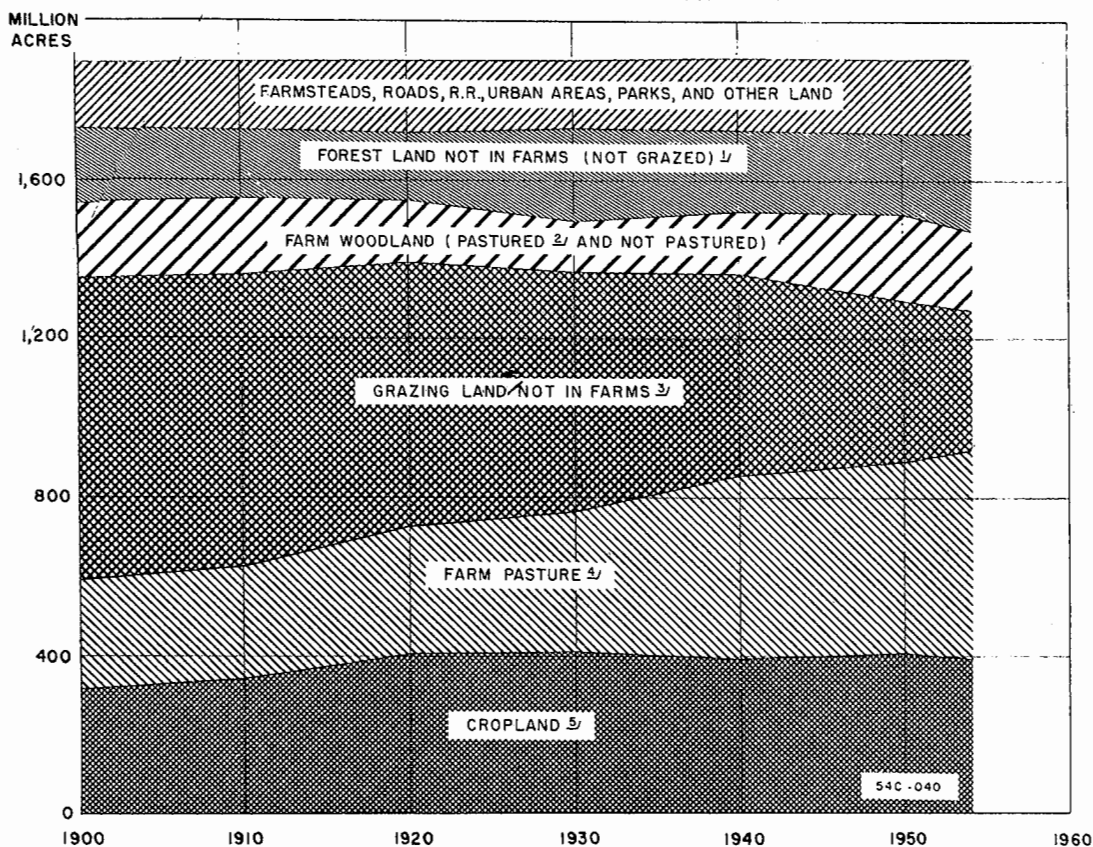


## THE TREND IN LAND UTILIZATION



CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES EXCLUSIVE OF ALASKA.

1 EXCLUDES FORESTED AREAS RESERVED FOR PARKS AND RELATED USES AND ARID WOODLAND, BRUSHLAND, AND FOREST LAND USED FOR GRAZING.

2 121 MILLION ACRES WERE REPORTED PASTURED IN 1954.

3 INCLUDES GRASSLAND, ARID WOODLAND, BRUSHLAND, AND FOREST LAND GRAZED.

4 OPEN PASTURE IN FARMS, INCLUDING CROPLAND USED ONLY FOR PASTURE AND OTHER PLOWABLE PASTURE.

5 INCLUDES SOIL IMPROVEMENT CROPS, SUMMER FALLOW, AND LAND SEEDING TO CROPS FOR HARVEST THE SUCCEEDING YEAR.

CROPLAND ACREAGES ARE FOR THE YEAR PRECEDING THE DATE OF THE CENSUS EXCEPT FOR 1954.

## CHANGES IN LAND USE

## THE TREND IN LAND UTILIZATION

[Continental United States exclusive of Alaska]

Uses of land	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1954
	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres
Cropland <sup>1</sup> .....	319	347	402	413	399	409	394
Farm pasture <sup>2</sup> .....	276	284	328	379	461	485	526
Grazing land not in farms <sup>3</sup> .....	768	739	661	578	504	400	353
Farm woodland (pastured and not pastured).....	191	191	168	150	157	220	197
Forest land not in farms (not grazed) <sup>4</sup> .....	175	162	160	208	203	201	238
Farmsteads, roads, railroads, urban areas, parks, and other land.....	174	180	184	175	181	189	196
Total.....	1,903	1,903	1,903	1,903	1,905	1,904	1,904

<sup>1</sup> Includes soil-improvement crops, summer fallow, and land seeded to crops for harvest the succeeding year. Cropland acreages are for the year preceding the date of the Census except for 1954.

<sup>2</sup> Open pasture in farms, including cropland used only for pasture and other plowable pasture.

<sup>3</sup> Includes grassland, arid woodland, brushland, and forest land grazed.

<sup>4</sup> Excludes forested areas reserved for parks and related uses and arid woodland, brushland, and forest land used for grazing.

Historical changes in the major uses of land in the United States can be grouped into two periods. The first period lasted until about 1920. This was the settlement or pioneer period which came to a close with the expansion of the cropland area into the subhumid parts of the Great Plains during and following World War I. From 1880 to 1920, the acreage of cropland harvested was more than doubled as it increased from 178 to 362

million acres. This rapid expansion in the acreage of cropland was accompanied by large decreases in the area of native grassland. Grazing land not in farms, which includes idle grassland and arid woodland and brushland grazed, was reduced by about 380 million acres between 1880 and 1920. Part of this grazing land was converted to cropland and part of it has since been included as land in farms. Clearing of forest land also continued during this period as cropland and open pastureland were added to farms in the 31 Eastern States and in parts of the Pacific Northwest. The forest area was reduced by 50 to 75 million acres between 1880 and 1920.

A greater degree of stabilization in the major categories of land use has characterized the period since 1920. Fluctuation rather than a continued increase in acreage of cropland has prevailed. But significant regional shifts in distribution of cropland have occurred. Land development and improvement through drainage, irrigation, and clearing of forests has continued to expand the acreage of cropland in some areas bypassed or only partially developed during the settlement period. Reversion to woodland and conversion to such nonagricultural uses as cities, highways, airports, parks, defense areas, and related uses have offset some of the additions to cropland and improved pasture through the development of new land. More of the grazing land not in farms has become a part of the pasture area in farms. This is partly explained by the inclusion of more public land in farms. If the grazing land is leased, it is reported in farms; but if it is used under permit, it is not included as a part of the land in farms as defined for the Census of Agriculture.