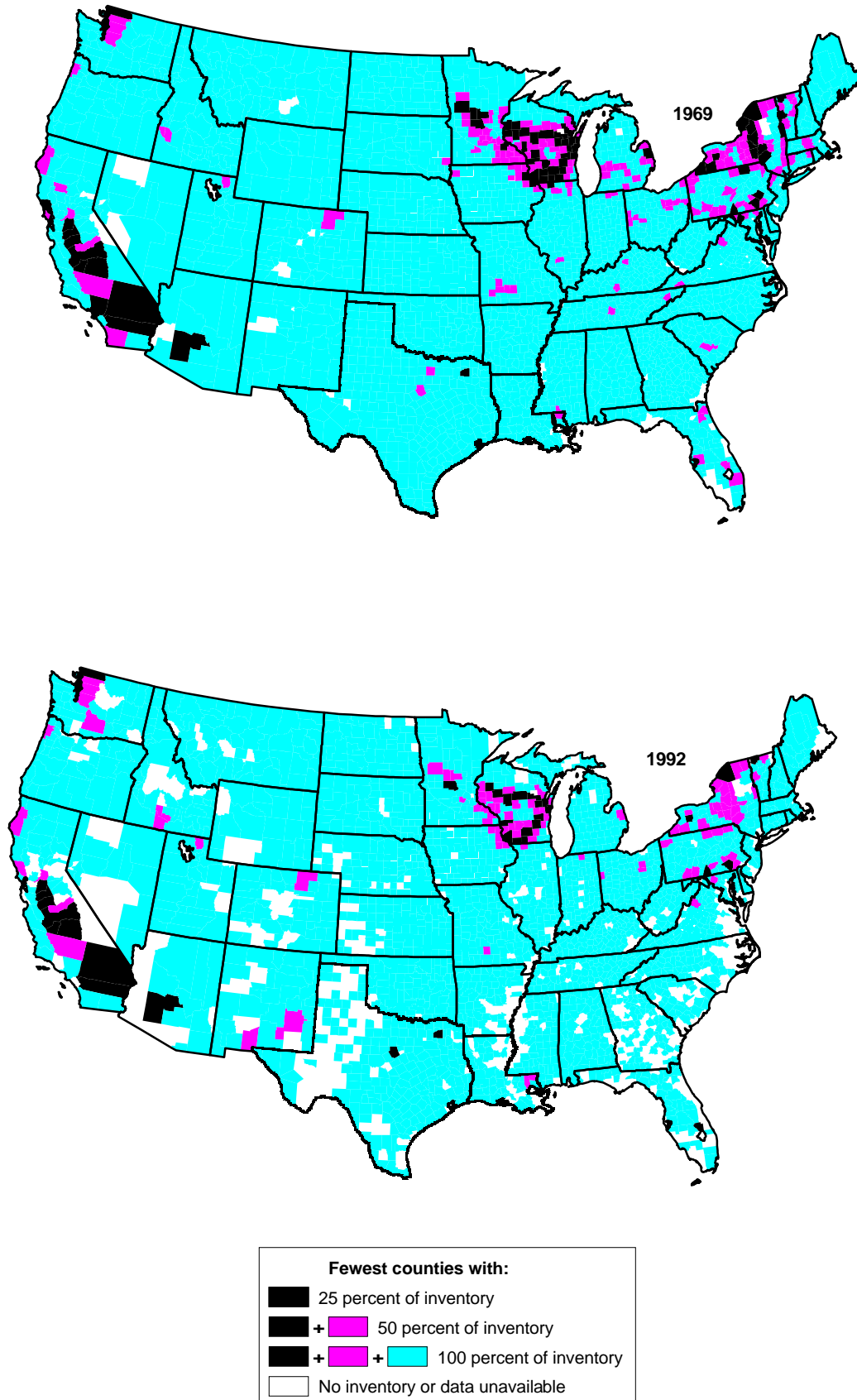


Figure 6
Concentration of the milk cow inventory, 1969 and 1992



Source: Compiled by ERS using census of agriculture data.

