

43. Two land ownership inventories completed by the federal Department of Energy Mines and Resources shed considerable light on the relationship among land ownership, poverty, and willingness to relocate. The inventoried areas are (a) in northern Colchester County and northeast Cumberland County, and (b) in the Musquodoboit Valley. Findings of the inventories are presented in Table 7.
44. The land inventories lead to the following conclusions:
- 1) Only a small percentage of the farms studied are in a strong position to compete for present and future agricultural markets. The group of 44 commercial farmers or candidates for expansion in the Cumberland-Colchester area represent only 8.4 per cent of all census farms in the study area. A more limited analysis of farms in other parts of Nova Scotia leads to a similar conclusion.
 - 2) A large number of the viable non-farmers are only slightly above the poverty line and represent potential poverty cases. There has been for some time an erosion of employment opportunities in rural areas, resulting from employment decline in the primary industries, and there is a strong probability that the potential poverty cases will become actual.
 - 3) A total of 125 pensioners in the Colchester-Cumberland area indicate their willingness to sell all or part of their property. Seventy-eight indicate a willingness to sell their farms, while an additional 47 want to sell only part of their land and retain their houses. In addition, a number of other landholders indicate that they would be willing to sell all or part of their holdings. Eleven,