



IRRIGATED LAND

Distribution, use, and trend in acreage are some of the significant aspects of irrigation shown by the accompanying maps and charts.

Irrigated land in farms.—Most of the irrigated land is concentrated in the 11 Western States and Texas. Lesser concentrations are found in Nebraska, Kansas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Florida. The accompanying map uses two different ratios of dots to acreage in order to show the distribution of irrigated land in Western and Eastern States. In the 28 Eastern States shown as a separate block in the accompanying map, the heaviest concentrations of irrigated land are associated with the production of such crops as vegetables in New Jersey and Delaware, tobacco and vegetables in Connecticut, rice in the Delta of Mississippi, and fruit on the southeastern shore of Lake Michigan.

Irrigated acreage of specified crops and pasture.—Pasture occupies more irrigated land than any one crop. Some of the

irrigated pasture is improved but pastures of native grasses adjacent to streams are also irrigated under favorable conditions. Alfalfa hay and cotton are the two leading crops on irrigated land. These are followed by rice; barley; sorghums; orchards, vineyards, and nuts; and wild hay. These crops and pasture account for about two-thirds of the irrigated acreage.

Irrigated land, increase and decrease in acreage, 1949-54.—Widespread increases in the acreage of irrigated land are shown by the accompanying map. Decreases are mainly concentrated in Colorado, Wyoming, and Nevada. Many of these areas of decrease are associated with a severe water shortage in 1954 and the decreases are probably only temporary. Smaller areas of decrease near metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and San Francisco are explained by the suburban spread of population and growing competition between urban and agricultural uses for available water and land.