The number of farms with fed cattle sales declined by about 100,000 during the 1978-92 period, about 40 percent, while total sales declined only by 14 percent (table 2). Fifty-percent of U.S. fed cattle sales were concentrated in only 44 counties in 1992, down from 73 counties in 1978 (table 3). A fourth of cattle sales came from 13 counties in 1992, covering an area less than a quarter of the size of Kansas. Iowa was the leading producer of fed cattle in 1978, but fell to fifth by 1992 as sales dropped nearly 50 percent. Kansas moved from fourth in 1978 to first in 1992, followed by Nebraska, Texas, and Colorado. Fed cattle sales became much more concentrated in the Central and Southern Plains States during the study period. Fewer counties in the Western States of California, Arizona, and Oregon, and in the Midwestern States of Iowa and Illinois, were among the fewest counties with 25 and 50 percent of sales (fig. 7). Overall, the distribution of cattle feedlots became geographically tighter during the 1978-92 period with regional shifts westward from Iowa and Illinois, and eastward from California and Arizona, into substantial feedlots in the Plains.

Compared with production in other livestock sectors, feeder cattle production changed little between 1969 and 1992. The number of farms with a beef cow inventory declined by about 9 percent, while the total beef cow inventory was 11 percent lower (table 2). The average per farm inventory remained much the same throughout the study period, around 40 head. The national beef cow inventory was spread throughout much of the country, with nearly 500 counties comprising the fewest with 50 percent of the 1992 inventory (table 3). A quarter of the 1992 beef cow inventory was in 171 counties that covered a total land area more than one and a half times the size of Texas. Texas led the Nation in total beef cow inventory during both 1992 and 1969, followed by Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. The geographic distribution of beef cows changed little between 1969 and 1992, with several counties west of the Mississippi River among the fewest counties with 25 and 50 percent of inventory, along with counties in the Southeast (fig. 8). The most notable change among the top-producing counties was that fewer Iowa, Illinois, and northern Missouri counties were included in 1992.

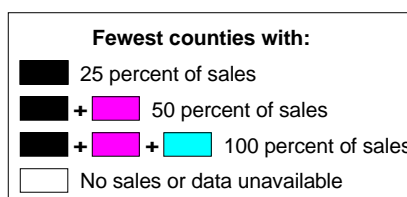
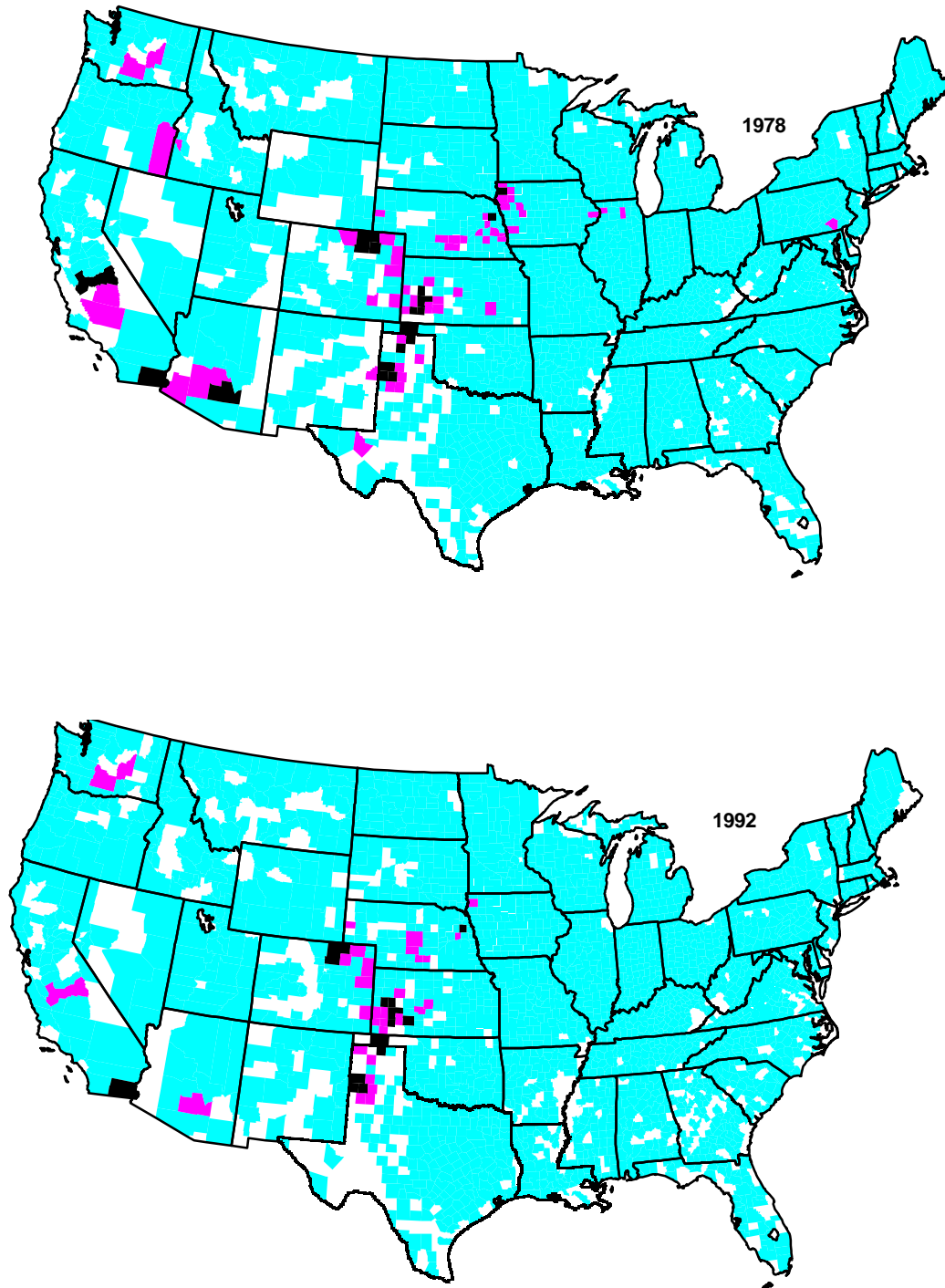
The demand for broilers grew dramatically during 1969-92. Total broiler sales increased by nearly 3 billion head, about 120 percent (table 2). Farms with broiler sales declined by 35 percent, resulting in an

