

FIGURE 3.

Food habits have changed over the years. The American people have reduced their consumption of the starchy foods such as bread and potatoes. The annual consumption of wheat has declined from 310 pounds per capita in 1910 to 173 pounds in 1954, but the

increase in population has offset this decrease so that total consumption has remained rather constant. (See table 1.)

Wheat is tolerant of a wide range of growing conditions. Ideal conditions for wheat production are a deep, fertile, fine-textured soil, cool temperatures and ample rainfall during the growing season, with warm dry weather during the final period of maturing and harvest. Wheat plants respond readily to favorable moisture conditions but will survive and produce grain with as little as 10 inches of rainfall. Most wheat is grown in areas of less than 50 inches annual rainfall. When wheat is grown in areas of less than 20 inches of yearly precipitation, it is a common practice to summer-fallow at least a part of the wheatland. The purpose of fallowing is to kill weeds, to keep the surface in as permeable condition as possible for the absorption of water, and help to control wind erosion. Many wheat growers in the low-rainfall areas have half of their cropland in wheat and the other half in fallow. A comparison of figures 1, 4, and 5 will show the relation of annual precipitation and summer-fallowing to the areas of wheat production.

Table 1.—TOTAL AND PER-CAPITA CONSUMPTION OF WHEAT FOR FOOD IN THE UNITED STATES:¹ 1910 TO 1954

Year	Total	Per capita	Year	Total	Per capita
	<i>Million bushels</i>	<i>Pounds</i>		<i>Millions bushels</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
1910.....	478	310	1940.....	484	217
1920.....	466	259	1950.....	481	186
1930.....	506	243	1954.....	474	173

¹ Source: Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

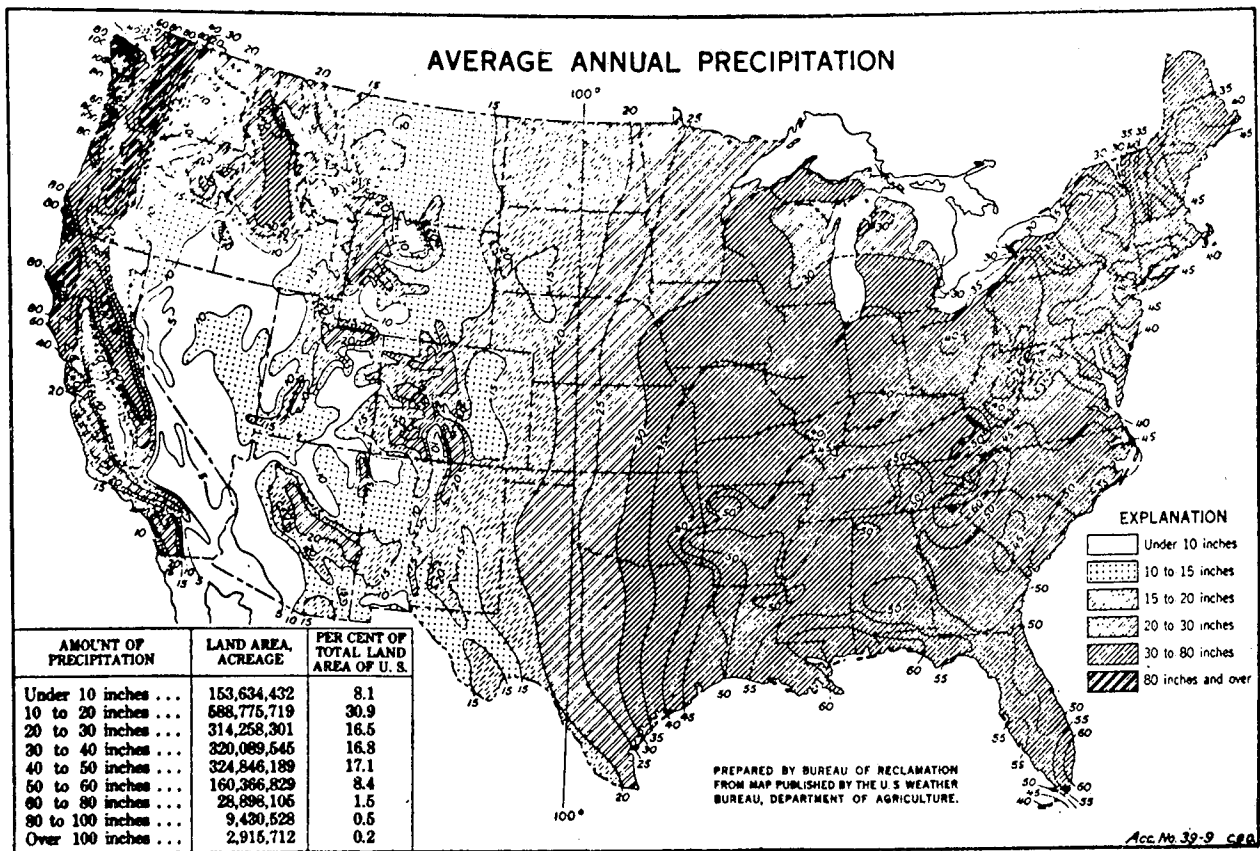


FIGURE 4.