state old age pension along with company and disability pensions. Those co-operators in receipt of a pension numbered 33, and 19 of these had some investment income as well. In 51 cases the extra income was derived from employment off the farm or from a separate business. At the lower end of the scale, 4 of the co-operators were in receipt of Family Credit/Income Support either because of low income or due to disability.

Table B.25: Levels of income

£	From Holding (No)	Other Income (No)	Total (No)
Loss	50	0	11
0-1000	14	7	4
1000-5000	19	30	24
5000-10000	2	21	24
10000+	5	27	27
Not known	0	5	0
Total	90	90	90

Table B.26: Sources of other income

Main Source	Nos
Employment	46
Pension +	19
Pension only	14
Unearned income	3
None	3
No details	5
Total	90

## Summary

By their very nature these holdings are not dynamic in their management and most of the comments made in the previous study remain valid for the larger sample. In general, holdings tend to be extensively farmed and the level of off-farm activity is more significant than time spent on the holding both in terms of hours spent and income generated.

## NORTH WESTERN PROVINCE

Area: Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside,  
Cheshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire

Provincial Centre: University of Manchester

Local Author: C. Maddison

Sample Size: 163

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

The province, bordered to the west by Wales and the Irish Sea and to the east by the Peak District and Penines, extends some 130 miles north to south. Covering a large and diverse area, both geographically and climatically, it is not surprising to find that the province contains a wide range of farming activities.

In South Shropshire, North-East Lancashire and down the eastern edge of the province, hill and upland areas predominate and these areas are characterised by livestock rearing farms where sheep production and cattle rearing are the dominant enterprises. By contrast, the Shropshire Plain is a traditional mixed farming area, blending livestock rearing and dairying with a range of arable crops including cereals, sugar beet, potatoes and oil seed rape. The situation is similar to the east in South Staffordshire, whilst to the north, in Cheshire, the soils and climate make grassland farming more appropriate and the county is a major dairy farming area. In Merseyside and West Lancashire, however, the fertile silts and mosses combine with the milder coastal climate to make this a region of horticulture and intensive arable farming, specialising in field scale vegetables. Finally, pigs and poultry are not uncommon enterprises and being unrestricted by soil type or climatic considerations, are found throughout the province.

Recruiting for this particular survey was designed to give a broad geographical spread of holdings, to obtain, as far as possible, a representative cross-section of the different types of farming within the region. Inevitably, not all the holdings recruited were found to be true to type as indicated on the recruitment lists and several holdings on later analysis, were deemed to fall outside the definition of 'small farm'. Nevertheless, with the principal exception of North Lancashire, a reasonable distribution of holdings throughout the main agricultural regions of the province was achieved. Table B.27 shows the final classification, by farm type, of the holdings recruited.

Dairy farms were recruited in Cheshire, Staffordshire and Shropshire. The LFA livestock farms were found mainly in Lancashire, North Staffordshire and South Shropshire and for the most part, these holdings were located around the fringes of, rather than within, the main upland areas. This latter point explains, to some extent, the lack of holdings



recruited in North Lancashire. Lowland livestock farms were by far the largest group and were found throughout the province; some of these were also on the fringes of upland areas and it is likely that a proportion fall within LFA boundaries, but were too small to claim livestock subsidies. Pig, poultry, cropping and "other" farms were scattered throughout the province, whilst the bulk of the horticultural holdings were situated in West Lancashire and Shropshire.

**Table B.27: Classification of holdings by farm type**

Farm Type	Original Sample	Dairy	Final Classification						
			LFA L/S	L'd L/S	P&P	Crop	Hortic	Un-Class	Not S.F.
Dairy	12	8	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
LFA livestock	24	1	19	1	-	-	-	3	-
Lowland livestock	72	-	1	57	3	1	-	10	-
Pigs & Poultry	16	-	-	2	7	-	-	7	-
Cropping	8	-	-	-	2	4	-	1	1
Horticulture	25	-	1	-	-	-	12	-	12
Unclassified	20	-	-	3	2	2	-	12	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>

### Characteristics of Holdings

Excluding the 14 holdings classified as 'not small farms' the average Utilisable Agricultural Area (UAA) was 9.25 ha, with 61 per cent of holdings having less than 10.00 ha. However, the degree of intensification of production is just as important as size in classifying holdings as 'small farms' and UAA actually ranged from less than 1.00 ha to just under 50.00 ha. Table B.28 shows the range of UAA by farm type; the majority of the largest farms were found in the more extensive livestock rearing groups, whilst the bulk of the very smallest farms were the much more intensive horticultural holding and pig and poultry units.

### The Occupants

The young, new entrant into farming was not common amongst the 163 co-operators interviewed. The majority of people encountered were the older, more established person, whether this be the genuine part-time farmer, the semi-retired farmer, the hobby farmer or those fully engaged in farming trying to make a living from a small area. This is certainly born out by the age structure of those interviewed; only 6 per cent were under the age of thirty-five and 62 per cent were over fifty. Whilst it was not a specific area of interview, it would certainly be fair to say that the majority of people visited have had a long term involvement in farming. The main exception to this would be the 'hobby farmer' who, having established himself in some other field, had more recently become involved in agriculture to some extent.

**Table B.28: Range of UAA by farm type**

Farm Type	Av Size Ha	<1 ha	1-5 ha	5-10 ha	10-15 ha	15-20 ha	>20 ha
Dairying	14.74	-	1	2	2	1	3
LFA livestock	15.73	1	3	5	4	1	7
Lowland livestock	10.95	2	19	15	12	5	10
Pigs & poultry	4.26	7	3	2	-	1	1
Cropping	18.51	-	-	1	3	2	1
Horticulture	1.64	7	4	-	1	-	-
Unclassified	6.95	3	17	7	8	1	1
<b>Total (163)</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>

Involvement in 'off-farm' activities, by the farmer or spouse, varied considerably amongst those interviewed, however, it is interesting to examine this involvement by farm type. Table B.29 shows the extent to which each group were involved in 'off-farm' activities and the proportion of each group that gained over 50 per cent of their income from 'non-farm' sources. On at least 33 per cent of the farms in each group, the farmer and/or spouse were involved in some sort of off-farm employment. Hours spent in off-farm employment accounted for at least 26 per cent of the total labour hours of the farmer and spouse in each group; however, only in the unclassified group were 'off-farm' hours greater than 'on-farm' hours.

**Table B.29: Involvement in off-farm activities and reliance on non-farm income, by farm type (Farmer and spouse)**

Farm Type	% Involved in 'off-farm' activities	% 'off-farm' hours	% with 50% 'non-farm' income'
Dairy	33	26	33
LFA livestock	62	50	62
Lowland livestock	49	45	76
Pigs & poultry	50	40	57
Cropping	57	39	57
Horticulture	50	36	75
Unclassified	54	80	89

Of greater importance than the degree of involvement in 'off-farm' employment, is the overall reliance of the farm family on 'non-farm' income. In addition to 'off-farm' earned income, many of the farmers interviewed were found to have additional sources of 'unearned' income, i.e. interest on savings, pensions, benefits. With the exception of the

dairy holdings, more than half the farms in each group received the greater part of their total income from 'non-farm' sources (Table B.29). The average levels of 'non-farm' income, for each farm type, are shown in Table B.30. Whilst 'non-farm' incomes varied considerably with the individual circumstances of those interviewed, it is clear that there is a much greater availability, or dependency on alternative sources of funds within certain farm groups.

**Table B.30: Non-farming income by farm type (Farmer and spouse)**

	Dairy	LFA L/S	Lowland L/S	Pigs & Poultry	Cropping	Hortic	Unclass
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Earned Income							
Employed	1444	2826	5920	4786	1920	3341	4288
Self-employed	1667	5245	3799	2129	2143	1600	5403
Total earned income	3111	8071	9719	6915	4063	4941	9691
Unearned income	1377	3638	1967	1852	600	2675	4071
Total Non-farm Income	4488	11709	11686	8767	4663	7616	13762

## Financial Performance

### (i) Income

Table B.31 shows the average output, costs and Net Farm Income for each farm type and it is interesting to relate these figures to 'off-farm' employment and reliance on 'non-farm' incomes.

The dairy and the pig and poultry groups had, by far, the highest level of output amongst the different farm types. However, with average costs over £5,000 higher on the pig and poultry farms, average Net Farm Income for the dairy group was considerably higher than any other type of farming. Table B.32 shows the range of Net Farm Incomes for the different farm types and dairying is clearly the most profitable group; none of the holdings made a Net Farm Income of less than £2,000 and in five cases the figure was in excess of £5,000.

The dairy group had the least involvement in off-farm employment (Table B.29) and on average, the lowest levels of 'non-farm' income (Tables B.29 and B.30). Farming was very much the primary concern on these holdings, whether on a full or part-time basis. With very little paid labour and consequently, a reliance on family labour, the seven day a week nature of this type of farming undoubtedly limits the possibilities for 'off-farm' employment. Nevertheless, because of the greater profitability

of these holdings, the necessity to find additional sources of funds was less than on other types of farm.