increase in per farm sales from about 71,000 to 238,000 head, nearly 130 percent. Fifty percent of U.S. broiler sales were concentrated in 51 counties in 1992, up from 37 counties in 1969 because of the increased production (table 3). Seventeen counties accounted for 25 percent of 1992 broiler sales, concentrated in an area roughly one-third the size of Arkansas. The geographic distribution of broiler production remained much the same in both 1969 and 1992, with each of the five leading States—Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, and Mississippi—sharing the industry growth (fig. 9). The geographic concentration of broiler production declined somewhat between 1969 and 1992, with the substantial industry growth spread mainly among counties adjacent to the major broiler-producing areas.

The number of farms with an inventory of layer hens and pullets declined by about 85 percent between 1969 and 1992 from more than 450,000 to about 70,000, while the total layer inventory declined 30 percent (table 2). However, average inventory per farm increased from 632 to nearly 3,000 head, more than 370 percent. Only 39 of more than 2,000 egg-producing counties included half of the total layer inventory in 1992 compared with 174 counties in 1969 (table 3). Ten counties had a quarter of the layer inventory in 1992, comprising an area less than 200,000 acres, nearly 70 percent smaller than in 1969. California had the largest layer inventory in both years, significantly higher than any other State. However, the California layer inventory declined more than 20 percent from 1969 to 1992. In contrast, Pennsylvania moved from sixth to second between 1969 and 1992, as the layer hen and pullet inventory nearly doubled. Among the top-producing States, only in Pennsylvania and Ohio did the layer inventory increase during the study period.⁷ Many counties that were among the fewest with 50 percent of total inventory in 1969 were not in the 1992 listing as the layer inventory declined in most regions (fig. 10). The 10 counties with a quarter of the 1992 layer inventory were in 6 different States spread throughout the Nation. Overall, egg production became much more highly concentrated among a few counties during the study period, while production in counties of Pennsylvania and Ohio increased relative to other areas.

