



feed the growing population was coming from the rapid expansion of the cropland acreage. Since 1920, the acreage of cropland has remained nearly stationary. However, farm output continued to increase after 1920 and since 1940 the rise has been very sharp. This means that it has been possible to feed the increasing population of the Nation and with a substantially improved diet.

Acreage on which commercial fertilizer was used, 1954.—Some striking regional changes in the use of fertilizer in the United States have occurred in the last 25 years. In 1929, very little fertilizer was used in the Corn Belt, Great Plains, and Western States. Most of the fertilizer used a quarter of a century ago was used in the following States or areas: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, southeastern Virginia, southeastern Pennsylvania, northeastern Maine, the Connecticut River Valley of

Connecticut and Massachusetts, and the Los Angeles area of California.

In 1954, commercial fertilizer was used on 123 million acres of cropland and pasture. Lime was applied to 11 million acres. The accompanying map shows the distribution of fertilizer use in 1954. When this map is studied against the background of the above statements relative to the use of fertilizer in 1929 the following striking changes in the distribution of its use may be noted. Half of the acreage fertilized in 1954 was in the Corn Belt, Great Plains, and Western States. In 1929, these areas accounted for only a sixth of the total expenditure made for commercial fertilizer used in the United States. About two-fifths of the expenditure for fertilizer in 1929 was concentrated in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain parts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama.

Most of the fertilizer used in 1929 was applied to the more intensively cultivated crops, especially to cotton, tobacco, fruit, truck, and potatoes. These crops have continued to absorb an important part of the fertilizer applied, but several other crops and pasture that were not formerly fertilized to any great extent are now widely fertilized.

In 1954, commercial fertilizer was applied to 18 million acres of hay and pasture, to 47 million acres of corn, to more than 11 million acres of wheat, and to about 3 million acres of oats. Cotton, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, and potatoes, which were widely fertilized in 1929, were other major crops on which fertilizer was extensively used in 1954. About 10 million acres of cotton, more than 1 million acres of tobacco, and 6 million acres of fruit, vegetables, and potatoes were fertilized. This means that nearly all of the tobacco; two-thirds of the fruit, vegetables, and potatoes; three-fifths of the corn; about half of the cotton; and a fourth of the acreage of wheat had some application of fertilizer in 1954.