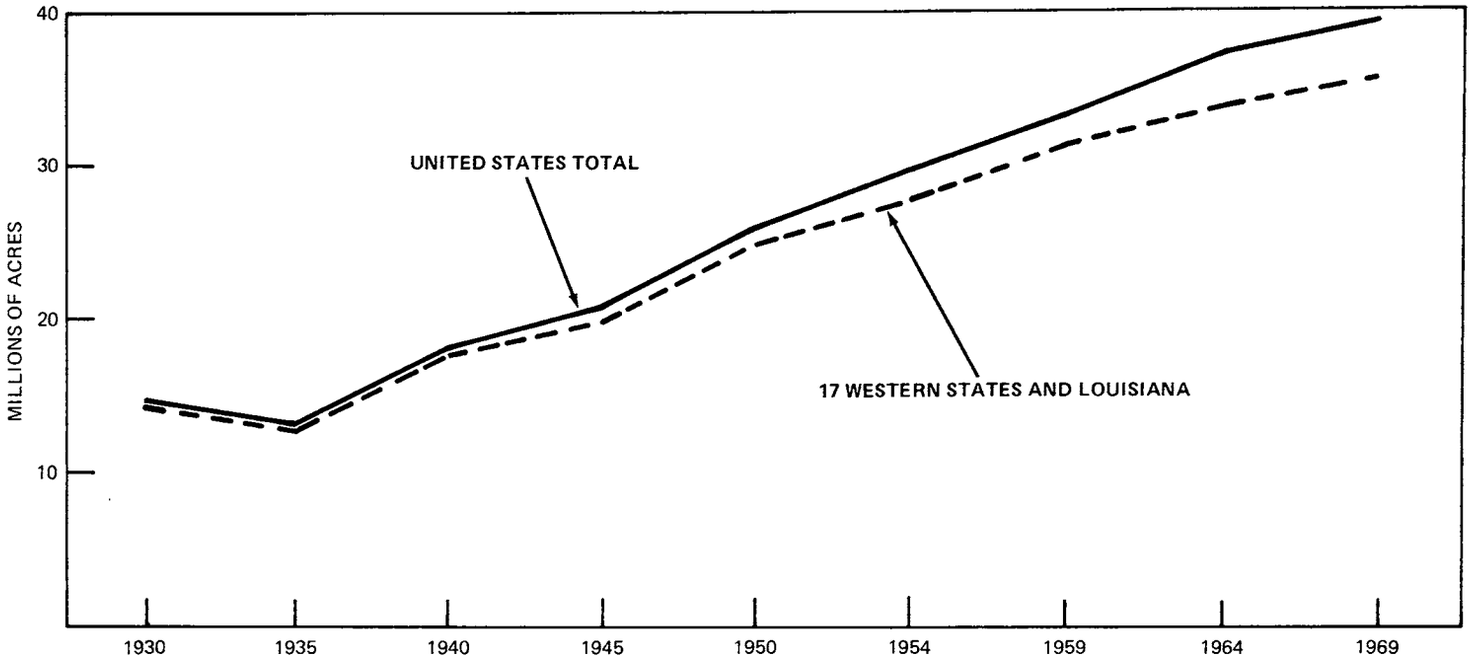
CHART–3. Acreage of Irrigated Land: 1930 to 1969

(The United States, 17 Western States, and Louisiana)



1930, acreage of irrigated crops; 1935, irrigated cropland harvested; 1940, acreage of irrigated cropland harvested and/or irrigated pasture; 1945 to 1969, acreage of irrigated land.

Orchard	57.5	Hay crops cut green	13.2
Irish potatoes	56.0	Corn for silage	12.9
Alfalfa seed	52.0	Peanuts for nuts	12.4
All vegetables	49.8	Hay except alfalfa	10.9
Nursery and greenhouse	49.2	Sorghum for silage	10.6
		Corn for grain	6.4
Cotton	28.1	All wheat	4.5
Sorghums for grains	26.9	Cropland pasture	4.0
Alfalfa hay	22.1	Soybeans for beans	1.9
Barley for grain	17.3	Oats for grain	1.6
Tobacco	13.9	All other crops	22.1

In general, the crops which produce the greater monetary returns per acre appear near the top of this list, while the crops producing lower values per acre tend to be irrigated less frequently.

Crop Intensity Related to Irrigation

By definition, "cropping intensity" refers to the method of cultivating land designed to increase the productivity of a given area by the use of more labor, equipment, and materials. In general, the more "intensive" crops and the more "intensively" cultivated land require more labor, equipment, and materials and, in turn, result in a higher dollar value per acre return.

The section on definitions previously presented provides an estimate of the average value per acre of specified crops within each category. For tabulation purposes, each crop for which data were collected was designated as intensive, moderately intensive, or less intensive and grouped accordingly. The less intensive category accounts for 90 percent (237.9 million) of all crops harvested on all farms, whether irrigated or nonirrigated (summary table 2, and table 10 in the body of this chapter). The moderately intensive crops account for 6.4 percent, and the intensive crops, 3.6 percent of all crops harvested. When irrigated and nonirrigated farms are compared, it is noted that the intensive and moderately intensive crops become relatively more important on the farms which have adopted irrigation for all or part of the crops grown.

It should be noted that summary table 2 is intended to show the relationship between the presence of irrigation on farms and the intensity of land use. The harvested acres shown for irri-

Summary Table 2. Acreage and Percent of Land in Three Crop Intensity Groups on Irrigated and Nonirrigated Farms, With Sales of $2,500 and Over: 1969

	All crops harvested		Intensive crops harvested		Moderately intensive crops harvested		Less intensive crops harvested	
	Acres (1,000)	Percent	Acres (1,000)	Percent	Acres (1,000)	Percent	Acres (1,000)	Percent
United States:								
Irrigated farms	50,386	100.0	5,803	11.5	7,972	15.8	36,611	72.7
Nonirrigated farms	213,933	100.0	3,786	1.8	8,813	4.1	201,334	94.1
17 Western States and Louisiana:								
Irrigated farms	41,970	100.0	3,570	8.5	6,568	15.6	31,832	75.9
Nonirrigated farms	86,149	100.0	822	1.0	3,707	4.3	81,620	94.7
30 Eastern States, Alaska, and Hawaii:								
Irrigated farms	8,416	100.0	2,233	26.5	1,404	16.7	4,779	56.8
Nonirrigated farms	127,784	100.0	2,964	2.3	5,106	4.0	119,714	93.7

Note: Data are from table 10 in the body of this report.