



MAJOR LAND-USE REGIONS

In the accompanying map, the United States is divided into regions grouped according to the major uses of land. Eleven major combinations of land use are delineated. The land-use regions that make up the different combinations are to a marked degree based upon contrasts in physical characteristics. Five different combinations of land use are shown in the 31 Eastern States, 6 different ones are located in the Great Plains States, and 6 are in the 11 Western States.

Three regions are shown with the cropland-pasture-forest combination of uses. In each of these three regions, a high proportion of the total land area is used as cropland. In several counties in the Central Farm Belt, more than four-fifths of all land is cropland and in most of the remaining counties of this region, more than half of all land is used as cropland.

Four land-use regions located in the Great Plains are characterized by a combination of cropland and grazing. Cropland is the dominant use. More than three-fifths of the land is used for that purpose throughout most of the area included in these four regions.

Adjacent to these regions are two other regions grouped under a grazing-cropland category. In these regions, grazing is a more important use of land than cropland. Considerable attention is given to moisture-conserving and wind-erosion control practices on land used for growing crops, for drought is a major threat to agriculture in these regions.

In the Cross Timbers and Flint Hills of Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas and in the Gulf Coast Prairie of Texas and Louisiana, the land-use combination is grazing, cropland, and woodland. In these two regions, cropland generally occupies less than half of the land area. Woodland areas are often grazed.

Seven regions which comprise much of northeastern and southern United States are grouped under the land-use category of forest, cropland, and pasture. For the most part, cropland occupies less than half of the land area over most of these regions.

In the Northeastern forest and the Lake States cutover regions, the land-use combination is best described as forest, pasture, and

hayland. Over much of the area in these two regions there is little or no cropland or pasture. In the areas where agriculture is carried on, pasture is an important use and much of the cropland is used for growing hay crops. Most of the forest land is not grazed.

Western counterparts of these two eastern regions are found in the southern Rockies, northern Rockies, and Utah Mountains, and in the Sierra-Cascade Forest Belt. Except for irrigated areas, cropland is of little importance in these three regions.

A third combination of major land uses found in the southeastern coastal plain is very similar in some respects to the two combinations just described for the Northern and Western States. A forest-grazing-cropland combination of uses best describes the land-use pattern of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast Flatwoods and the Florida Peninsula. In these two regions, a high proportion of the land is forested. Cropland accounts for less than a third of the total area with many areas having little or no cropland.

The grazing-irrigated and dry cropland-woodland combination of land use characterizes three regions in the Western States. The presence of a considerable acreage of dry cropland is a distinctive aspect of agriculture in these regions. Irrigated cropland is also of major importance. Land used for grazing generally accounts for a higher proportion of the total area than cropland. Woodland areas are widely grazed.

The grazing-woodland-irrigated cropland combination of major uses is found over extensive areas in the 11 Western States and extends into the western part of the Great Plains States. The regions characterized by this combination of major uses differ from those of the grazing-irrigated and dry cropland-woodland group mainly in having smaller and more widely scattered areas of irrigated cropland and also in having less dry cropland.

The two desert areas are little used for agriculture except where water for irrigation is available, as in the Imperial Valley of California.