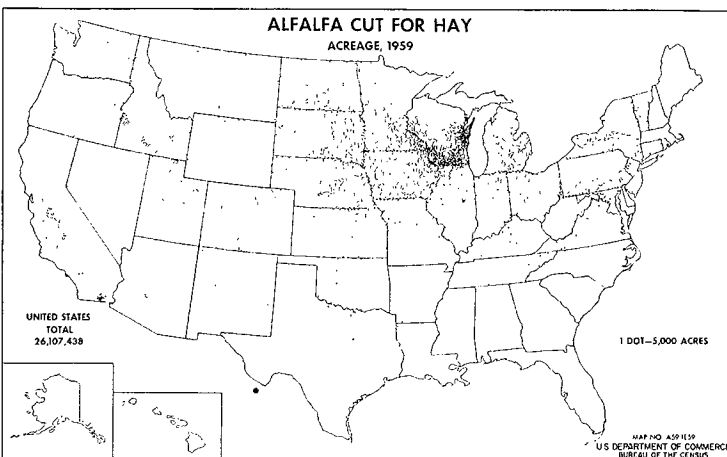


LAND FROM WHICH HAY WAS CUT

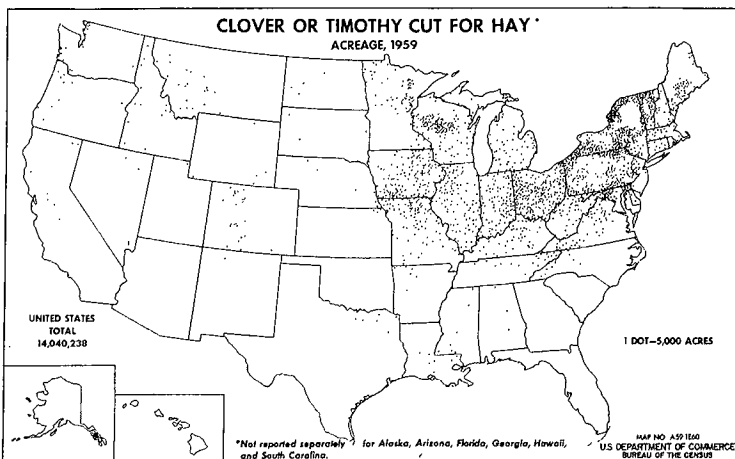
The land from which hay was cut amounted to 63.5 million acres in 1959. This was the lowest acreage reported by the Census of Agriculture since 1939, when 58.8 million acres were cut for hay. In 1954 the peak acreage since 1924 was reported—69.9 million acres. Generally, however, the acreage of hay cut has fluctuated between 60 and 70 million acres since 1900. Some of the variation is probably due to slightly different ways of reporting the acreage cut.

The Northern Plains reported the most hay cut—15 million acres, or nearly a fourth of the total U.S. acreage. About half of the hay acreage cut in this region was wild hay. The next most important hay-producing region was the Corn Belt with 11.5 million acres, followed by the Lakes States with 9.1 million acres and the Northeast with 7.5 million acres. It is significant to note that hay is a major crop in the dairy areas of the Northeast and the Lake States.



ALFALFA CUT FOR HAY

About 41 percent of the total acreage in hay crops is in alfalfa hay, which includes alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures used for hay and for dehydrating. Of all the major hay crops, alfalfa is the most widely grown. Only in the Southeast, where a humid climate and sandy soils are not favorable for its production, is it completely absent from the hay crops grown. Soils with adequate lime are the most favorable for growing alfalfa. In the West it is a major irrigated crop. Annual yields are particularly high in the Southwest, where several cuttings each year are possible because of the long growing season and the use of irrigation water. California in 1959 reported average yields of 5 tons per acre and Arizona had 4.8 tons per acre. In Wisconsin 2.7 tons per acre were reported. Four States each reported more than 2 million acres of alfalfa hay in 1959—Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota. Six other States each reported more than a million acres cut—Nebraska, Michigan, North Dakota, Illinois, Kansas, and California.



CLOVER OR TIMOTHY CUT FOR HAY

Clover and timothy was formerly a much more important hay crop than it is today. In 1909, nearly 37 million acres of clover and timothy were cut compared to 4.7 million acres of alfalfa hay. Fifty years later only 14 million acres of clover and timothy hay were cut compared with 26.1 million acres of alfalfa hay which was cut. Less emphasis on timothy as a hay crop is definitely noticeable. Part of the decline in the acreage of timothy is associated with the decrease in number of horses used as draft animals.

The major producing areas for clover and timothy hay have always been in the north central and northeastern States. In 1959 the Corn Belt had 4.7 million acres, the Northeast reported 4.1 million acres, and the Lake States 2.1 million acres. Seventy-eight percent of the total acreage of clover and timothy was located in these three farm production regions.