

Cropland Used for Grain or Row Crops Farmed on the Contour.—The inquiry regarding cropland used for grain or row crops farmed on the contour was included in both the 1959 and the 1954 Census (except for Florida) for all States in the conterminous United States. Crops are planted on the contour when the rows or strips are laid out at right angles to the natural slope of the land. Generally, alternate strips or rows of different crops are used to retard soil and water losses. The usual arrangement is to alternate row crops with close seeded crops.

Cropland used for grain or row crops farmed on the contour was reported for approximately one-tenth of the farms in the 48 conterminous States and totaled 22 million acres or 5.0 percent of total cropland. The acreage in 1959 was approximately the same as in 1954. (The acreage was not obtained for the State of Florida for 1954; however, the acreage in that State was negligible.)

Growing of crops on the contour is a widely used practice in the central and southern Great Plains States, some of the more rolling parts of the Corn Belt, Pennsylvania, and in parts of the cotton-producing area of the South.

Land in Stripcropping Systems for Soil-Erosion Control.—Stripcropping was defined as a practice of alternating close grown crops with strips or bands of row crops or of alternating either close grown crops or row crops with bands of cultivated fallow land. Wind stripcropping, stubble mulching, and other conservation practices help control soil blowing. Wind stripcropping involves the planting of crops in strips of uniform width, which are arranged at right angles to the direction of prevailing winds. Small grain crops and cultivated summer fallow often occupy alternating strips. The data for stripcropping for 1959 relate to all 48 States in the conterminous United States. The comparable data for 1954 are for 14 States and the western part of Texas. The comparative data for the 14 States and the western part of Texas for 1959 and 1954 are as follows:

	1959	1954
Farms reporting-----	38,211	26,972
Acres-----	11,927,550	5,218,112

This conservation practice is concentrated chiefly in the western wheat-producing area, where wheat is being grown on land that is subject to wind erosion, particularly during the drier years.

