

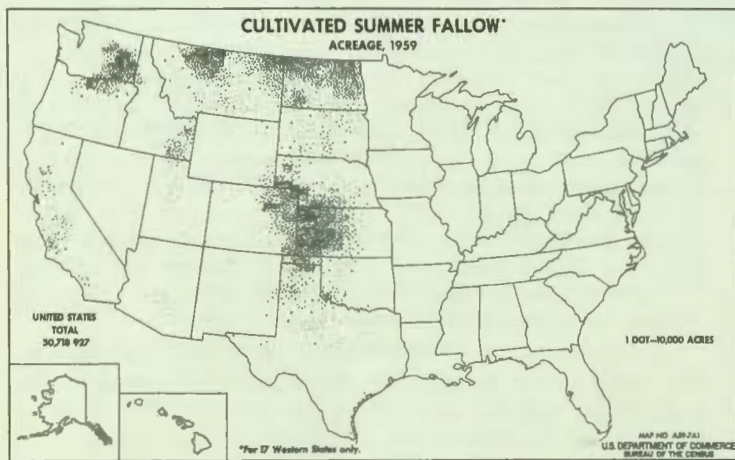
A GRAPHIC SUMMARY



CROPLAND NOT HARVESTED AND NOT PASTURED

Cultivated summer fallow; land in soil improvement grasses and legumes; idle cropland; land in crops intended for harvest after 1959 (Hawaiian sugarcane for example); and cropland not harvested because of complete crop failure, low prices, labor shortage, or for other reasons, are all included in the category of cropland not harvested and not pastured. The total acreage reported in this land-use category in 1959 was 71 million acres.

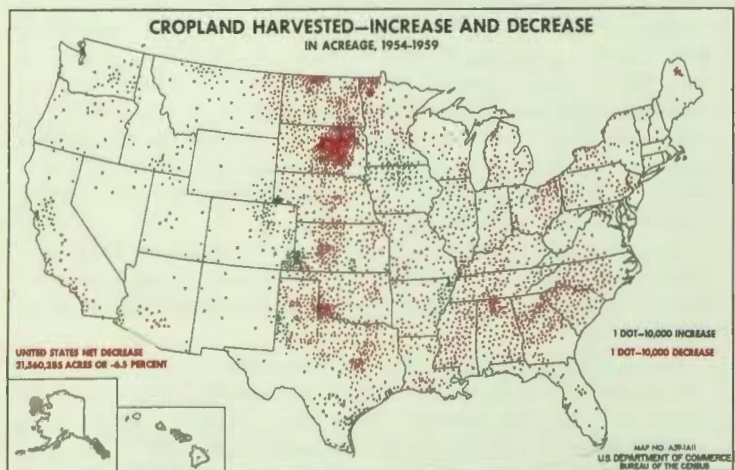
The most important single use in the category was cultivated summer fallow, which accounted for about 31 million acres in the 17 Western States. The acreage planted to soil-improvement grasses and legumes amounted to 16 million acres. Crop failure, as estimated by the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has averaged about 10 million acres annually in recent years. The remaining acreage in this category is largely cropland that is temporarily idle or that may be in the process of being retired from cropland use.



CULTIVATED SUMMER FALLOW

Cropland that was plowed and cultivated but left unseeded for the 1959 harvest in order to control weeds and conserve moisture was reported in the Census of Agriculture as cultivated summer fallow. Although the Census of Agriculture reports the acreage of cultivated summer fallow only for the 17 Western States, it should be emphasized that this practice is of little importance in other States. The practice is used mainly in the production of wheat, although some land upon which barley is grown is left fallow for a year in order that improved yields can be obtained through the accumulation of more moisture.

During the 10 years from 1949 to 1959, the wheat acreage in the 17 Western States dropped from 58 million to 38 million acres, and the acreage in cultivated summer fallow increased from 26 million to 31 million acres. Farm program limitations on the acreage that may be planted to wheat encouraged farmers to fallow their land more regularly in order to improve the yields on the remaining acreage they were permitted to plant.



CROPLAND HARVESTED—INCREASE AND DECREASE IN ACREAGE, 1954-59

From the accompanying map it may be seen that both significant increases and decreases in the acreage of cropland harvested occurred between 1954 and 1959. The net decrease was about 22 million acres, or about 6 percent.

A major part of the decrease has occurred in the six Great Plains States where wheat acreage allotments have had a striking influence and in the Southern States where cotton allotments and a continuing decline in small farms account for the decrease. The Northeast and the Lake States and some areas in the Western States have also experienced decreases.

The increases in the acreage of cropland harvested have come mainly in the Corn Belt, where further improvement in drainage in some areas has been taking place, in the lower Mississippi Valley where land clearing and drainage has continued at an appreciable rate, and in the Western States where irrigated acreage has increased in several areas.