**Table B.31: Average output and costs by farm type**

	Dairy	LFA L/S	Lowland L/S	Pigs & Poultry	Cropping	Hortic	Unclass
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Gross Output</b>							
Main crops	81	-	220	113	5165	9039	-
Forage/ By-products	83	-	70	161	1648	59	823
Dairying	18885	23	-	-	-	-	-
Beef/rearing	2069	4226	4529	442	417	-	-
Sheep	254	1968	699	196	808	-	-
Pigs/Poultry	-	24	964	18375	259	-	-
Other livestock	-	-	280	57	57	-	-
Misc Revenue	61	149	647	2113	313	12	601
<b>Total Gross Output</b>	<b>21433</b>	<b>6390</b>	<b>7409</b>	<b>21457</b>	<b>8667</b>	<b>9110</b>	<b>1424</b>
<b>Variable Costs</b>							
Livestock costs	8369	1696	2348	13050	624	-	8
Crop costs	825	407	343	83	1898	3910	30
<b>Total Variable Costs</b>	<b>9194</b>	<b>2103</b>	<b>2691</b>	<b>13133</b>	<b>2522</b>	<b>3910</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Gross Margin</b>	<b>12239</b>	<b>4287</b>	<b>4718</b>	<b>8324</b>	<b>6145</b>	<b>5200</b>	<b>1386</b>
<b>Fixed Costs</b>							
Wages	289	405	299	2497	225	814	38
Machinery costs	885	620	622	1015	716	483	145
Depreciation	457	391	264	619	314	970	79
Land & property	1748	1142	1408	741	2230	533	652
General farm costs	1980	851	746	1619	766	1023	178
<b>Total Fixed Costs</b>	<b>5359</b>	<b>3409</b>	<b>3339</b>	<b>6491</b>	<b>4251</b>	<b>3823</b>	<b>1092</b>
<b>Net Farm Income</b>	<b>6880</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>1379</b>	<b>1833</b>	<b>1894</b>	<b>1377</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>Average Farm Size</b>	<b>14.74</b>	<b>15.73</b>	<b>10.95</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>18.51</b>	<b>1.64</b>	<b>6.95</b>
<b>Number in Sample</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>37</b>

The pigs and poultry and the horticultural groups contained the most intensive farming units. Table B.33 shows the much higher output and costs per hectare for both these groups by comparison with the other farm types. With horticultural units in particular, their apparently small size often belies the scale of their business and of the fourteen holdings ultimately

classed as 'not small farms' and excluded from the tables, twelve were horticultural units.

**Table B.32: Range of Net Farm Income by farm type**

Farm Type	Net Farm Income (1=£1,000.00)							
	<0	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	>10
Dairy	-	-	-	1	2	1	3	2
LFA livestock	7	4	3	4	1	1	1	-
Lowland livestock	21	16	6	5	6	1	7	1
Pigs and poultry	6	2	-	2	-	-	3	1
Cropping	1	1	3	-	-	1	1	-
Horticulture	4	-	4	2	-	1	1	-
Unclassified	25	8	2	1	-	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table B.33: Average output and costs per hectare by farm type**

	Dairy	LFA L/S	Lowland L/S	Pigs & Poultry	Cropping	Hortic	Unclass
	£/ha	£/ha	£/ha	£/ha	£/ha	£/ha	£/ha
Gross Output	1454	406	677	5037	468	5555	205
Variable Costs	624	134	246	3083	136	2384	5
Gross Margin	830	272	431	1954	332	3171	200
Fixed Costs	363	216	305	1524	230	2331	158
<b>Net Farm Income</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>42</b>

Despite the more intensive nature of the farming on the pig and poultry units and horticultural holdings, both these groups proved to be generally less profitable than the dairy farms. Although these were both more diverse groups than the dairy farms, with more 'off-farm' employment (Table B.29), it was surprising, initially, that they did not exhibit a higher level of profitability, considering the intensive nature of production. However, it must be remembered that the year costed, 1988, was a comparatively poor year for pigs, poultry and horticulture. For most of the year both pig and egg prices were very low and horticultural holdings suffered similarly, particularly in the second half of the year. All three types of farming do suffer from unpredictable and variable incomes, so on these very small units, it is less of a surprise to find a greater level of 'non-farm' income than for the dairy group (Table B.30). In addition, these types of holding are often situated quite close to urban areas, where

the scope for off-farm employment is perhaps greater than in more rural situations.

The agricultural systems on the LFA and lowland livestock farms were much more extensive than in the three groups already mentioned and this is illustrated in Table B.33. In both these livestock groups, cattle rearing is the dominant enterprise, whether this be fattening or store production. Whilst less significant in terms of the output, sheep were also an important enterprise in these two groups, with flocks on 48 per cent of LFA farms and 33 per cent of lowland holdings. Other enterprises were relatively unimportant on these farms, particularly in the LFA group; the contributions of other enterprises to total output that appear in Table B.31 are influenced by a limited number of holdings in each case.

The LFA and lowland livestock farms probably formed the most diverse groups of all, in terms of size, profitability, degree of involvement in off-farm employment and reliance on 'non-farm' incomes. However, these two groups together, accounted for 84 (52%) of the 163 holdings and it is amongst these that we find the majority of the genuine small farms. Whilst there were a few comparatively high incomes, many of the least profitable farms were found in these groups; in fact, a third of these holdings made a loss from farming and over half had Net Farm Incomes of less than £1,000 (Table B.32). It is not surprising then, to find a much higher level of 'non-farm' income on these farms (Table B.30) than on the more intensive holdings. Of the 84 holdings, on 52 per cent the farmer and/or spouse had some sort of 'off-farm' employment and on 73 per cent the greater part of their total income came from 'non-farm' sources.

With the exception of the odd stabling business, the unclassified group contains the real 'hobby' farms. What real farming takes place was very extensive, but, in the majority of cases, most if not all of the total farm output came from letting out land. Net Farm Incomes on these holdings were very low and for the most part the main source of income lies elsewhere. Basically, the group is made up of two types of people, on the one hand the retired farmer who wishes to retain some land and some involvement in farming and on the other hand, the newcomer wanting to own a house in the country, a few acres of land and perhaps 'dabble' in agriculture.

The cropping farms were the least common amongst the holdings surveyed. The sample of seven is too small to draw any definite conclusions. Only one holding could truly be described as a full-time holding and this was the only one to make a loss. Only one of the group had no other source of income other than farming; of the other six, four had some form of 'off-farm' employment. Although Table B.30 shows 'non-farm' income to be low by comparison with most other groups, it should be pointed out that two farmers declined to give details of unearned income.

#### (ii) Capital investment

Table B.34 shows the average levels of capital investment by farm type. All but fifteen of the holdings surveyed were owner-occupiers, and the main feature across all the groups is the importance of the farmhouse as a proportion of total capital investment. It is likely that in the

majority of cases, because of the very small size of many of these farms, the house will account for at least 50 per cent of the total capital investment.

Investment in machinery and building varied quite considerably, but for the most part, was fairly limited. Investment of this nature was most significant on the pigs and poultry units and horticultural holdings; these small, but intensive farms had by far the greatest investment on a per hectare basis. The unclassified farms also had a high capital investment, but this is mainly due to the high value of the houses on a number of the holdings. Overall, capital investment was lowest on the cropping farms, but it should be remembered that four out of the seven in this group were tenanted.

**Table B.34: Average capital investment by farm type**

	Dairy	LFA L/S	Lowland L/S	Pigs & Poultry	Cropping	Hortic	Unclass
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
House and land	102444	143762	124245	121018	56429	70500	175595
Agric buildings	2444	1405	2691	7696	3571	6458	2784
Glasshouses	-	-	-	-	-	7585	-
Machinery	4568	3924	2638	6192	3143	2126	795
<b>Total</b>	<b>109456</b>	<b>149091</b>	<b>129574</b>	<b>134906</b>	<b>63143</b>	<b>86669</b>	<b>179174</b>
<b>Total per hectare</b>	<b>7426</b>	<b>9478</b>	<b>11833</b>	<b>31668</b>	<b>3411</b>	<b>52847</b>	<b>25780</b>

### Conclusion

These small farms are a very diverse group of holdings. Undoubtedly, some were full-time holdings, whilst others were definitely 'hobby farms'; in between these two extremes lie a whole range of part-time farms. On over half the farms surveyed, the farmer and/or spouse were found to have some sort of 'off-farm' employment and on almost three-quarters of the holdings over 50 per cent of total income came from 'non-farm' sources. However, what is remarkable in many cases, is the ability of farm families to survive on very low incomes. It is significant also, that so many of these holdings were owner-occupied; on the one hand, it is simply because the farm is owned that many of these holdings remain solvent, whilst it is also true, that owning one's own land seems to be an important concept in itself.

## NORTH EASTERN PROVINCE

Area: Humberside (North), South Yorkshire,  
West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire, Cleveland

Provincial Centre: Askham Bryan College

Local Author: Susan Holley

Sample Size: 99

The Yorkshire sample originally consisted of 105 holdings. However, six were found to have a mix of enterprises generating sufficient output to put them outside the scope of the survey and for this reason their results are excluded from the following summary.

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

Geographically the holdings were distributed quite evenly throughout the Yorkshire region. There was the expected concentration of holdings on the perimeter of the West Yorkshire industrial conurbation and a lack of holdings in the East Yorkshire Wold area where part-time holdings are significantly fewer. Of the 99 holdings, 23 were situated in the Less Favoured Areas.

