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FROZEN FOOD LOCKER AND FREEZER PROVISIONING FIRMS IN THE UNITED STATES¹

Twenty-Third Annual Count, January 1960

by L. B. Mann
Frozen Food Locker Branch

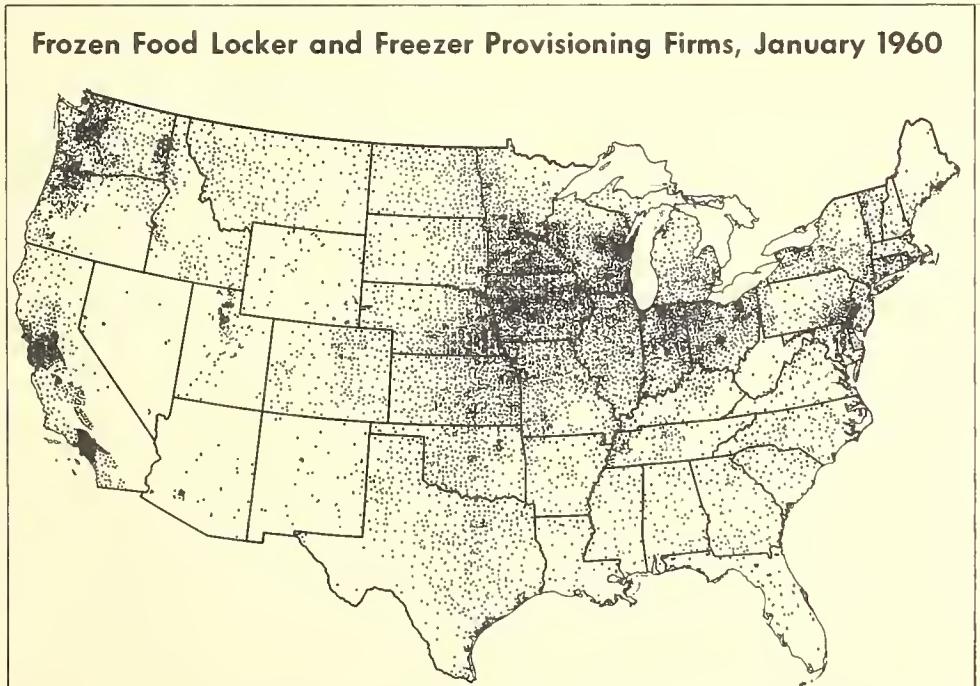
A total of 9,875 frozen food locker and freezer provisioning firms were reported operating in the United States in January 1960.² Of this total, the survey showed that 8,965 firms provided locker rental service in addition to processing and merchandising. It also showed that 910 firms had no lockers but specialized in processing and merchandising frozen food for home freezer users, institutions, and wholesale and retail outlets.

The volume of food processed and the number of patrons served have increased 50 percent during the past 10 years. One out of every seven families is being served by this industry. The value of food sold reached \$550 million in 1959 which was double that of 5 years ago. Total sales of food, freezers, supplies, and services reached \$844 million.

While the number of locker firms showed a decline of 306 as compared with last year, the total number of firms was substantially ahead of a year ago due to the inclusion of freezer provisioning firms for the first time this year. Iowa again led with 689 firms, Wisconsin came second with 616, and Minnesota third with 613 (table 1).

¹Continental United States only.

²This count is based on information supplied by various State departments and other agencies, some of which had no record of the number of "freezer provisioning firms."



Note: Appreciation is expressed to officials of State Departments of Agriculture, State Extension Service, the National Institute of Locker and Freezer Provisioners, and State locker associations for their cooperation in providing information to Farmer Cooperative Service.

Table 1. - *Locker and freezer provisioning firms by States, January 1960*

State	Number	State	Number	State	Number
Alabama	59	Maine	21	Ohio	463
Arizona	44	Maryland	52	Oklahoma	215
Arkansas	90	Massachusetts	¹ 27	Oregon	427
California	612	Michigan	246	Pennsylvania	263
Connecticut	42	Minnesota	613	Rhode Island	5
Colorado	256	Mississippi	58	South Carolina	48
Delaware	21	Missouri	390	South Dakota	179
Florida	45	Montana	168	Tennessee	¹ 89
Georgia	85	Nebraska	577	Texas	¹ 417
Idaho	120	Nevada	22	Utah	115
Illinois	431	New Hampshire	19	Vermont	36
Indiana	384	New Jersey	42	Virginia	56
Iowa	689	New Mexico	53	Washington	565
Kansas	439	New York	236	West Virginia	16
Kentucky	111	North Carolina	98	Wisconsin	616
Louisiana	¹ 39	North Dakota	201	Wyoming	75
United States total: 9,875 plants					

¹1959 count - 1960 unavailable.

The frozen food locker industry is continuing to change the nature and scope of its activities from custom processing and renting lockers to commercial processing and merchandising for home freezer users, institutions, and other outlets.

While the number of locker plants has declined by about 2,600 since the peak year of 1951, over 900 new "Freezer Provisioning" firms have been established during the past 10 years and many locker plants have greatly expanded their own commercial processing and merchandising activities (table 2).

Table 2. - *Number of frozen food locker plants, 1938-1960*

Year	Total plants	Year	Total plants	Year	Total plants
1938	1,269	1946	8,025	1954	10,854
1939	1,861	1947	9,529	1955	10,553
1940	2,870	1948	10,617	1956	10,344
1941	3,623	1949	11,245	1957	9,894
1942	4,323	1950	11,569	1958	9,611
1943	4,559	1951	11,608	1959	9,271
1944	5,282	1952	11,427	1960	¹ 9,875
1945	6,484	1953	10,954		

¹Includes freezer provisioning firms.

Net zero storage space in locker and home freezers totaled approximately 213 million cubic feet in January 1960, a 50 percent increase over 1955. This large zero storage space is capable of holding at one time approximately 6.4 billion pounds of perishable food.

Locker and freezer provisioning firms are becoming increasingly important as processors and suppliers of frozen food in quantity lots to consumers.

