The young farmer who makes his start on the land in 1949 will find that the agricultural situation in South Carolina has changed greatly since his father's time. A sharp decrease in farm population, and the mechanization, electrification, and vastly different crop methods, are some of the factors which have served to change and improve the agricultural outlook in our State.

In 1920, there were 1,072,679 people living on farms in South Carolina; by 1945, this number had decreased to 682,663. Instead of making up two-thirds of our population as in 1920, farm people now make up only one-third of it.

In spite of this sharp decrease, the production of crops, livestock, and livestock products have reached and maintained new high levels, as our farmers take advantage of new methods of scientific farming.

The rapid mechanization of our farms is shown clearly in the increased use of tractors, as compared to the decline in use of horses and mules. In 1920, there were 1,304 tractors in use in South Carolina. By 1945 the number had increased to 12,477, and farm experts say there will be 30,000 to 40,000 tractors in use by 1950. On the other hand, the number of horses and mules declined from 297,741 in 1920 to 191,000 in 1945, and will probably drop below 150,000 by 1950.

Use of electricity on our farms is also increasing rapidly, and today, 69% of South Carolina farms are electrified.
In 1948 the State was second in the nation in number of farm electrical connections, with 38,000.

Along with this new emphasis on modern farming has come a corresponding gain in the production of all major crops. Some of the outstanding increases are as follows:

The yield of lint cotton per acre has been increased from an average of 169 pounds in 1920 to 377 pounds in 1948, and the percentage of cotton 15/16-inch or better increased from 33 per cent in 1928 to 98 per cent in 1948. In 1928, we required 2,051,000 acres to raise 726,000 bales, while in 1948 only 1,130,000 acres were required to produce 890,000 bales.

Tobacco has also shown a vast increase in average yield, rising from 570 pounds per acre in 1928 to 1,250 pounds per acre in 1948. Production of tobacco rose from 84,360,000 pounds in 1928 to 128,750,000 pounds in 1948.

We have raised our corn yield from 12 bushels to the acre in 1928 to 20 bushels last year, and corn production increased from 17,064,000 bushels in 1928 to 28,360,000 bushels in 1948.

South Carolina now produces more oats than any Southern state east of the Mississippi, and our wheat production is now for the first time providing enough wheat for the needs of our farm population. Wheat production rose from 567,000 bushels in 1928 to 3,444,000 bushels in 1948.

Similar increases may be cited in other crops, including peanuts, of which we are now raising about 17,000,000 pounds annually, and soybeans, of which we are raising more than 200,000 bushels a year. The latter will soon be a million-dollar crop because of a new shatterpruf bean produced by Clemson College which can be combined successfully.
For two years now, South Carolina has been the largest shipper of fresh peaches in the United States. Our peach trees have increased from 450,000 in 1928 to 3,000,000 in 1948.

Complete figures are not yet available for livestock production last year, but it is safe to predict that large increases will be shown. The number of pure-bred bulls on our farms has increased from 973 in 1939 to 2,417 in 1947. However, this figure will probably soon be reduced by the widespread use of artificial insemination. There were about 8,000 calves born in the State last year through this program.

Many of our farmers are finding that raising turkeys is a profitable sideline, with very high returns for the labor and investment required. There were 357,000 turkeys produced on our farms in 1947.

The pattern of farming in South Carolina has thus changed materially in the past quarter-century. Our farmers are changing from the traditional cotton-corn system to a more diversified system of crop production, which enables them to do a better job of conserving and improving their soils, to develop new sources of income, and to make more efficient, year-round use of farm labor.

Much has been learned in recent years about soils and their conservation and improvement; proper use of fertilizers; improved varieties of crops; methods of planting and cultivation; control of insects, diseases and parasites; breeding and feeding of farm animals; forest management; grading, packing, processing and marketing farm products; the use of labor-saving machinery and equipment, and other improved practices of farm and home management. As a result, the gross cash income of our farmers has risen from $100,000,000 in 1940 to more than $400,000,000 in 1948.
With the knowledge of scientific farming methods increasing among our farmers every year, prospects are excellent for a continued steady rise in farm income, and for improved standards of living for our farm population.