### Characteristics of Holdings

Table B.35 shows the distribution of part-time and full-time farms in the Yorkshire region according to types of farming. Part-time is defined as those holdings below 4 BSUs whilst full-time is defined as those holdings above 4 BSUs. This compares with the Yorkshire regional sample for the survey of 23 livestock in Less Favoured Areas, 34 livestock in lowland areas, 7 general cropping, 7 pigs and poultry, 7 horticultural and 21 holdings not fitting any of these criteria.

**Table B.35: Distribution of part-time and full-time farms  
in the Yorkshire region**

	Part-time		Full-time	
	No.	%	No.	%
Livestock - Less Favoured Area	694	(16)	1245	(11)
Livestock - lowland (inc. dairying)	2162	(50)	3444	(31)
Cropping	616	(14)	4932	(45)
Pigs and poultry	555	(13)	1085	(10)
Horticultural	292	(7)	341	(3)
Total	4319	(100)	11047	(100)



There was a great range in farm size as can be seen from Table B.36. The average size of the holdings was just over 9 hectares. The largest holding in the sample was 23.9 hectares and the smallest holding was 0.1 hectares. The larger holdings were concentrated in the grazing livestock sector with an average of 11.7 hectares whereas the average holding size for the pigs and poultry and horticultural sectors were 3.8 and 1.6 hectares respectively. Twelve farms rented all their land, 15 were of mixed tenure and the remaining 72 were totally owner occupied. The average area for rented farms was 10.5 hectares, owner occupied 7.5 hectares and mixed tenure 16.6 hectares. Eight of those farmers owning land did not own a house. The value of land and agricultural buildings for the remaining 79 averaged almost £160,000 per holding although the range was between £41,000 and £450,000.

**Table B.36: Range of farm size (hectares)**

	LFA L'stock	Lowland L'stock	Crop- ping	Pigs & Poultry	Hortic	Other	Total
	- - - No. of farms - - -						
Hectares							
0-2	3	5	-	2	5	3	18
2-5	4	6	2	3	2	7	24
5-10	1	10	3	1	-	6	21
10-15	4	2	1	1	-	3	11
15-20	6	7	1	-	-	1	15
20+	5	4	-	-	-	1	10
Total	23	34	7	7	7	21	99
Av.ha/farm	12.9	10.9	8.3	3.8	1.6	7.1	9.2

### The Occupants

The ages of co-operating farmers ranged from 25 to over 75 years. Eight per cent of the sample were under 35 with 19 per cent being over 65 years of age. The bulk of the sample (73%) were between the ages of 35 and 65 years. Twenty two of the 99 farmers were women. Table B.37 shows how long these participating farmers had been in agriculture and how many years they had been managing a holding as well as the time spent on their present holding.

### Financial Results

Total output for all farms averaged £6,163 but this varied from £3,332 in the 'other' category to £10,637 and £11,105 per farm in the pigs and poultry and horticultural groups respectively. Horticultural farms achieved a much higher gross margin when compared to other types of farming. At £7,415 per farm, it was two and a half times that achieved by the cropping type of farm and was double that of both the lowland livestock

Table B.37: Range of years in farming

Years	Years in farming	Years managing any holding	Years managing present holding
<10	25	39	46
11-20	23	28	29
21-30	15	13	12
31-40	8	5	6
>40	28	14	6
	99	99	99

and other groups. Fixed costs averaged £4,097 for all farms. The figure for the horticultural farms was more than double this at £9,195 per farm, mainly attributable to the much higher figure for paid labour. For all farm types there was a Net Farm Loss of £47 per farm. The lowland livestock, cropping and horticultural groups all experienced Net Farm Losses. The highest Net Farm Income achieved was £1,515 per farm from the pigs and poultry group. Management and Investment Incomes, which are arrived at after deducting a charge for farmer and spouse labour (valued at £4.50 per hour) from the Net Farm Income, are negative for all the groups with an overall average of -£5,580 per farm. Occupier's Income has been calculated by adding back the nominal rental value, which is part of the land and property charges, to Net Farm Income but no account has been taken of interest charges and depreciation on occupier's buildings and works. The average for all farms is £810 per farm. Two groups (cropping and horticulture) experienced negative occupier's incomes and the highest figure of £1,756 per farm was achieved by the pig and poultry group. There are large ranges in NFI, MII and Occupier's Income as can be seen from Table B.38 with over 59 per cent having a negative NFI, 88 per cent having a negative MII and 45 per cent having a negative Occupier's Income.

Fifty five per cent of co-operating farmers worked to some degree or other off the holding. Types of employment ranged from working on other holdings either in the form of a contractor or farm worker to a wide range of professions. Some were managing directors of multi-national companies whilst others owned their own business. Only two farmers were totally dependent on their holdings for a living. The average income for the 26 who were employed outside farming was £19,082 but this covered a range of £300 to £145,000. Of the 28 who were self-employed, the range varied between £3,000 and £130,000 with an average per person of £19,400. Only 31 holdings did not have some form of unearned income (interest, pensions, child benefit or social payments etc.). The average for the 68 holdings receiving unearned income was £3,543 per holding.

Over 37 per cent stated that their main objective was to gain a significant income from agriculture but found they were constrained by availability of labour or capital. Over 90 per cent of farmers felt that the opportunities for developing other sources of income either on- or off-farm were either nil or extremely limited.

Table B.38: Number of farms by NFI, MII and Occupier's Income/Farm

£/farm	NFI	MII	Occupier's Income
< -10,000	1	19	1
-10,000 to -7,500	1	7	-
-7,500 to -5,000	5	25	3
-5,000 to -2,500	10	21	10
-2,500 to 0	41	15	31
0 to 2,500	24	9	34
2,500 to 5,000	11	1	10
5,000 to 7,500	2	-	6
7,500 to 10,000	2	1	1
> 10,000	2	1	3
	99	99	99

### Conclusions

The results of the survey suggest that there are many different reasons for people being involved in small scale farming. There are those who are clearly improving their lifestyle by purchasing a small holding and can only be considered to be farming for a hobby and not for monetary gain. In many cases these farmers would be financially better off letting their land. Equally there are those who are working very long hours for very small monetary rewards. Some of these will make a financial success of their farming but for many, financial dependence on farming will not be possible.

## NORTHERN PROVINCE

Area: Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear

Provincial Centre: University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Local Author: D. Barnes

Sample Size: 92

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

The Northern province is in general characterised by larger than average farms. The region has only 7 per cent of the holdings in England but 11 per cent of land area. Nevertheless, 40 per cent of holdings in the area are under 4 BSU - the size below which a farm is deemed not large enough to employ one person all year. Half the farms surveyed fall within the 'less favoured areas'. As Table B.39 shows, many more farms were surveyed in Cumbria than in other counties. Cumbria has only 45 per cent of the land area but 64 per cent of the holdings while Northumberland has 38 per cent of the land area and only 11 per cent of the holdings.

Table B.39: Distribution of sampled farms by county

Cumbria	64%
Co. Durham	22%
Northumberland	11%
Tyne & Wear	3%
Total	100%

This high concentration of small holdings is in part due to high property prices - particularly in the Lake District. This often leads to farms being divided on sale with a smallholding being formed around a 'desirable house'. Historically, however, Cumbria has had a high population of smallholdings, particularly close to the industrial areas such as the Whitehaven/Workington vicinity.

### Characteristics of the Holdings

Table B.40 summarises the farming types represented in this survey. By far the most important activity on the small farms is livestock rearing. This accounted for over two thirds of the sample. These were split 50:50 between LFA and lowland. The average size of all livestock farms was 11 ha with lowland farms slightly larger than upland. In Northumberland all farms were livestock farms with only 30 per cent lowland and 70 per cent upland. This was in contrast to the other counties which had only 60 per

cent livestock farms of which, just over half were lowland. There were no dairy farms although a very small number still had a milk quota which was leased out.

**Table B.40: Classification of small farm types**

LFA livestock	34%
Lowland livestock	35%
Pigs & Poultry	4%
Cropping	1%
Horticultural	3%
Other	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The next largest group were those with virtually no farming activity at all - in most cases their land was let. The average size of these holdings was 10.5 ha. Their land was let for an average of £120/ha. They were also able to obtain revenue from miscellaneous farm resources of over £1,200 per holding. This was four times larger than the average obtained by the big livestock groups. Ninety per cent of these farms were in Cumbria.

The remaining farms (less than 10% of the sample) were made up of small numbers obtaining income from poultry (this group is actually named 'pigs and poultry' but there were, in fact, no pigs), horticulture and general cropping.

### **The Occupants**

As with larger farms there are very few small farms being run by younger people. There were no farms in the survey being run by farmers under 20 and less than 1 in 6 was under 35. Two thirds of the farmers were in the 35-65 age range and 1 in 5 were pensioners. As might be expected the age range shifts depending on the predominant enterprise, the majority of livestock farms being run by farmers under 50 whereas the majority of farms with no agricultural activity are being run by pensioners.

In contrast to larger farms, nearly a quarter of lowland livestock farms in the province were being run by women. Over all, women were running 1 in 6 small farms.

The number of hours worked on and off each of the dominant holding types is shown in Table B.41. The average time spent on the small farms was 962 hours per year; just under 19 hours per week.

In every group the average number of hours worked off the farm was greater than the hours worked on the farm. This reflects the relatively poor return to agricultural work compared to the returns from non-

agricultural employment and the need for farmers of small parcels of land to maintain a satisfactory level of income.