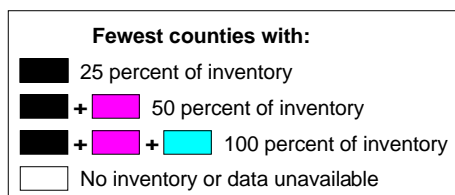
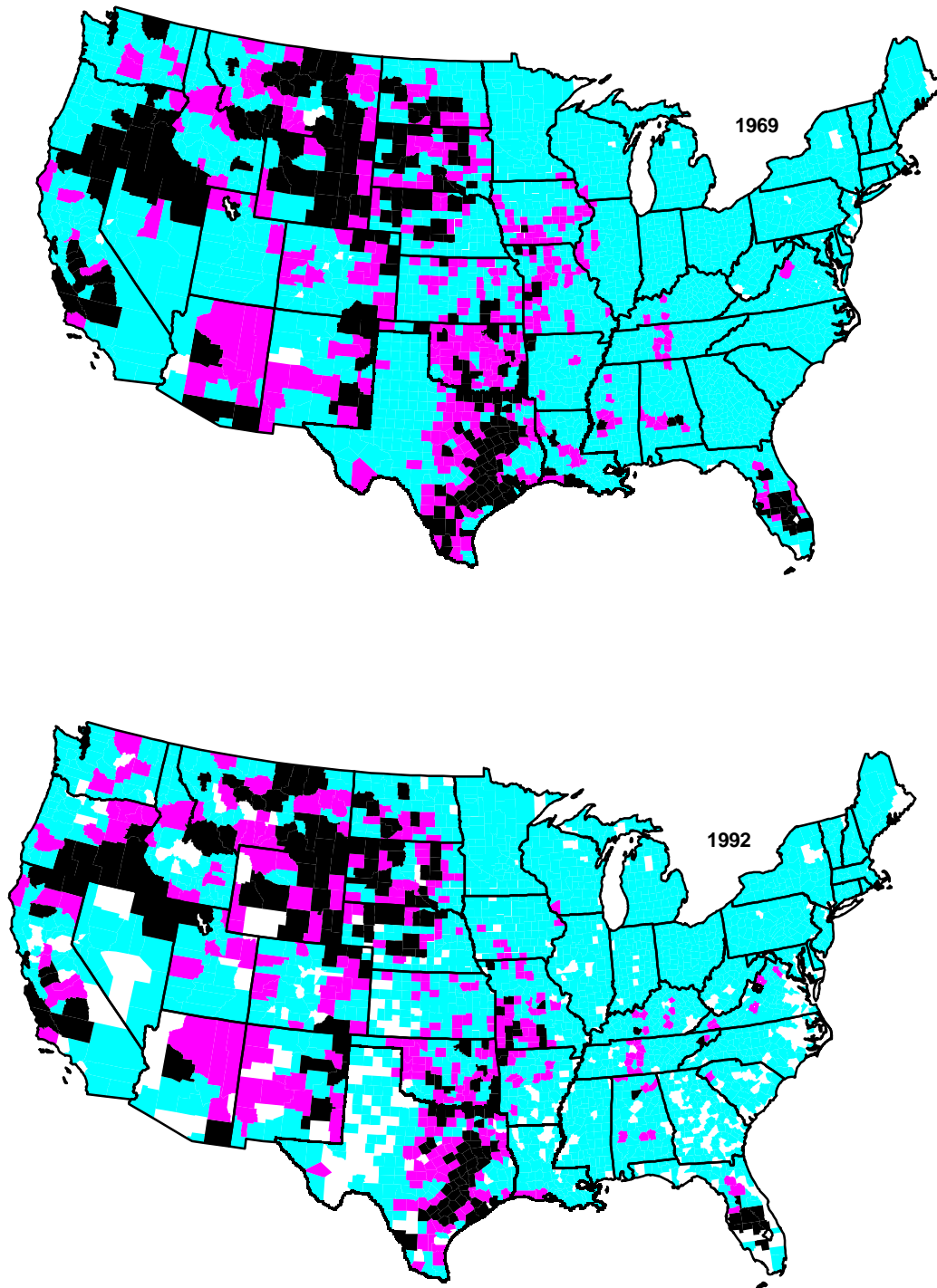
⁷Since 1992 the layer inventory in Ohio and Indiana has increased substantially relative to that in other States (USDA/NASS, 1996).

Figure 7
Concentration of fed cattle sales, 1978 and 1992



Source: Compiled by ERS using census of agriculture data.

