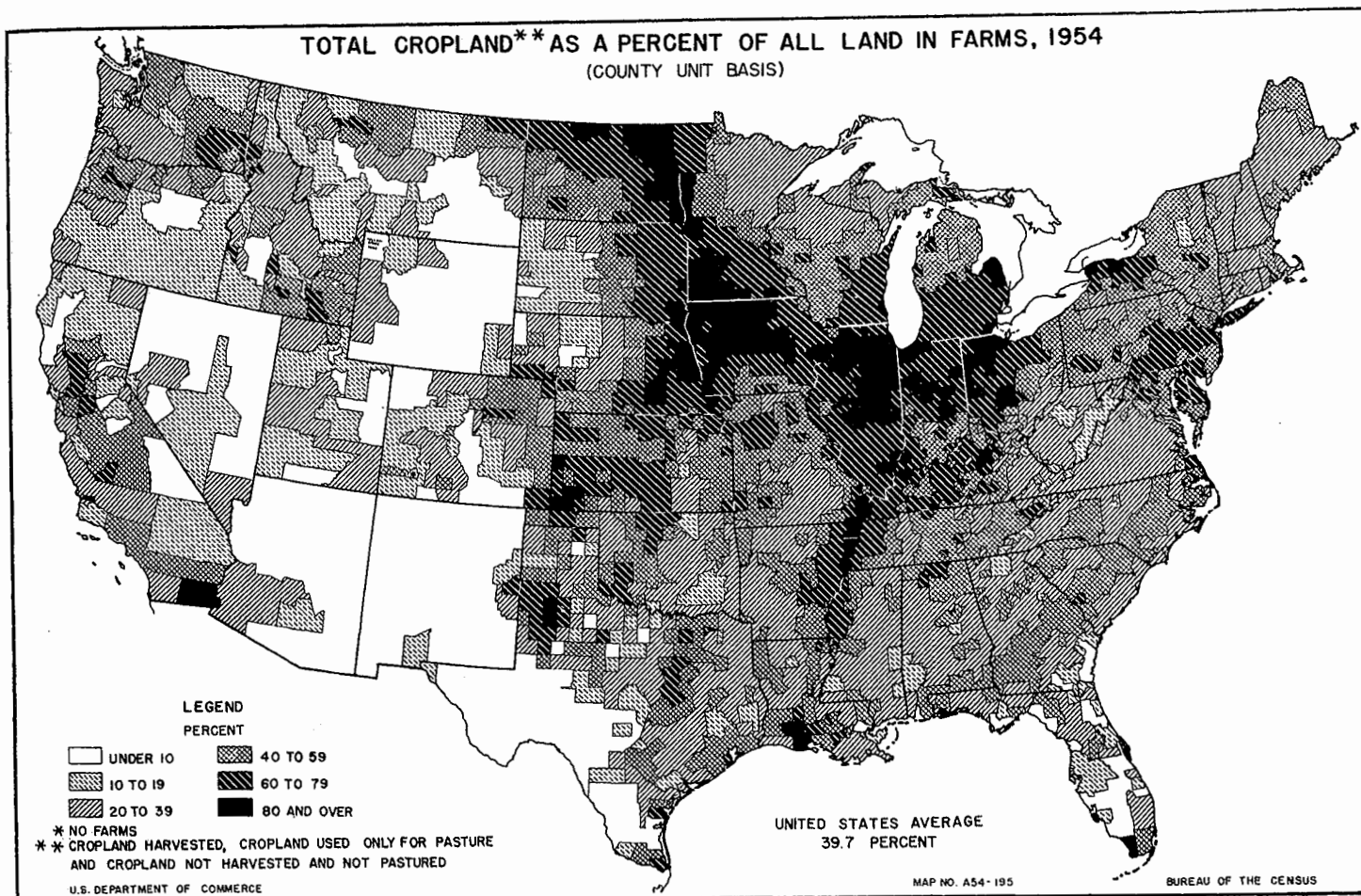


TOTAL CROPLAND** AS A PERCENT OF ALL LAND IN FARMS, 1954
(COUNTY UNIT BASIS)



Cropland as a percentage of total land area.—This map shows the proportion of the total land area occupied by cropland. Two extremes stand out. On the one hand, there is the comparatively compact area in the North Central States in which nearly all of the counties have 60 percent or more of their total area in cropland. Counties with less than 20 percent of the total land area are at the other extreme. These counties are more widely scattered than are counties having high proportions of cropland. Very few counties in the Western States have more than a fifth of their total area in cropland. This is partly because of their large size and partly because of the widespread climatic limitations to crop production. In the East, counties with a low proportion of the total area in cropland are found in most States. The largest areas are associated mainly with rough topography, poor soils, and inadequate natural drainage. In some areas of contiguous counties, such as those in southern New England and in many scattered counties, urbanization has proceeded so far that cropland has become a minor use of land.

Since a county-unit basis is used on this map, several important details are obscured. For example, the high proportion of cropland in irrigated areas in the Western States is not clearly indicated. Small areas of rough forested land and poorly drained areas in the Eastern States cannot always be distinctly associated with the physical conditions that limit their use for crop production.

Some of the distinctive physical features that are related to the low proportion of cropland shown by this map are the Sand

Hills of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia; the Sand Hills of Nebraska; the ridge and valley section of the Appalachian Mountains; the Adirondack Mountains; the Cross Timbers of Texas; the Knobstone Belt in southern Indiana; unglaciated southeastern Ohio; and many other areas with relatively little cropland. Many of the unshaded areas in the East are used only to a limited extent for farming. In the West, grazing is the predominant use of the land over extensive areas.

Small areas with a high proportion of land used as cropland that do not stand out distinctly on a county-unit basis are the many small irrigated areas in the West, the Black Prairies of Texas, the Inner Bluegrass and the Pennyroyal areas of Kentucky, the southern shore of Lake Ontario, and the southern and eastern shores of Lake Okeechobee in Florida.

Total cropland as a percentage of all land in farms.—Essentially the same overall pattern is found represented in this map as that for cropland as a percentage of total land area. The map indicates the importance of cropland relative to other uses of farmland. In the West, ranches with large acreages used for pasture tend to obscure the much higher proportions of cropland on most irrigated farms. In the South, Northeast, and Lake States, much land in farms remains in forest. In some type-of-farming situations, the high proportion of forest land is associated with production of crops with high labor requirements, such as tobacco or cotton which are often concentrated on a few acres of the best farmland. In such instances, little attention is given to the rest of the farm.