



#### CROPLAND AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LAND AREA

The proportion of the total land area actually used as cropland is an important, though not the only, indicator of the significance of agriculture in a particular county or part of the country.

On the map two extremes are obvious. In the North Central States there is a relatively compact area in which nearly all of the counties have 60 percent or more of their total area in cropland. Counties with less than 20 percent of the total land area in cropland are at the other extreme. These counties are more widely scattered than are counties having high proportions of cropland. Very few counties in the Western States have more than a fifth of their total area in cropland. This is partly because of their large size and partly because of widespread climatic limitations to crop production. In the East, counties with a low proportion of the total area in cropland are found in most States. The largest areas are associated mainly with rough topography, poor soils, and inadequate natural drainage. In some areas of contiguous counties such as those in southern New England, and in many scattered counties, urbanization has proceeded so far that cropland has become a minor use of land.

Since this map is on a county-unit basis, several important details are obscured. For example, the high proportion of cropland in irrigated areas in the Western States is not clearly indicated. Small areas of rough forested land and poorly drained areas in the Eastern States cannot always be distinctly associated with the physical conditions that limit their use for crop production.

#### TOTAL CROPLAND AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL LAND IN FARMS

The same overall pattern is found represented in this map as in that showing cropland as a percentage of total land area. How-

ever, the map indicates more directly the importance of cropland relative to other uses of farmland.

In the West, ranches with large acreages used for pasture tend to obscure the much higher proportions of cropland on most irrigated farms. In the Southern, Northeastern, and Lake States, much land in farms remains in forest. In some type-of-farming situations, the high proportion of forest land is associated with production of crops with high labor requirements such as tobacco or cotton, which are often concentrated on a few acres of the best farmland. In such instances, little attention is given to the rest of the farm.

#### CROPLAND HARVESTED AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LAND AREA

Counties with 75 percent or more of the total land area used for harvested cropland are found mainly in the North Central States. Surrounding these high-density counties are most of the counties with 50 to 74 percent of the total land area in cropland harvested.

Counties with less than 5 percent of the total land area in harvested cropland are numerous in the Western States, the mountainous and hilly areas of the Eastern States, and the Coastal Plain flatwoods, and in the heavily forested counties of northern New England, the northern parts of the Lake States, and Alaska. Over these extensive areas agriculture is often of little significance except for the grazing of livestock in some of the western areas and in parts of the Southern States.