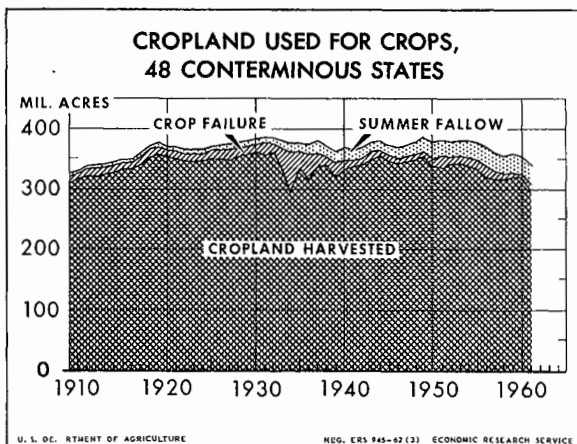
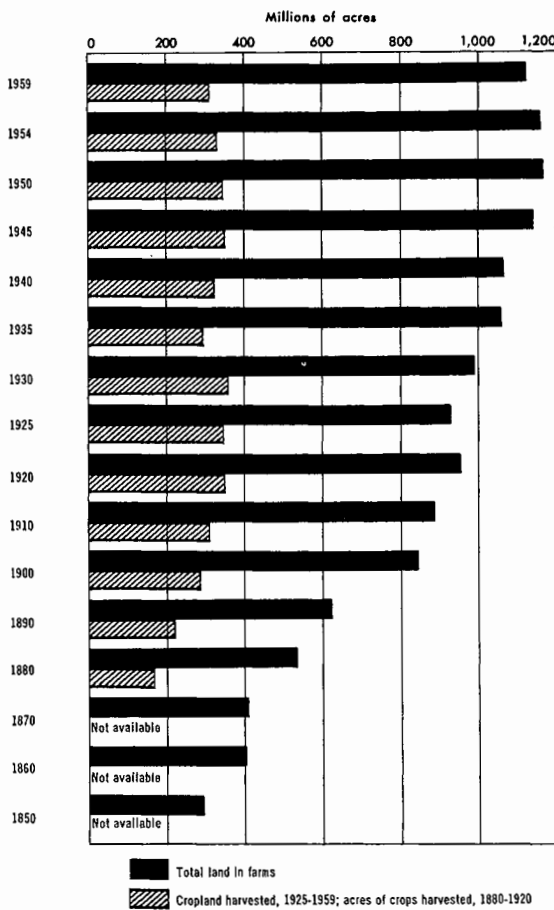


ALL LAND IN FARMS AND CROPLAND HARVESTED FOR THE UNITED STATES: 1850 TO 1959



THE TREND IN LAND UTILIZATION

The overall or total changes in the major uses of land since 1900 are shown in the accompanying chart and tabulation. Briefly summarized, the following significant changes have occurred: (1) Cropland increased by more than 90 million acres from 1900 to 1920, remained stable during the decade of the 1920's, and since has fluctuated at a level somewhat below the peak of 480 million acres. (2) Grassland pasture and range other than cropland used only for pasture has declined by about 130 million acres. A considerable part of this decline occurred during the first two decades of the present century when large acreages of native grasslands were plowed up for crops before and during World War I. (3) The acreage in forest and woodland has remained fairly stable. The clearing of forest land for crop, pasture, urban, and other uses has been counterbalanced by the natural reversion and, in recent years particularly, the replanting of areas formerly used as cropland and pasture to trees. (4) The increase in the acreage of other land is accounted for to a large extent by the increased demands for land as space for residential, recreational, transportational, military, and other related uses.

TRENDS IN MAJOR LAND USES, 48 CONTERMINOUS STATES, 1900-1959¹

Land use ²	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1959
	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres	Million acres
Cropland.....	389	431	480	480	467	478	457
Available pasture and range (nonforested)....	761	693	652	652	650	631	630
Forest and woodland.....	600	600	602	601	608	612	614
Other land.....	153	179	169	170	180	183	201
Total.....	1,903	1,903	1,903	1,903	1,905	1,904	1,902

¹ Exclusive of Alaska and Hawaii. For example, excluded in 1959 are the combined totals for Alaska and Hawaii of less than 1 million acres of cropland, and 3 million acres of grassland pasture and range.
² For definitions of the major uses see the preceding page of this report.

LAND IN FARMS AND CROPLAND HARVESTED, 1850-1959

The acreage of land in farms was 1,123 million acres in 1959, which was about 38 million acres less than the acreage reported in 1954. About 5 to 6 million acres of this decrease was due to a change in the definition of a farm for the 1959 Census of Agriculture. The remaining decrease can be attributed to several conditions. Whole farms that had been placed in the Soil Bank Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture were not enumerated in the 1959 Census. Urban expansion and the building of new highways account for some of the loss. Also, the spread of factories and nonfarm residences, often occupying a number of acres, into rural areas has been increasing considerably. In the 345 counties that include standard metropolitan statistical areas, land in farms declined by 7 million acres.

The 1959 Census of Agriculture reported 311 million acres of cropland harvested, compared with 333 million acres reported in 1954. Except for 1934, when crop failure was extremely high because of the severe drought of that year, the acreage of cropland harvested in 1959 was the lowest since 1909, when the Nation also had 311 million acres.

CROPLAND USED FOR CROPS

In 1959 and 1960, about 60 million acres of harvested cropland were used for the production of export products. This acreage accounted for about 18 percent of the 330 million and 328 million acres of crops harvested, as reported by the Economic Research Service, in 1959 and 1960, respectively. Only during and following World War I, during the Korean conflict, and in 1956 was the acreage as large.

Only about 6 million acres of harvested cropland are now used to produce feed for horses and mules both on and off the farm. This compares to 81 million acres used for that purpose in 1918 and 1919. Thus, about 75 million acres formerly used for the production of energy for use on the farm are now used for the production of human food. The substitution of the tractor for the horse and mule as the major source of energy accounts for this remarkable shift in use of cropland harvested.