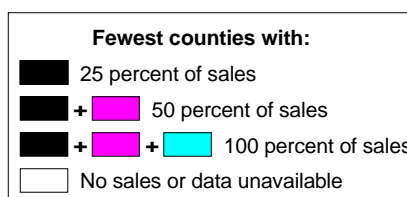
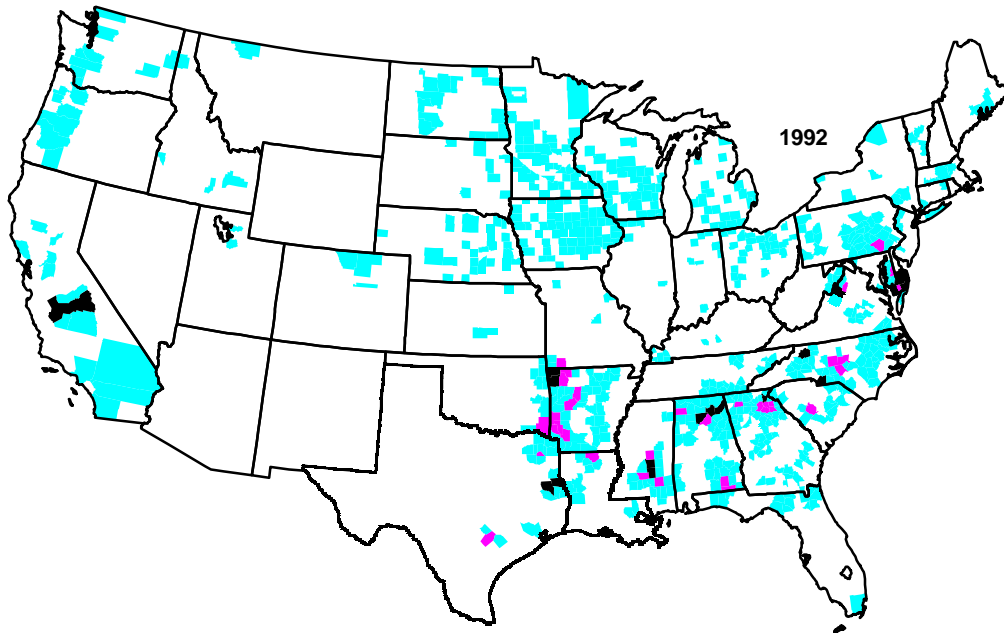
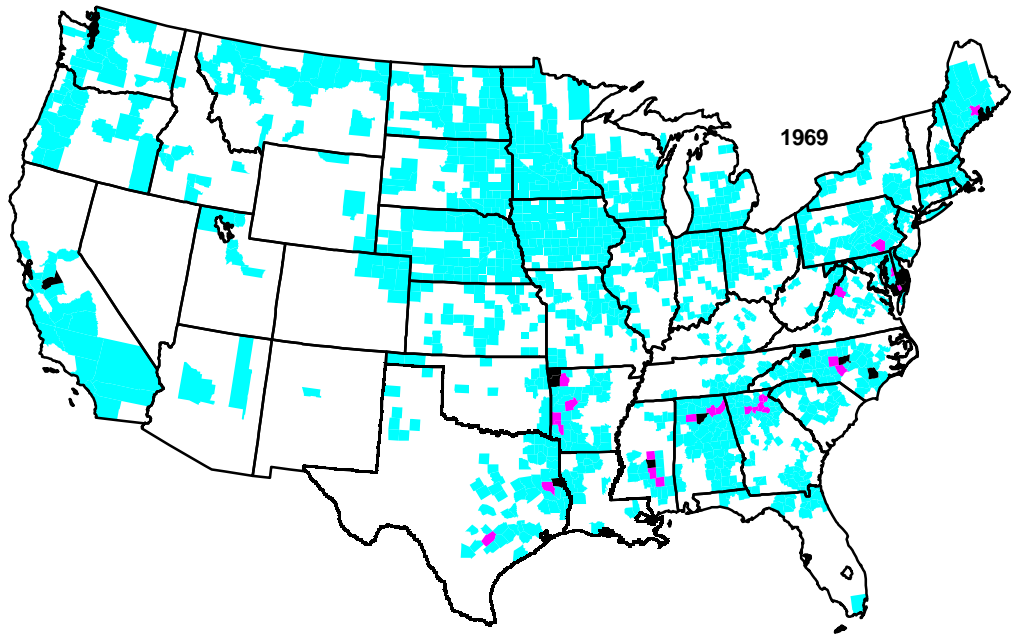
Figure 8
Concentration of the beef cow inventory, 1969 and 1992



Source: Compiled by ERS using census of agriculture data.