**Table B.41: Hours worked per holding**

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	All Other	All Types
On farm	1144	1117	365	962
Off farm	1871	1336	1041	1448
<b>Total</b>	<b>3015</b>	<b>2453</b>	<b>1406</b>	<b>2410</b>

### Financial Results

Not surprisingly the financial results show considerable variation. The average net income over all holdings was £781. This figure, however, hides the range of individual results from -£4,400 to +£7,800 per holding. There was also considerable variation between the group averages. In the case of the poultry group and the horticultural group the results should be treated with caution because of the small group sizes. (There was only one farm in the 'cropping' group so this has not been included). In all groups the income from non-farming activities exceeds the net income from the farm. Table B.42 shows the relative importance of the farm income to the total family income.

**Table B.42: Average financial results (£ per farm)**

	LFA Livestock	Lowland livestock	Pigs & poultry	Hortic	Other	All
Number of farms	31	32	4	3	21	92
Total output	5362	4285	3721	6940	2531	4292
Major enterprise	55%	43%	43%	77%	50%	35%
	sheep	beef	poult	hort	let	sheep
Variable costs	1364	1592	986	1515	68	1136
Total gross margin	3998	2694	2735	5425	2463	3156
Fixed costs	2546	2567	1267	1996	2021	2375
Net farm income	1452	127	1468	3429	442	781
Non-farm income	11268	13556	10152	9366	9604	9206
NFI as % of total income	11%	1%	13%	27%	4%	8%
Capital (land, house & buildings)	97264	106275	100075	75355	123903	101246
Hectares	10.78	11.18	3.67	1.83	10.50	10.31

On average, the income from farming provides only 8 per cent of the total family income, however on horticultural holdings it represented over a quarter of total income. These holdings are relatively small, and intensively run, producing the highest farm incomes from the smallest areas. It can be seen from the table that farm income is the smallest proportion of total income on lowland livestock farms (less than 1%). Not only is net income from farming lowest but non-farm income is highest of any of the groups. Of all the groups with farming activity, this group, in the main, must be considered to be 'hobby farming'. In some cases these 'farms' are no more than large gardens but they are still registered as agricultural holdings. Nevertheless, they do spend an average of some 1,100 hours on the holding even though they derive virtually no farming income from this. Presumably on many holdings an agricultural tax loss will be used to offset income tax paid for off-farm employment.

In contrast, the LFA livestock group received over 10 per cent of its family income from farming. Net farm income was ten fold that of the lowland livestock group even though the time spent farming was only slightly more. It is interesting that these two livestock groups had very similar farm areas and similar fixed costs. LFA farms, however, have considerably more output and a greater dependence on sheep production. This reliance on sheep is in common with larger LFA farms in the area.

The group with the third largest number of farms which had virtually no agricultural activity had the lowest total family income. Their farm income was made up, largely of rents from let land. Their non-farm income was over twenty times higher than the income from the farm and over 20 per cent of it was from unearned income. This reflects the fact that the majority of these farmers are pensioners.

## Conclusions

The average size of the holdings surveyed in the northern province was approximately 10 ha (25 acres). There were virtually no holdings where farm income was greater than non-farm income with the average from the farm being less than £800. The labour input in many cases is substantial so many farmers are motivated by non-financial considerations. Thus agricultural activities are carried out for pleasure and enjoyment. In these cases the non-farm income may be considerable. Another important category of farms are retirement holdings. These are often farmed by ex-full-time farmers who have sold the greater part of their farm. They have retained or acquired a house and a few acres but are engaged in very little agricultural activity. There are, however, a small group of holdings which are particularly commercially orientated (notably horticultural holdings). These farmers are able to generate quite substantial incomes from small amounts of land.

## WALES

Provincial Centre; University College of Wales, Aberystwyth

Local Author: T. N. Jenkins

Sample Size: 247

### Geographical Distribution of Holdings

In Wales, 251 farms distributed throughout the Principality were initially recruited for this survey. Sampling was restricted to the following three farm types, as deduced from the data available for Welsh farms on the 1987 June census returns:

dairying - farms on which dairying is practised in significant measure, irrespective of location;

LFA livestock - farms rearing sheep and/or cattle and situated within the severely disadvantaged or the disadvantaged less favoured areas and hence eligible for hill livestock compensatory allowances;

lowland livestock - farms rearing sheep and/or cattle outside the less favoured areas.

The sample was also drawn to be representative of two farm sizes: up to 1.9 BSU, and 2.0 to 3.9 BSU.<sup>1</sup> Table B.43 shows the sampled farms classified according to the data collected from them for 1988. The 39 farms finally classified as 'other types' proved either to be agriculturally inactive or had predominantly let their land to other farmers.

Table B.43: The Welsh sample

Farm type	Final classification
Dairying	10
LFA livestock	162
Lowland livestock	36
Other types	39
All	247 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> 4 farms found not to be 'small farms' in terms of the definitions applied and are excluded from the analysis.

<sup>1</sup>Very small farms are defined as farms of less than 4 BSU, a measurement of business size equivalent to around 13 dairy cows, 440 hill sheep, or 320 lowland sheep.



In order to recruit the sample, 381 farms were approached, 130 of which were eventually not included for the reasons shown below:

Farmer could not be contacted	42 farms
Farmer's lack of interest	40
Farm recently, or in the process of being, sold	25
Farmer's poor health or recent bereavement	7
Farm not farmed by occupier who lacked interest	7
Clearly not a 'very small farm'	5
Farmer too busy	4

The overall recruitment rate was therefore around 65 per cent of the farms originally selected for survey.

### Characteristics of Holdings

The average size of the farms in the sample is 11.2 ha of effective agricultural area,<sup>1</sup> with 60 per cent of the farms in the 5-20 ha range (Table B.44). Over three-quarters of the farms are wholly owner-occupied and less than 10 per cent wholly rented (Table B.45).

**Table B.44: Farm sizes (ha of effective agricultural area)**

Farm type	<1 ha	1-4.9 ha	5-9.9 ha	10-19.9 ha	> 20 ha
Dairying	0	2	5	2	1
LFA livestock	3	32	51	51	25
Lowland livestock	1	9	9	13	4
Other types	3	14	9	8	5
All	7	57	74	74	35

**Table B.45: Farm tenure**

Farm type	Nos. of farms		
	Owner-occupied	Mixed tenure	Wholly tenanted
Dairying	9	1	-
LFA livestock	121	25	16
Lowland livestock	26	6	4
Other types	34	2	3
All	190	34	23

<sup>1</sup>i.e., with rough grazing converted to its pasture equivalent.

## The Occupants

Over two-thirds of the farmers in the survey are over 50 years of age and well over one third of them past normal retirement age (Table B.46). Outside the LFA livestock sector, none of the farmers surveyed is under 35 years of age.

**Table B.46: Age structure of farmers**

Farm type	Farmer's age (years)			
	< 35	35-49	50-64	>65
Dairying	0	5	1	4
LFA livestock	13	46	52	54
Lowland livestock	0	9	9	15
Other types	0	7	15	17
All	13	67	77	90

Over the sample as a whole, the time spent on gainful activity by farmers and/or their spouses<sup>1</sup> is split fairly evenly between on-farm and off-farm work (Table B.47). In the dairying sector, however, on-farm work not surprisingly predominates, given the regular nature and labour intensity of the main enterprise, and 6 of the 10 farmers spent none of their time on gainful activity off the farm. In both the LFA and lowland livestock sectors, almost half the farmers have off-farm work. The relatively low level of on-farm activity on the other types of farm reflects the considerable letting of land by agriculturally inactive occupiers.

**Table B.47: Gainful activity levels of farmers/spouses**

Farm type	Average hours of gainful activity per farm	
	On farm	Off farm
Dairying	2012 (79%)	545 (21%)
LFA livestock	1174 (53%)	1034 (47%)
Lowland livestock	1293 (57%)	986 (43%)
Other types	400 (38%)	639 (62%)
All	1109 (54%)	936 (46%)

<sup>1</sup>The farmer and spouse (if any) are treated as one entity in this and succeeding paragraphs.

## Financial Results

### (i) Farm Incomes

Table B.48 shows the aggregate farm output, input and income position for the 247 farms in the sample. The nature of the small farm sector in Wales makes it inevitable that livestock enterprises should form the dominant proportion (over 80%) of output, and livestock subsidies<sup>1</sup> contributed around 17 per cent of livestock output. The calculation of net income is made along standard farm business lines: benefit values are attributed to farmhouses, commercial values are placed on unpaid family labour, rental values are assessed for owner-occupied farms, and any interest charges paid on farm borrowing are excluded. To the extent, therefore, that farms are rent free and labour is unpaid, the negative net income of £276 per farm (or £25 per effective agricultural hectare) is not a barrier to continuing activity. The distribution of net incomes was as follows, with three-quarters of the sample lying within the relatively narrow range of -£2,500 to +£2,500.

