

IRRIGATION IN HUMID AREAS

berries from 22,598 acres of land. The figures, by States were as follows:

State	Farms reporting	Acres
28 States .....	1,134	22,598
Maine.....	8	11
New Hampshire .....	1	1
Massachusetts .....	817	12,889
Connecticut.....	4	36
New York .....	3	101
New Jersey.....	146	5,727
Wisconsin.....	150	3,798
Minnesota.....	5	35

The number of farms reporting and the acreage of cranberries harvested in 1955 was probably about the same as in 1954.

Number of times crops were irrigated.--Operators of approximately one-fourth of the farms reported irrigating two times; a fourth reported irrigating five or more times; 20 percent of the farms reported irrigating three times; 18 percent irrigated one time; and 12 percent irrigated four times.

Not only the frequency and amount of rainfall, but also the length of growing season, soil type, and root system of crops irrigated influenced significantly the number of times water was applied.

Cotton and corn were irrigated fewer times in 1955 than hay, tobacco, pasture, Irish potatoes, nursery and flower crops. On nearly 80 percent of the farms cotton and corn were irrigated only one or two times during 1955.

Legality of water rights.--While a challenge regarding the legality of water rights was reported by only 2 percent of the operators of 14,541 farms in the 1955 survey, this aspect of irrigation may be much more significant than is indicated by the small number of farms reporting. Some of the reports on the challenge of the legality of the right to use water, may have involved legal action, although no information is available regarding the exact number of such cases. The reports on water rights were not restricted to cases where legal action had been taken but included oral and other threats of legal action as well. Farmers who used streams for water reported most of the cases involving a question of legal rights. Laws are more restrictive with respect to the use of streams than other sources of water supply in most of the 28 States. Forty-four percent of those reporting a challenge of the legality of water rights reported the source of water as "streams only."

More than one-fourth of the farmers who reported a challenge of the legality of water rights were operators of farms on which irrigation began in 1954 or later. On approximately one-fourth of the farms reporting a challenge of legality of water rights, irrigation was begun during the period 1951-1953. Almost three-fifths of those reporting the legality of water rights questioned, reported the use of constructed reservoirs.