Figure 9

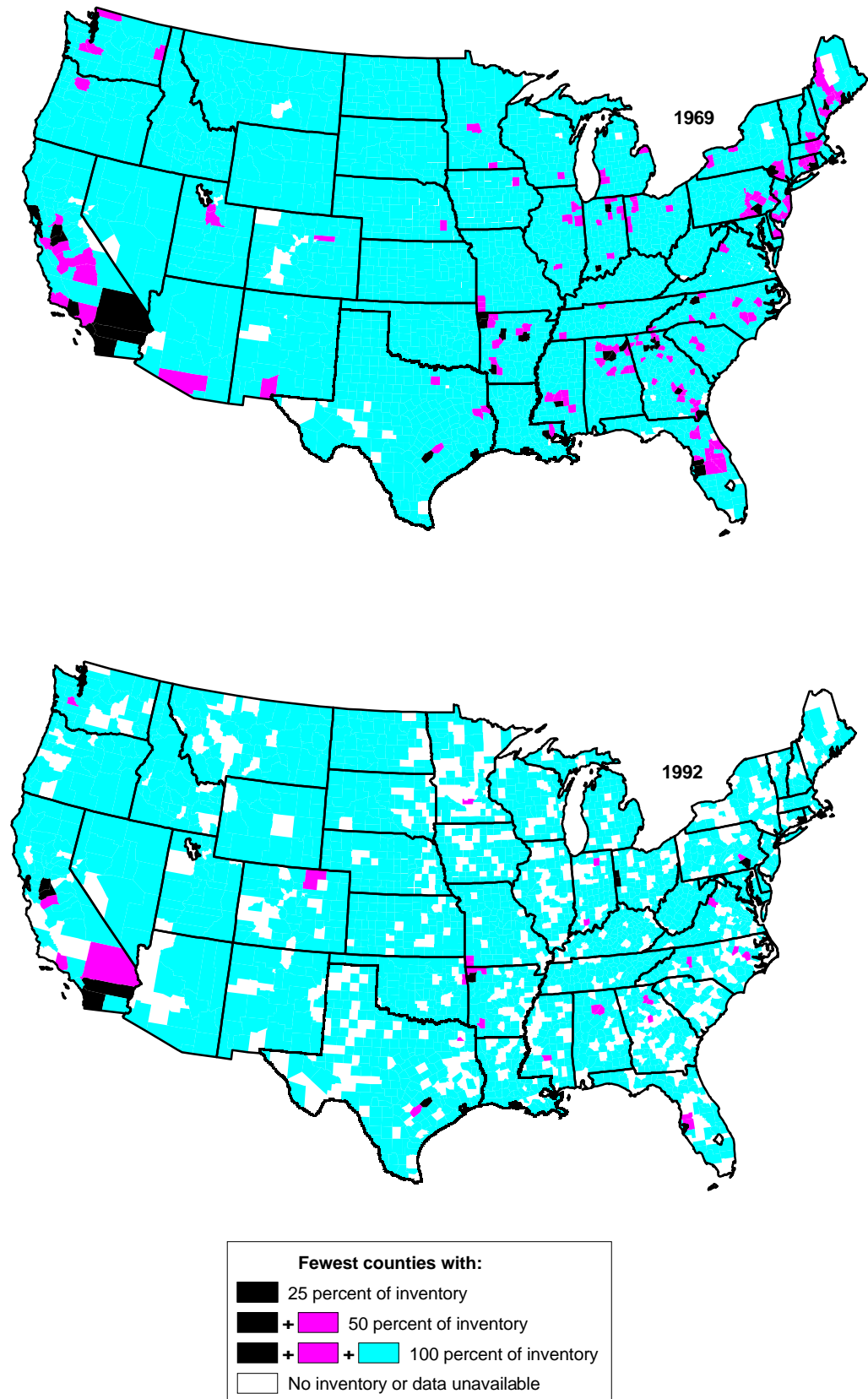
Concentration of broiler sales, 1969 and 1992



Source: Compiled by ERS using census of agriculture data.

Figure 10

Concentration of the layer hen and pullet inventory, 1969 and 1992



Source: Compiled by ERS using census of agriculture data.