<u>Negative net income (£/farm)</u>				<u>Positive net income (£/farm)</u>			
7500-		5000-		1-	2501-	5001-	
>7500	5001	2501	2500-0	2500	5000	7500	>7500
3	7	23	103	83	24	1	3

Table B.48: Outputs, inputs and income : whole sample

Outputs	£/farm	£/eff.ha	Inputs:	£/farm	£/eff.ha
Crops	17	2	Variable costs	929	83 (B)
Forage	102	9	Fixed costs	2736	244 (C)
Livestock (which, 2781 livestock subsidies)	2781	248		---	---
Miscellaneous	465	42)	Total gross margin	2460	220 (A)-(B)
	489	44		---	---
Total output	3389	303 (A)	Net income	-276	-24 (A)-(B) -(C)

In the dairying sector, a high level of specialisation was noteworthy, with 88 per cent of output being derived from the dairying and associated cattle enterprises. An output figure of £680 per ha, gross margin of £524

<sup>1</sup> Principally, hill livestock compensatory allowances, annual ewe premia and suckler cow premia.

per ha, and net income of £1,409 per farm or £158 per ha must be viewed in the light of the small number of dairying farms in the sample.

In the LFA livestock sector, a high level of specialisation was also in evidence, with 88 per cent of output again being derived from beef and sheep enterprises and with sheep alone contributing almost 60 per cent. Direct subsidies contributed an eighth of beef cattle output and well over a quarter of sheep output. Average total output of £292 per hectare and total gross margin of £209 per hectare were insufficient to cover fixed costs, leaving a negative net income of -£266 per farm or -£22 per ha. The distribution of net incomes on the farms surveyed was as follows, with almost three-quarters of the farms having net incomes in the range -£2,500 to +£2,500:

<u>Negative (£/farm)</u>				<u>Positive (£/farm)</u>			
7500-	5000-			1-	2501-	5001-	
>7500	5001	2501	2500-0	2500	5000	7500	>7500
3	6	13	64	56	18	0	2

In the lowland livestock sector, beef and sheep enterprises also account for a high proportion of output (80%) although here cattle predominate. Output at £344 per ha and gross margin at £254 per ha were slightly above the levels noted on the LFA livestock farms, but a higher level of fixed costs left net income negative at -£554 per farm or -£56 per ha, distributed as follows:

<u>Negative (£/farm)</u>		<u>Positive (£/farm)</u>	
>2500	2500-0	1-2500	>2501
7	14	14	1

(ii) Non-farming incomes

Only 9 farmers<sup>1</sup> in the sample rely entirely on farming for income. In all other cases, non-farming sources of income are available and are summarised in Table B.49. In purely numerical terms, 'unearned' sources of income predominate: such income averaged around £3,600 per farm on the 80 per cent of farms where it was received.<sup>2</sup> Analysis of the sources of 'unearned' income recalls the age distribution of the sampled farmers, with 47 per cent of the farms run by farmers in receipt of pensions (Table B.50). The skewed age structure is further emphasised by the fact that only 21 per cent of farmers had children sufficiently young to entitle them to child benefit payments. Around a quarter of the farmers obtained an

<sup>1</sup>Again, spouses (where present) are included in the term 'farmers'.

<sup>2</sup>A small number of farms declined to divulge precise information and are excluded from this calculation.

income from investments, and one fifth received contributions to household budgets from other persons living on the farm.

Income from employment and/or self-employment is available to a smaller number of farmers but is in many cases substantial: in the case of employment income the average per recipient farm was around £10,800, while in the case of self-employment income it was around £9,600 per recipient farm. Amongst the occupational categories of those farmers employed and self-employed in non-farming activities by far the most common group were professional people - mainly involved in teaching and nursing, followed by those in clerical, agricultural contracting, and construction occupations.

**Table B.49: Non-farming income sources of farmers and/or spouses**

	No. of farms with incomes from:		
	Employment	Self-employment	'Unearned' sources
Dairying	2	3	8
LFA livestock	52	35	132
Lowland livestock	8	8	31
Other types	5	4	32
All	67	50	203
Average level of income per farm <sup>a</sup>	£ 10,786	£ 9,606	£ 3,619

<sup>a</sup>For those farms receiving income and prepared to divulge the amount.

**Table B.50: Sources of 'unearned' income (No. of farms)**

Source	Farm type:				Total
	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Other	
Investments	2	32	13	16	63
Pensions	4	71	18	23	116
Income support/ family credit	2	5	1	-	8
Child benefits	3	37	9	4	53
Family contributions <sup>a</sup>	3	34	8	5	50
Other <sup>b</sup>	-	9	1	7	17

<sup>a</sup>Contribution to household living expenses made by family members living at, but not working on, the farm.

<sup>b</sup>Eg. from letting property off the farm.

Across the whole sample, total non-farming income averaged around £7,800 per farm, compared with the net income from farming of -£276 per

farm. To complete this broad picture of financial circumstances, fifteen per cent of the farms in the sample carried interest charges, averaging around £1,800 per farm paying interest (around £275 per farm across the whole sample).

## Conclusions

A major feature of the very small farm sector in Wales is its diversity, and generalisations concerning the nature of the farms found there are accordingly difficult to make. The farms visited in the course of the survey range from traditional family smallholdings yielding a modest living for their occupiers, to units purchased with outside resources and run for the purpose of indulging a vision or a philosophy. In the middle, and probably most typical, are farms which are merely sidelines or convenient bases for their occupiers whose main livelihood is non-agricultural.

Some features do, however, stand out as worthy of particular mention:-

Retired farmers As indicated by the age structure of the farmers in the sample, a considerable number are retired or semi-retired farmers either letting land which they no longer have the motivation or the energy to farm themselves, or farming a few fields purely for interest and to maintain the traditions to which they have devoted their lives. These farmers are supplemented by a further good number who have retired from work outside the agricultural sector, and who now pursue an interest which brings with it a congenial rural lifestyle.

Dependence Many small farmers are not as independent of the outside world as they might often wish. As well as the obvious dependence on state pensions and benefits, many older farmers are clearly dependent on the goodwill of younger family members, and even of neighbours, for help with farm work. The strength of family loyalty is often a striking feature, enabling many small farmers to continue an existence based more on sentiment than on practicality.

Inheritance A common situation is that in which a small, often unviable, farm has been inherited, with the beneficiary subsequently maintaining it out of duty to the family and because it provides a home and a partial living. The result is then rarely anything more than very limited farming aspirations, even where development potential is evident to outsiders.

Lifestyle The quest for an 'alternative' lifestyle is fairly commonly encountered, but rarely seems to be based on a positive view of the business potential (agricultural or non-agricultural) of farming. It is noticeable, too, that the smallholder's lifestyle often suits cases where a disabled family member requires care, and the state allowances which this brings can become an important element in household income.

Living standards One of the most noticeable features of the small farm sector is low living standards. Many farmers either have limited material aspirations or have resigned themselves to standards which outsiders often find striking. In part, this is the result of physical remoteness and the

lack of services which this can entail, with many farms in very inaccessible places and rarely seeing visitors; but it can also be the result of family circumstances, with many bachelors/spinsters/widows/widowers living entirely alone on their farms.

Health Poor health is another commonly encountered feature. This may be both a reason for farming, as a small farm is often more easily managed than a job in the non-farming sector; or for abandoning farming, either by letting out the land or relying on other family members. Poor health would appear to be an important feature in the limited aspirations so widely apparent in the small farm sector.

Expansion The intention to expand farming activity appears relatively rare, with few farmers realistically aiming either to build up to full-time farming or to trade up to a larger farm. In part, the limitation arises from the need for outside resources in a sector apparently reluctant to commit itself to financial borrowing on any scale. In a situation where they are maintaining outside employment in a rural area as well as farming, few farmers have the command over resources necessary to invest significantly in improving the farm business.

Hope Many small farmers continue farming in the hope that their younger relatives will want to take over the farm or possibly as an insurance for such youngsters if they should not be able to succeed in another career. Optimism is also apparent in small farmers holding on until their land can be sold for development, not necessarily for the occupier's benefit but for that of their heirs.

Farming methods Many of the features outlined above ensure that the methods of farming adopted are often motivated by non-agricultural considerations. Many households have adopted low intensity farming systems to cater for age limitations or the extent of non-farming activity, with the result that the small farm sector is to some extent a repository of traditional attitudes and techniques contrasting with the increasing intensity of fully commercial farm sector in Wales.

