

WHEAT PRODUCTION REGIONS

Wheat production in the United States can be separated into two general production situations. In the western half of the country there are extensive areas of specialized cash-grain farming where wheat is the dominant crop (see fig. 6). While some wheat is grown in all of the Western States, production is concentrated in three major regions. These three major regions, characterized by specialization and large acreages of wheat, account for about half of the total production of wheat. Nearly all of this production occurs on commercial farms. In addition, some wheat is grown in other scattered areas of the West.

In the eastern half of the United States wheat is generally a minor farm enterprise. Here wheat usually is grown in a diversified type of farming where wheat typically is a minor source of income.

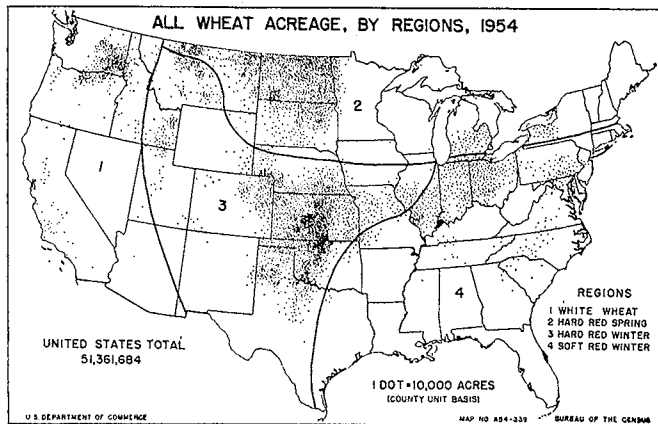


FIGURE 6.

Table 3.—ESTIMATED SUPPLY AND DOMESTIC USE OF WHEAT BY CLASSES: 1954-55¹

Class	Supply		Domestic use	
	Million bushels	Million bushels	Million bushels	Million bushels
Hard red winter.....	1,018	225		
Soft red winter.....	271	159		
Hard red spring.....	338	140		
Durum.....	10	8		
White.....	254	55		

¹ 12 months beginning July 1, 1954.

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

In this report, soft winter wheat production in the eastern half of the United States is covered in less detail. Very few of the producers there would be classified as wheat farmers and data are not available to show how much of the capital and labor is used on these wheat-producing farms. But these areas taken together produce almost a fourth of the wheat in the United States.

Wheat production in the three major wheat areas in the western half of the United States can be described as an extensive, highly mechanized type of agriculture.

Areas of production for the major classes of wheat are shown in figure 6. Along the boundaries between two of the areas, there is considerable overlapping in the classes grown. Winter wheat has been pushing farther north as more winter-hardy varieties have been developed. The boundary between hard and soft winter wheat is not a distinct line but rather a belt in which both classes are found.

The hard winter wheat area lies in the southern Great Plains extending from Texas to southern Nebraska and from the Corn Belt to the Rocky Mountains. Subregions 93, 94, and 103 comprise nearly all the hard winter wheat area and the data for these three subregions are used to represent the total for this area. Practically all of the wheat produced in these three subregions is hard winter wheat.

The hard spring wheat area extends from northern Nebraska to the Canadian border and from the Red River Valley in Minnesota to western Montana. It includes subregions 89, 90, 91, and 105. The total for these 4 subregions is used to represent the total for this area. This area produces both winter and spring wheat, although the latter is far more extensive. This territory lies too far north for winter wheat except on the southern border and in protected areas in Montana.

The white wheat area is found in southwestern Washington and northern Oregon, extending slightly into Idaho. The data for this subregion are used as the total for this area. Here both spring and winter wheat are grown, but winter wheat predominates.

Table 4.—NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL FARMS, PERCENTAGE GROWING WHEAT, AND PERCENTAGE CLASSIFIED AS CASH-GRAIN, MAJOR PRODUCING REGIONS: 1954

Item	Number of commercial farms	Percent of commercial farms growing wheat for sale	Cash-grain farms			
			Number	Percent of commercial farms	Percent growing wheat for sale	Average wheat acreage per cash-grain farm
Major wheat regions:						
Hard winter wheat.....	127,971	79.9	75,544	59.0	93.7	168.7
Hard spring wheat.....	104,378	90.8	61,427	58.9	100.0	150.4
White wheat.....	14,551	83.8	9,109	62.6	100.0	244.0
Other regions:						
West of 98 th parallel.....	403,703	23.2	48,524	12.0	72.1	140.8
East of 98 th parallel.....	2,677,286	18.3	343,370	12.8	46.7	27.8

Table 5.—PERCENTAGE OF FARMS REPORTING WHEAT SOLD AND OF THE QUANTITY OF WHEAT SOLD FOR CASH-GRAIN AND OTHER FARMS FOR MAJOR WHEAT REGIONS: 1954

Region and type of farm	Percentage of farms producing wheat for sale	Percentage of total wheat sold in the United States
Major Wheat Regions		
Hard winter wheat:		
Cash-grain farms.....	93.7	21.0
Other commercial farms.....	60.0	4.6
Other farms.....	15.3	0.1
Hard spring wheat:		
Cash-grain farms.....	100.0	13.2
Other commercial farms.....	69.6	2.4
Other farms.....	19.0	(z)
White wheat:		
Cash-grain farms.....	100.0	10.1
Other commercial farms.....	30.9	0.3
Other farms.....	6.7	(z)
Other Regions		
West of the 98 th parallel:		
Cash-grain farms.....	72.1	9.9
Other commercial farms.....	16.6	5.3
Other farms.....	2.4	0.1
East of the 98 th parallel:		
Cash-grain farms.....	46.7	14.9
Other commercial farms.....	14.1	17.3
Other farms.....	2.5	0.6

^z 0.05 percent or less.