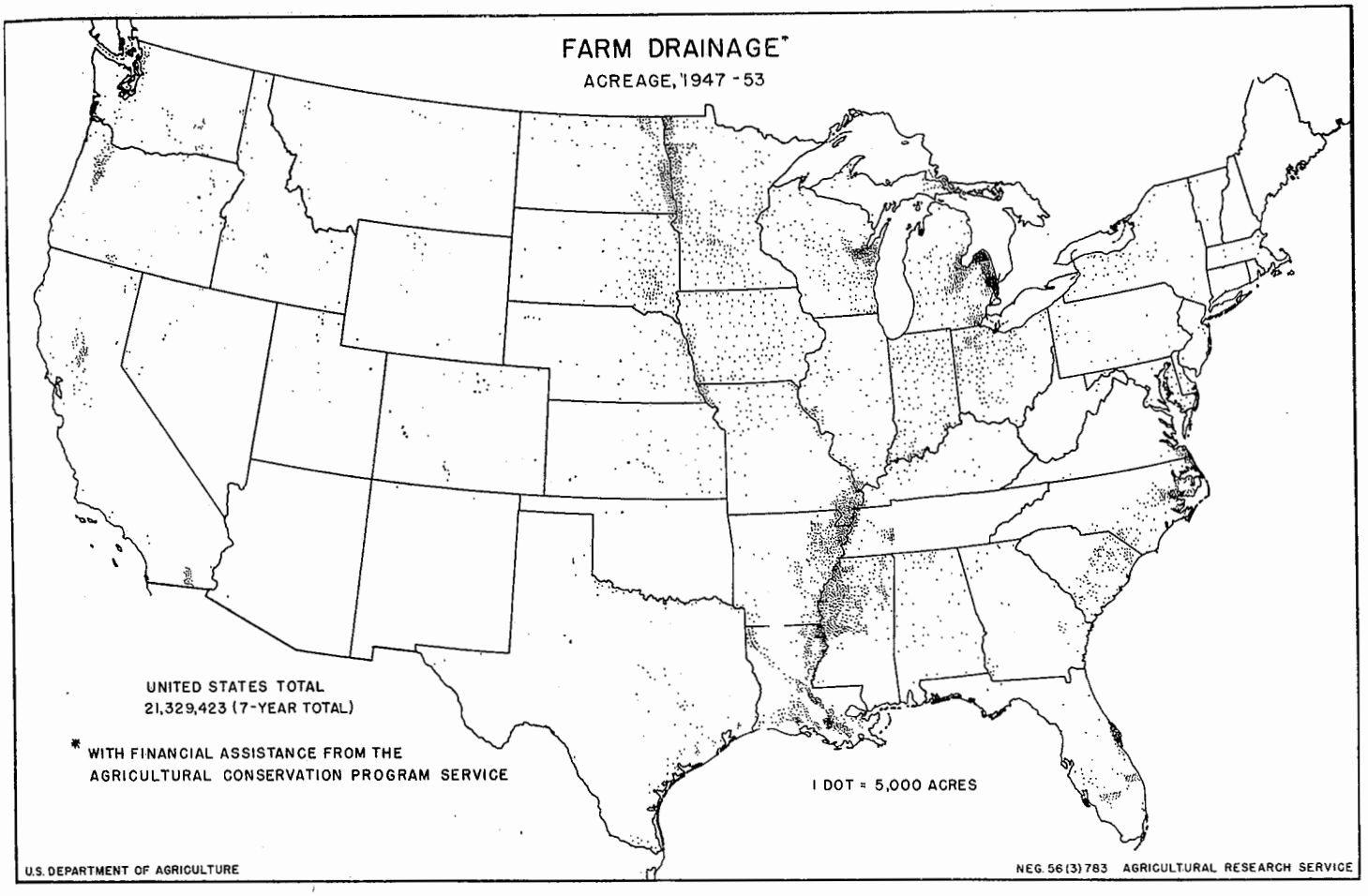
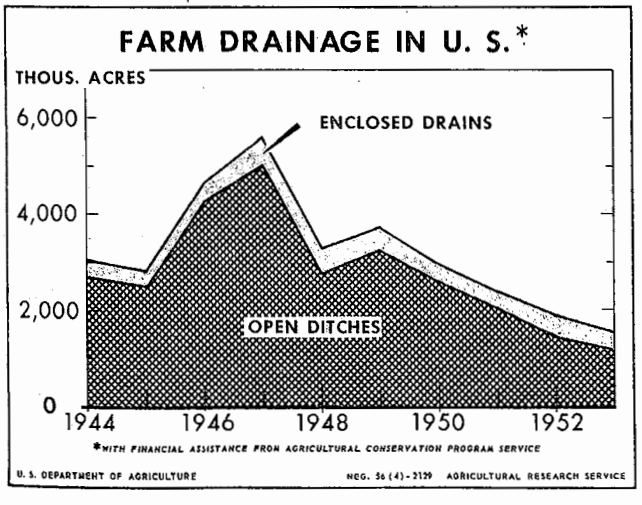


DRAINAGE



The artificial drainage of land that does not have good natural drainage has brought millions of acres of good land into agricultural use. An important part of the Nation's most productive land has been improved by drainage.

Organized group drainage enterprises, which are generally responsible for construction of canals and ditches, are frequently necessary prerequisites to the establishment of good farm drainage works. Cooperative effort among farmers is necessary in order to build these main outlets for field drains. The success of both group and farm drainage enterprises is largely determined by careful planning based on good soil and engineering surveys, by careful consideration of expected benefits in relation to costs, and by sound financial planning. After an enterprise is established, close cooperation must continue if the project is to be adequately maintained.

Farm drainage.—The distribution of the acreage drained during a 7-year period from 1947 to 1953 for which county data were available indicates the chief areas in which farm drainage is being carried out in the United States. The North Central States, Mississippi Delta, and Southeastern Coastal Plain are the principal regions in which farm drainage has been a significant land-improvement practice. The acreage drained during the 7-year period covered by the map totaled more than a million acres for each of the following States: Michigan, Louisiana, Mississippi, Minnesota, Arkansas, and Wisconsin. Ten other States each had more than one-half million acres drained during the 7-year period. Most of the drainage was by open ditches (18 million acres). Tile drainage totaled approximately 3 million acres. Two-fifths of the tile drainage was installed in Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, and Michigan.

Farm drainage in United States.—From 1944 to 1953, Agricultural Conservation Program assistance was rendered in draining nearly 32 million acres of farmland, or an average of about 3 million acres a year for this 10-year period. Much of this acreage was drained with the technical assistance of the Soil Conservation Service. The amount of farm drainage carried out annually is shown in the accompanying chart. Not all of this acreage is newly drained land. A considerable part of the drainage carried out under the Agricultural Conservation Program is on land that has previously been improved to some extent by drainage.

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