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS  
BY CENTRES**



Table B51

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - WYE

	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	24	5	10	24	71
	Average Per Holding				
Utilised Agricultural Area	8.37	5.02	3.80	9.75	8.23
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	154	0	11,610	0	1,916
By-Products&Forage	321	961	1	280	307
Livestock	3,045	13,727	40	0	2,109
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,214	807	278	821	884
TOTAL OUTPUT	4,734	15,495	11,929	1,101	5,216
Less:					
Livestock Variable Costs	1,262	7,311	1,051	93	1,204
Crop Variable Costs	220	134	3,780	36	671
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	3,252	8,050	7,098	972	3,341
Less:					
Wages	1,082	4,714	3,038	170	1,241
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	570	2,035	1,248	287	693
General Farm Costs	603	1,265	1,772	276	706
Rent & Rental Value	653	781	617	740	695
NET INCOME	344	-745	423	-501	6
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	874	-574	977	61	514
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	11,979	3,452	21,847	13,783	13,058
Interest Payments	3,922	83	1,537	1,714	2,397
	Average Per Hectare				
TOTAL OUTPUT	566	3,087	3,139	113	634
GROSS MARGIN	389	1,604	1,868	100	406
NET INCOME	41	-148	112	-51	1
	Hours Per Holding				
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,982	1,664	2,773	559	1,492
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,110	1,268	642	1,880	1,444

Table B52

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - READING

	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	92	7	7	20	47	176
	Average Per Holding					
Utilised Agricultural Area	10.19	7.09	13.14	6.70	8.37	9.36
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	70	86	3,103	5,692	0	810
By-Products&Forage	228	547	1,194	4	62	225
Livestock	4,183	6,131	1,353	459	21	2,554
Miscellaneous Revenue	2,434	3,268	84	815	3,019	2,363
TOTAL OUTPUT	6,915	10,032	5,734	6,970	3,102	5,952
Less:						
Livestock Variable Costs	2,194	4,677	476	587	460	1,547
Crop Variable Costs	198	65	1,008	1,937	50	381
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	4,523	5,290	4,250	4,446	2,592	4,024
Less:						
Wages	1,816	2,229	352	1,280	637	1,400
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,450	1,943	1,284	923	378	1,108
General Farm Costs	1,040	2,512	1,152	941	578	965
Rent & Rental Value	1,560	775	1,298	864	1,302	1,367
NET INCOME	-1,343	-2,169	164	438	-303	-816
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	-528	-2,088	1,127	1,025	885	53
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	25,610	16,039	6,995	14,447	22,250	21,940
Interest Payments	2,540	3,407	443	1,019	2,323	2,233
	Average Per Hectare					
TOTAL OUTPUT	678	1,416	436	1,040	370	636
GROSS MARGIN	444	747	323	664	310	430
NET INCOME	-132	-306	12	65	-36	-87
	Hours Per Holding					
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,358	2,041	1,398	2,038	494	1,246
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,657	1,118	1,171	1,361	1,412	1,504

Table B53

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - EXETER

	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	7	28	63	11	9	11	45	174
	Average Per Holding							
Utilised Agricultural Area	10.10	12.33	12.34	11.51	23.77	4.72	10.10	11.73
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	229	53	68	136	3,988	4,783	0	559
By-Products&Forage	131	19	184	43	266	0	30	99
Livestock	4,528	3,527	4,470	12,430	2,768	848	-40	3,342
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,726	678	1,387	1,345	3,286	1,424	1,769	1,483
TOTAL OUTPUT	6,614	4,277	6,109	13,954	10,308	7,055	1,759	5,483
Less:								
Livestock Variable Costs	1,149	724	1,190	6,431	1,237	439	84	1,114
Crop Variable Costs	286	224	313	274	1,075	1,071	72	320
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	5,179	3,329	4,606	7,249	7,996	5,545	1,603	4,049
Less:								
Wages	1,409	180	674	945	996	1,421	124	563
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	516	735	1,172	751	1,848	1,097	188	824
General Farm Costs	901	553	875	1,714	1,990	902	235	771
Rent & Rental Value	1,459	1,209	1,474	1,485	2,756	955	1,131	1,376
NET INCOME	894	652	411	2,354	406	1,170	-75	515
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	2,241	1,728	1,587	3,470	2,935	2,083	934	1,687
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	5,230	13,054	9,534	8,743	6,830	3,720	10,077	9,477
Interest Payments	0	695	729	3,863	483	285	584	839
	Average Per Hectare							
TOTAL OUTPUT	655	347	495	1,212	434	1,495	174	468
GROSS MARGIN	513	270	373	630	336	1,175	159	345
NET INCOME	89	53	33	205	17	248	-7	44
	Hours Per Holding							
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	873	1,089	1,526	1,945	1,872	2,465	478	1,262
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	291	1,032	1,284	1,129	944	410	1,230	1,107

Table B54

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - CAMBRIDGE

	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	21	9	32	24	24	110
	Average Per Holding					
Utilised Agricultural Area	8.98	3.31	7.58	3.21	4.25	5.82
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	409	28	3,938	6,894	0	2,730
By-Products&Forage	93	41	25	42	77	54
Livestock	5,859	7,086	174	87	0	1,768
Miscellaneous Revenue	583	1,894	137	404	467	496
TOTAL OUTPUT	6,944	9,049	4,274	7,427	544	5,048
Less:						
Livestock Variable Costs	1,361	2,988	135	49	67	569
Crop Variable Costs	539	99	1,769	2,152	19	1,099
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	5,044	5,962	2,370	5,226	458	3,380
Less:						
Wages	1,212	524	609	1,241	21	727
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	657	975	783	840	225	666
General Farm Costs	349	906	542	1,113	78	558
Rent & Rental Value	1,124	462	1,038	646	586	822
NET INCOME	1,702	3,095	-602	1,386	-452	607
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	1,883	3,201	-140	1,608	21	936
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	12,827	16,117	7,705	5,790	8,968	9,415
Interest Payments	2,727	2,610	380	285	1,144	1,142
	Average Per Hectare					
TOTAL OUTPUT	774	2,733	564	2,315	128	868
GROSS MARGIN	562	1,801	313	1,629	108	581
NET INCOME	190	935	-79	432	-106	104
	Hours Per Holding					
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,177	1,498	994	2,126	438	1,196
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,226	1,114	1,549	693	1,173	1,183

Table B55

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - NOTTINGHAM

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	6	35	6	12	22	85
	Average Per Holding					
Utilised Agricultural Area	21.43	12.57	13.50	2.22	10.48	10.86
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	153	137	4,885	10,763	0	1,931
By-Products&Forage	365	369	758	73	348	338
Livestock	4,756	3,877	318	0	0	2,010
Miscellaneous Revenue	278	679	335	573	1,669	854
TOTAL OUTPUT	5,552	5,062	6,296	11,409	2,017	5,133
Less:						
Livestock Variable Costs	2,037	1,705	165	0	14	887
Crop Variable Costs	527	255	1,904	5,331	117	1,061
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	2,988	3,102	4,227	6,078	1,886	3,185
Less:						
Wages	446	708	66	1,863	582	741
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,388	990	921	1,869	499	969
General Farm Costs	2,266	924	589	700	405	798
Rent & Rental Value	1,864	1,375	1,751	588	1,180	1,242
NET INCOME	-2,976	-895	900	1,058	-780	-565
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	-1,797	118	1,689	1,439	307	354
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	3,535	10,022	8,595	6,645	11,905	9,441
Interest Payments	1,077	231	144	681	243	354
	Average Per Hectare					
TOTAL OUTPUT	259	403	466	5,147	192	473
GROSS MARGIN	139	247	313	2,741	180	293
NET INCOME	-139	-71	67	478	-74	-52
	Hours Per Holding					
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	2,657	1,058	1,014	2,407	318	1,176
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	864	1,481	2,190	1,016	651	1,196

Table B56

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - MANCHESTER

	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	9	21	63	14	7	12	37	163
	Average Per Holding							
Utilised Agricultural Area	14.74	15.73	10.95	4.26	18.51	1.64	6.95	9.93
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	81	0	219	113	5,166	9,039	0	986
By-Products&Forage	83	- 2	21	161	919	4	55	79
Livestock	21,208	6,241	6,472	19,070	1,541	0	0	6,180
Miscellaneous Revenue	61	151	696	2,113	1,042	72	1,369	834
TOTAL OUTPUT	21,433	6,390	7,408	21,457	8,668	9,115	1,424	8,079
Less:								
Livestock Variable Costs	8,369	1,696	2,348	13,050	624	0	8	2,737
Crop Variable Costs	825	407	343	83	1,898	3,910	30	614
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	12,239	4,287	4,717	8,324	6,146	5,205	1,386	4,728
Less:								
Wages	289	405	299	2,497	225	814	38	476
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,341	1,012	886	1,635	1,030	1,455	224	890
General Farm Costs	1,981	851	746	1,619	766	1,026	178	795
Rent & Rental Value	1,748	1,141	1,407	740	2,231	534	652	1,134
NET INCOME	6,880	878	1,379	1,833	1,894	1,376	294	1,433
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	7,954	1,767	2,322	1,985	2,326	1,516	766	2,120
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	4,488	11,709	11,686	8,767	4,663	8,028	13,762	10,756
Interest Payments	569	136	720	1,340	1,674	455	343	624
	Average Per Hectare							
TOTAL OUTPUT	1,454	406	677	5,032	468	5,552	205	813
GROSS MARGIN	830	273	431	1,952	332	3,171	199	476
NET INCOME	467	56	126	430	102	839	42	144
	Hours Per Holding							
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,979	1,372	1,356	1,649	1,633	1,790	316	1,225
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	689	1,371	1,118	1,109	1,063	1,080	1,295	1,161

