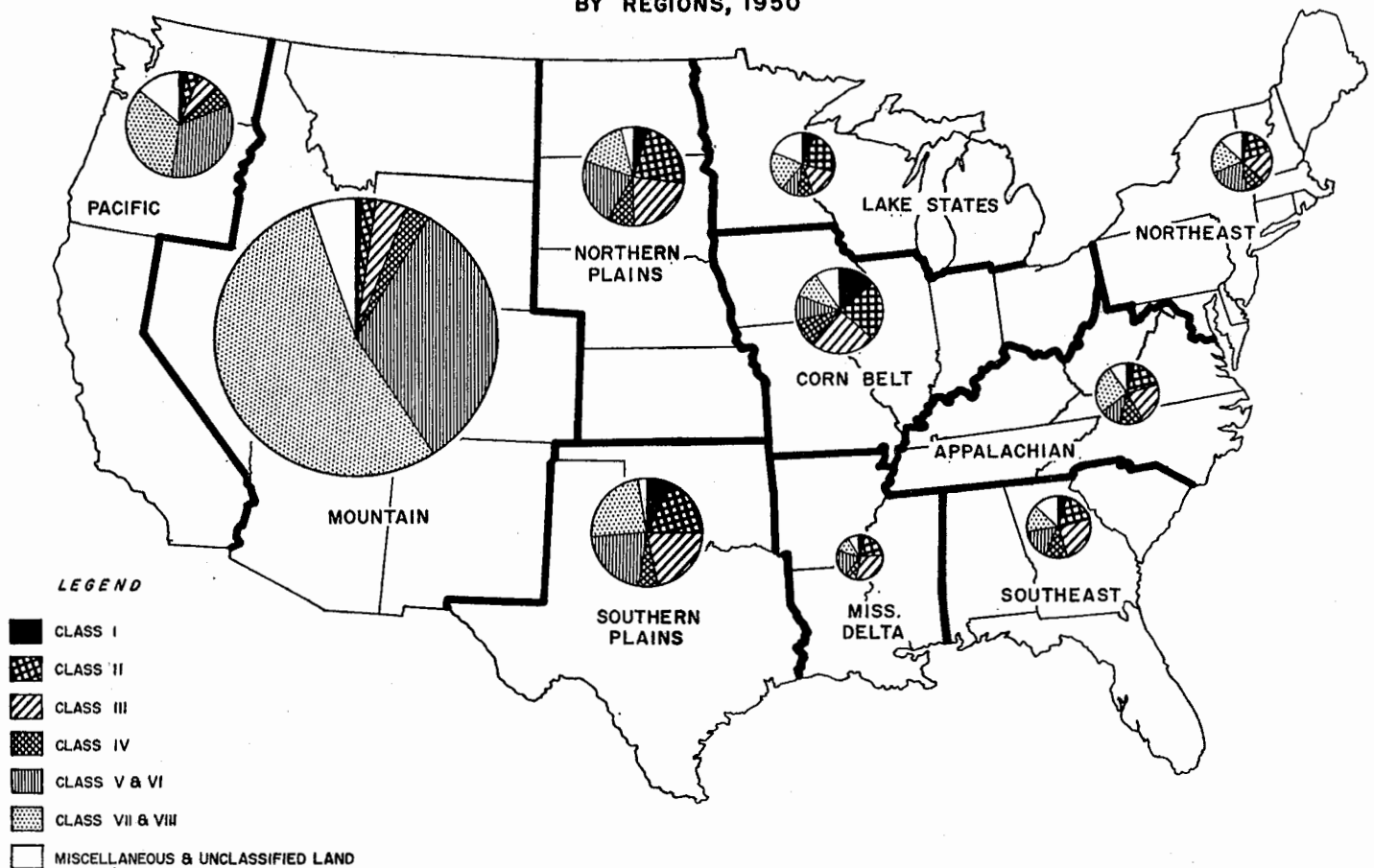


LAND CAPABILITY AS COMPARED WITH TOTAL LAND AREA  
BY REGIONS, 1950



LAND CAPABILITY BY FARM-PRODUCTION REGIONS

The accompanying map and table give a generalized picture of land capability by regions. The land capability inventory currently being made by the Soil Conservation Service eventually will obtain for the whole country the information needed about land conditions. This information will permit better decisions to be made pertaining to the uses most suitable for different kinds of land in order to maintain its productivity.

The land-capability classification divides land into eight general classes which in turn are subdivided into subclasses and units according to more detailed characteristics pertaining to

kind of limitations on use and necessary management practices. These land classes indicate the degree of risk involved in using the land for different purposes. Class I land is level and easy to farm with little or no danger from erosion. There are an estimated 72 million acres of Class I land for the country as a whole. More than half of this Class I land is located in the North Central States.

Land in capability Classes II and III is also suited to cultivation if certain limitations such as slope, sandy soil, tight subsoil, or other permanent limiting features are kept in mind in using it. Class II land needs such easily applied practices as contouring, protective cover crops, and simple water management practices. Class III land can be cultivated safely only if careful attention is given to such conservation measures as terracing and strip-cropping on slopes and good water management on flat areas. The regional distribution of this land in Classes II and III is shown in the accompanying map. The total acreage is about equally divided between Class II and Class III land.

Land in capability Class IV must be cultivated with extreme care. It should be used only occasionally for cultivated crops. Its best use is for hay crops or pasture.

Land in Classes V, VI, and VII is not suited to cultivation but it may be used for grazing or forestry. Class V land has few restrictions when used for grazing or forestry, while land in Classes VI and VII have moderate to severe limitations when used for these purposes.

The land included in Class VIII is extremely arid, rough, steep, stony, sandy, wet, or severely eroded. Some examples of Class VIII land are rocky foothills, rough mountain land, bare rock outcrops, coastal sand dunes, much marsh and swamp land, and very arid land not suited for any grazing.

LAND CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO CAPABILITY BY FARM-PRODUCTION REGIONS<sup>1</sup>

Region	Classes I, II, and III	Class IV	Classes V and VI	Classes VII and VIII	Miscellaneous and unclassified	Land area total
	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres
Northeastern.....	40.7	12.1	24.6	21.8	13.1	112.3
Corn Belt.....	101.9	17.0	15.8	16.3	14.4	165.4
Lake States.....	53.9	10.8	10.0	24.5	23.5	122.7
Northern Plains.....	97.1	17.6	42.5	30.1	8.1	195.4
Appalachian.....	50.9	15.4	13.1	32.7	12.5	124.6
Southeastern.....	56.1	13.8	20.4	17.7	16.3	124.3
Mississippi Delta.....	50.1	6.1	18.6	10.6	7.5	92.9
Southern Plains.....	98.6	12.3	45.3	51.0	5.6	212.8
Mountain.....	30.6	13.8	177.7	296.3	30.3	548.7
Pacific.....	24.2	13.0	67.8	70.8	28.9	204.7
United States.....	604.1	131.9	435.8	571.8	160.2	1,903.8

<sup>1</sup> Estimates compiled in 1948-49 by Soil Conservation Service. Adjusted slightly on basis of 1950 Census of Agriculture figures.