Table B57

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - ASKHAM BRYAN

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	23	33	7	7	7	21	99
	Average Per Holding						
Utilised Agricultural Area	12.93	10.24	3.76	8.31	1.61	7.05	9.23
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	0	227	0	3,961	10,722	0	1,113
By-Products&Forage	86	76	89	49	0	93	120
Livestock	4,736	4,639	10,520	587	20	0	3,460
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,756	642	29	177	363	3,239	1,470
TOTAL OUTPUT	6,578	5,584	10,638	4,774	11,105	3,332	6,163
Less:							
Livestock Variable Costs	1,718	1,762	6,533	303	21	161	1,511
Crop Variable Costs	283	371	18	1,780	3,668	65	602
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	4,577	3,451	4,087	2,691	7,416	3,106	4,050
Less:							
Wages	862	586	579	193	3,834	1,057	948
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,323	892	656	1,626	1,516	397	980
General Farm Costs	1,100	1,112	996	749	3,537	587	1,140
Land & Property	1,028	1,204	341	1,069	309	1,034	1,028
NET INCOME	264	-343	1,515	-946	-1,780	31	-46
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	825	474	1,596	-92	-1,493	798	637
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	9,517	21,378	11,935	7,380	15,963	15,099	14,975
Interest Payments	636	1,692	1,046	861	913	491	1,013
	Average Per Hectare						
TOTAL OUTPUT	509	545	2,831	574	6,879	472	668
GROSS MARGIN	354	337	1,088	324	4,593	440	439
NET INCOME	20	-34	403	-114	-1,103	4	-5
	Hours Per Holding						
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,587	1,372	1,309	599	2,015	533	1,230
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,439	1,797	1,707	1,636	1,024	1,359	1,531

Table B58

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - NEWCASTLE

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	31	32	21	92
	Average Per Holding			
Utilised Agricultural Area	10.78	11.18	10.50	10.31
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£
Crops	0	22	0	201
By-Products&Forage	70	331	0	156
Livestock	4,956	3,531	10	3,038
Miscellaneous Revenue	336	402	2,521	897
TOTAL OUTPUT	5,362	4,286	2,531	4,292
Less:				
Livestock Variable Costs	1,183	1,271	36	909
Crop Variable Costs	181	321	32	227
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	3,998	2,694	2,463	3,156
Less:				
Wages	293	328	133	260
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,042	867	696	877
General Farm Costs	524	584	222	485
Rent & Rental Value	686	788	970	753
NET INCOME	1,453	127	442	781
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	1,778	633	1,380	1,306
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	10,224	10,501	9,086	9,976
Interest Payments	746	916	1,895	1,087
	Average Per Hectare			
TOTAL OUTPUT	498	383	241	416
GROSS MARGIN	371	241	234	306
NET INCOME	135	11	42	76
	Hours Per Holding			
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,144	1,117	365	962
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,871	1,336	1,041	1,448



Table B59

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY CENTRES 1988 - ABERYSTWYTH

	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	10	162	36	37	247
	Average Per Holding				
Utilised Agricultural Area	13.50	11.97	9.83	9.61	11.28
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	195	4	43	0	17
By-Products&Forage	371	79	82	149	102
Livestock	6,460	3,192	2,880	-25	2,786
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,701	219	376	1,465	487
TOTAL OUTPUT	8,727	3,494	3,381	1,589	3,392
Less:					
Livestock Variable Costs	1,385	787	711	322	732
Crop Variable Costs	241	210	172	38	178
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	7,101	2,497	2,498	1,229	2,482
Less:					
Wages	15	443	416	83	365
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	870	512	635	103	481
General Farm Costs	923	656	748	258	620
Rent & Rental Value	1,697	1,178	1,497	1,174	1,240
NET INCOME	3,596	-292	-798	-389	-224
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	5,233	749	359	632	852
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	8,454	7,433	8,581	8,774	7,831
Interest Payments	306	359	135	5	274
	Average Per Hectare				
TOTAL OUTPUT	646	292	344	165	301
GROSS MARGIN	526	209	254	128	220
NET INCOME	266	-24	-81	-40	-20
	Hours Per Holding				
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	2,012	1,174	1,293	391	1,103
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	545	1,034	986	598	945

## SECTION C: THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY REGIONS

The threefold presentation of results in this report - by farming type, by Provincial Centre, and (here) by EC Regions - follows from the fact that no single classification of the results would be likely to satisfy all interests and all needs. In farming terms, Section A clearly has most meaning, although in most cases it embraces under any one farming type holdings from widely differing parts of the country, with different geographies, different industrial hinterlands and different social milieux. Section B regionalised the data around their 'collecting' centres, with a geographical cluster accompanied by more or less (in most cases less) farming homogeneity. As noted in the Introduction to that Section, Provincial boundaries, like most local County boundaries, are usually artificial in any farming sense.

What then of the regional division of the United Kingdom adopted for European Community purposes? These are shown in Figure 2. They represent combinations of Economic Planning Regions and have their basis, therefore, in wider considerations than farming ones. Wales coincides with the agricultural economic Province, based on Aberystwyth, adopted in Section B, so what has been written there about the survey in that region holds good here. England has been much more arbitrarily subdivided into three. Of these regions it is true that the East represents the drier, more arable area, and generally speaking has the larger farm units, whilst the West and North Regions, embracing most of the Less Favoured Areas, are the wetter, hillier and grassier parts of the country. But, in farming terms, who would separate the chalk in Wiltshire from the Berkshire Downs or the Cotswolds in Gloucestershire from the similar formations in Oxfordshire and Northampton; and what place has Derbyshire in the same region as Norfolk and Suffolk, or Cheshire to be with Northumberland? Except, therefore, in very broad farming terms, this division of England, at least, has limited significance. But these regions do have a wider economic and political significance to Government and to the European Commission. For this reason, as well as for the convenience of other similarly interested users, some of the key data from this study have been presented here (without further commentary) for the regions just described. As in Section B, data is shown where the sample size was not less than five.

FIGURE 2: REGIONAL BOUNDARIES ADOPTED IN TABLES



Table C1

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY REGIONS 1988 - ENGLAND EAST

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	6	112	23	44	51	88	328
	Average Per Holding						
Utilised Agricultural Area	21.43	10.75	5.15	9.23	3.23	8.36	8.50
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	153	164	11	4,007	8,628	0	1,939
By-Products&Forage	365	236	402	324	39	196	218
Livestock	4,756	4,211	7,450	297	94	9	2,110
Miscellaneous Revenue	278	1,953	1,543	300	482	1,479	1,293
TOTAL OUTPUT	5,552	6,564	9,406	4,928	9,243	1,684	5,560
Less:							
Livestock Variable Costs	2,037	2,064	4,067	220	415	155	1,167
Crop Variable Costs	527	258	92	1,675	3,323	51	859
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	2,988	4,242	5,247	3,033	5,505	1,478	3,534
Less:							
Wages	446	1,837	1,830	590	1,640	293	1,177
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,388	1,270	1,024	900	1,151	352	927
General Farm Costs	2,266	846	1,013	596	1,224	310	762
Rent & Rental Value	1,864	1,534	684	1,153	639	1,093	1,158
NET INCOME	-2,976	-1,245	696	-206	851	-570	-490
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	-1,797	-360	901	349	1,161	389	230
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	3,535	20,047	11,361	7,928	9,602	15,901	14,510
Interest Payments	1,077	2,646	2,274	666	588	1,809	1,750
	Average Per Hectare						
TOTAL OUTPUT	259	611	1,826	534	2,862	201	654
GROSS MARGIN	139	395	1,018	329	1,705	177	416
NET INCOME	-139	-116	135	-22	263	-68	-58
	Hours Per Holding						
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	2,657	1,426	1,732	1,024	2,343	493	1,302
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	864	1,448	1,183	1,730	884	1,218	1,310

Table C2

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY REGIONS 1988 - ENGLAND WEST

	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	17	34	158	18	19	28	83	357
	Average Per Holding							
Utilised Agricultural Area	13.49	12.95	11.54	8.56	20.24	5.86	9.39	11.13
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	137	43	123	117	4,196	5,268	0	708
By-Products&Forage	304	20	199	71	456	0	42	142
Livestock	12,545	3,905	4,958	13,865	2,255	578	-19	4,023
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,269	651	1,144	1,483	1,920	955	2,094	1,368
TOTAL OUTPUT	14,255	4,619	6,424	15,536	8,827	6,801	2,117	6,241
Less:								
Livestock Variable Costs	4,639	884	1,563	8,106	949	253	192	1,521
Crop Variable Costs	564	237	309	168	1,303	1,339	61	383
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	9,052	3,498	4,552	7,262	6,575	5,209	1,864	4,337
Less:								
Wages	1,063	267	544	1,344	545	1,523	327	609
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,060	764	1,025	1,302	1,503	1,003	246	859
General Farm Costs	1,535	548	890	2,180	1,485	744	369	852
Rent & Rental Value	1,684	1,181	1,314	1,207	2,256	874	1,012	1,259
NET INCOME	3,710	738	779	1,229	786	1,065	-90	758
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	4,929	1,792	1,692	1,973	2,324	1,848	791	1,706
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	4,527	11,666	12,443	11,579	6,166	10,121	12,997	11,496
Interest Payments	356	619	962	2,794	628	792	695	910
	Average Per Hectare							
TOTAL OUTPUT	1,056	357	557	1,816	436	1,160	225	560
GROSS MARGIN	671	270	395	849	325	888	199	390
NET INCOME	275	57	68	144	39	182	-10	68
	Hours Per Holding							
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,549	1,107	1,401	1,638	1,800	2,096	407	1,237
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	485	951	1,302	1,146	922	853	1,317	1,170

Table C4

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY REGIONS 1988 - WALES

	Dairying	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	10	162	36	37	247
		Average Per Holding			
Utilised Agricultural Area	13.50	11.97	9.83	9.61	11.28
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	195	4	43	0	17
By-Products&Forage	371	79	82	149	102
Livestock	6,460	3,192	2,880	-25	2,786
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,701	219	376	1,465	487
TOTAL OUTPUT	8,727	3,494	3,381	1,589	3,392
Less:					
Livestock Variable Costs	1,385	787	711	322	732
Crop Variable Costs	241	210	172	38	178
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	7,101	2,497	2,498	1,229	2,482
Less:					
Wages	15	443	416	83	365
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	870	512	635	103	481
General Farm Costs	923	656	748	258	620
Rent & Rental Value	1,697	1,178	1,497	1,174	1,240
NET INCOME	3,596	-292	-798	-389	-224
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	5,233	749	359	632	852
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	8,454	7,433	8,581	8,774	7,831
Interest Payments	306	359	135	5	274
		Average Per Hectare			
TOTAL OUTPUT	646	292	344	165	301
GROSS MARGIN	526	209	254	128	220
NET INCOME	266	-24	-81	-40	-20
		Hours Per Holding			
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	2,012	1,174	1,293	391	1,103
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	545	1,034	986	598	945

Table C3

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS BY REGIONS 1988 - ENGLAND NORTH

	LFA Livestock	Lowland Livestock	Pigs and Poultry	Cropping	Horticulture	Other	All Types
Number of Holdings	70	93	20	10	20	70	285
	Average Per Holding						
Utilised Agricultural Area	12.53	9.71	3.80	9.94	1.76	7.51	8.96
GROSS OUTPUT	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Crops	0	128	79	3,882	9,458	0	847
By-Products&Forage	56	125	157	314	3	55	106
Livestock	5,140	4,486	12,220	643	241	3	3,672
Miscellaneous Revenue	747	589	1,704	217	178	2,239	1,107
TOTAL OUTPUT	5,943	5,328	14,160	5,056	9,880	2,297	5,732
Less:							
Livestock Variable Costs	1,458	1,763	8,102	292	88	63	1,555
Crop Variable Costs	270	321	66	1,643	3,627	45	503
TOTAL GROSS MARGIN	4,215	3,244	5,992	3,121	6,165	2,189	3,674
Less:							
Wages	477	460	1,355	329	1,703	378	587
Machinery(incl.depreciation)	1,125	841	1,167	1,339	1,506	418	897
General Farm Costs	804	773	1,080	606	1,875	297	759
Rent & Rental Value	905	1,052	435	1,224	431	799	884
NET INCOME	904	118	1,955	-377	650	297	547
OCCUPIERS INCOME - FARMING	1,429	767	2,078	436	836	950	1,111
OCCUPIERS INCOME - NON FARM	10,830	15,057	10,035	7,524	10,929	13,090	12,518
Interest Payments	578	1,208	1,240	1,163	776	975	952
	Average Per Hectare						
TOTAL OUTPUT	474	549	3,726	509	5,629	306	640
GROSS MARGIN	336	334	1,577	314	3,512	292	410
NET INCOME	72	12	514	-38	370	40	61
	Hours Per Holding						
OWNLABOUR - ONFARM	1,340	1,244	1,513	670	1,844	415	1,114
OWNLABOUR - OFFFARM	1,701	1,529	1,343	1,597	1,158	1,302	1,468

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED<sup>1</sup>

Farming Types Seven farm types have been used, namely Dairying, LFA Livestock, Lowland Livestock, Cropping, Pigs and Poultry, Horticulture and Other. Holdings have been assigned to a particular type on the basis of their dominant enterprise gross margin. 'LFA /Livestock' farms are livestock farms situated within one of the 'less favoured areas' as prescribed in the EEC regulations. Farms classed as 'Other' comprise farms with no identifiable enterprise other than grassland let for keep, used by the occupier solely for recreational purposes or from which hay or silage has been sold.

Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) is the sum of all crop and grass areas on the holding.

Gross Output:

- for crops is based on the crop year and includes feed used on the farm,
- for by-products and forage, includes hay and forage sales and keep sold,
- for livestock includes sales less purchases made during the financial year adjusted for valuation changes, livestock subsidies and home consumption,
- miscellaneous revenue is restricted to activities directly connected with farming, mainly hire work and the resale of agricultural products.

Costs: All costs are net of private use and in these tables the rental value of the farmhouse has been excluded from 'Miscellaneous Revenue' and has also been deducted from 'Total Rental Value' and/or from Rent.

Variable Costs are deducted from Total Output to give Total Gross Margin and have been subdivided into Livestock Variable Costs (mainly feed and vet and medicines) and Crop Variable Costs (mainly seeds, fertilizers and sprays).

Fixed Costs are deducted from Total Gross Margin to give Net Income and have been subdivided into Wages (including unpaid labour other than that of farmer and spouse), Machinery Costs (including depreciation and contract work), General Farm Costs such as insurance, electricity, water, occupier's repairs, rates, professional fees and office expenses, and Rent and/or rental value.

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<sup>1</sup> Whilst these definitions apply in general to the use of terms throughout the report, some minor differences may exist in the use of the terms by local authors.



Occupier's Income: In order to compare earnings from farming with income from other sources Net Income has been adjusted by adding back the rental value and deducting depreciation on improvements to give what is called "Occupier's Income from Farming". This can be compared directly with "Occupier's Income from Non-Farm Sources", which is the sum of any paid employment, profit from businesses other than farming and unearned income (interest on investments, pensions and supplementary benefit).

Net Farm Income This measure appears only in the summary Table I.2 shown in the Introduction where the data have been drawn from brief reports of this survey in Farm Incomes in the United Kingdom. These reports enable the income figures on Very Small Farms to be compared with those from farming generally. The measure assumes that all farms are tenanted and that all tenant type assets are owned by the farmer. It thus represents the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and investment in tenant's capital.

Interest Payments on borrowed capital are listed but have not been deducted, as is more usual, from Net Income when calculating Occupier's Income as it was not possible to determine in all cases the purpose of the loan and hence whether or not the interest was attributable to the farm business.

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Northern (NEWCASTLE)	Professor D. R. Harvey, BSc MA(Econ) PhD Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Newcastle upon Tyne Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU. Telephone: 0912 328511
North Eastern (ASKHAM BRYAN COLLEGE)	M. D. Pollard, NDA SDDH Principal, Askham Bryan College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Askham Bryan, York, YO2 3PR. Telephone: 0904 702121
North Western (MANCHESTER)	Professor D. R. Colman, BSc MS PhD Department of Agricultural Economics, The University, Manchester, M13 9PL. Telephone: 061 273 7121
East Midland (NOTTINGHAM)	Dr M. F. Seabrook, BSc PhD Department of Agriculture and Horticulture, University of Nottingham, School of Agriculture, Sutton Bonington, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 5RD. Telephone: 0602 506101
Eastern (CAMBRIDGE)	I. M. Sturgess, MA MS Agricultural Economics Unit, Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge, Silver Street, Cambridge, CB3 9EL. Telephone: 0223 355262
South Eastern (WYE)	Dr J. P. G. Webster, BSc PhD FBIM FRSA Farm Business Unit, School of Rural Economics and Related Studies, Wye College (University of London), Nr. Ashford, Kent, TN25 5AH. Telephone: 0233 812401
Southern (READING)	Professor A. K. Giles, BSc(Econ) FBIM P O Box 237, Department of Agricultural Economics and Management, University of Reading, Building No. 4, Earley Gate, Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 2AR. Telephone: 0734 875123

South Western  
(EXETER)

Professor J. P. McInerney, BSc Phd Dip Ag Econ NDA  
University of Exeter,  
Lafrowda House, St. German's Road,  
Exeter, EX4 6TL.  
Telephone: 0392 263839

East of Scotland  
(EDINBURGH)

Dr N. Lilwall,  
East of Scotland College of Agriculture,  
Economics Division,  
6 South Oswald Road,  
Edinburgh, EH9 2HH.  
Telephone: 031 668 1921

North of Scotland  
(ABERDEEN)

Dr G. E. Dalton, BSc MSc PhD  
Economics Division,  
School of Agriculture,  
181 King Street,  
Aberdeen, AB9 1UD.  
Telephone: 0224 480291

West of Scotland  
(AUCHINCRAIVE)

M. Buckett, BSc MSc FRAGS CBIOL MIBOL  
West of Scotland Agricultural College,  
Oswald Hall, Auchincruive,  
Ayr, KA6 5HW.  
Telephone: n0292 520331

Wales  
(ABERYSTWYTH)

Professor D. I. Bateman, MA  
School of Agricultural Sciences,  
Department of Agricultural Economics,  
University College of Wales,  
Penglais, Aberystwyth, SY23 3DD.  
Telephone: 0970 3111

Northern Ireland  
(BELFAST)

T. Stainer, BSc  
Department of Agriculture for Northern Ireland,  
Dundonald House,  
Upper Newtownards Road,  
Belfast, BT4 3SB.  
Telephone: 0232 650111

## Erratum

Very Small Farms: A Neglected Component?  
Special Studies in Agricultural Economics Report No. 5  
Department of Agricultural Economics and Management  
University of Reading 1989

1. In Section A (Analysis by type of holding) the central sub-heading in Table 2 for each farm type (eg A.1.2, A.2.2 etc) should read 'Hours per holding' not 'Hours per hectare'.
2. In Annex 2:  
For 'East of Scotland' read 'North of Scotland'

For East of Scotland details see Annex 2 of this report.

