Part 3—Other Land Improvement Practices, Crop Diversion, and Use of Sprays and Dusts to Control Insects and Diseases on Animals

Introduction—In 1964, for the third time, information was obtained on land-use practices related to soil conservation and land improvement. Information regarding the number of ponds, reservoirs, etc., on farms was collected in 1964. This information was also collected for the 1954 census. Data for farms participating in the wheat and feed grain programs and for animals treated externally by spraying, dusting, or methods for the purpose of controlling insects were obtained in 1964 for the first time in any census.

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 the 1964 census for all States except Alaska. A similar inquiry was included in the 1959 census for all States except Hawaii and Alaska, and in the 1954 census for all States except Florida, Alaska, and Hawaii. 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 one-tenth of the farms in the United States, and totaled 21.6 million acres or 5.0 percent of the total cropland. The acreage in 1954 was slightly more than the acreage in 1959 and 1964.

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.

The change in the number of farms with cropland used for grain or row crops farmed on the contour and the acreage on which this land-use practice was used were for the last three censuses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1954</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm acres</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cropland acres</td>
<td>21,565</td>
<td>22,321</td>
<td>22,435</td>
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Land in stripcropping systems for soil-erosion control—Stripping 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 stripping for 1964 relate to all States except Alaska. The comparable data for 1959 are for all States except Alaska. The 1954 data relate only to 14 States and parts of Texas.

This conservation practice is most important in the wheat producing areas in the Great Plains. Of the 16.7 million acres in 1964, over 11 million acres were in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Colorado.

The number of farms with land in stripcropping systems for erosion control declined 5 percent from 1959 to 1964, while the acreage increased 4 percent.

Artificial ponds, pits, reservoirs, and earthen tanks—More than 1 farm out of 4 had one or more artificial ponds, pits, reservoirs, or earthen tanks in 1964. The total number of ponds, etc., was 2,156,000 and the total area covered by these ponds, etc., when they were filled totaled 2,131,000 acres. In 1954, there were 907,000 farms with a total of 1,768,000 ponds, etc. Most of the artificial ponds are located in the Great Plains and Western States. The six States (Missouri, Kansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Texas) with more than 100,000 ponds, etc., had more than half of all the artificial ponds, pits, reservoirs, and earthen tanks in 1964.

Crops treated for the control of insects and diseases—The agriculture questionnaire for the 1964 census contained six questions relating to the acres of groups of crops treated by spraying, dusting, or other methods to control insects and diseases. The six groups of crops for which data were obtained, were:

1. Grain crops (corn, wheat, oats, barley, rice, etc.)
2. Alfalfa, clover and other hay crops
3. Cotton
4. Vegetables grown for sale
5. Fruits and nuts
6. All other crops

The question regarding cotton appeared on the agriculture questionnaire for the 17 important cotton-producing States. These 17 States had over 99 percent of the acreage of cotton harvested in 1964.

Farm operators and the census enumerators were instructed to count acres only once, when the acreage was treated more than once.

In 1964, nearly 1 out of every 7 acres from which crops were harvested was treated by spraying, dusting, or other methods for the control of insects and diseases. Approximately 11.3 percent of the acreage from which grain crops were harvested, was sprayed or dusted. More than 2.2 million acres, or 3.5 percent of the acreage of alfalfa, clover, and other hay crops harvested were treated by spraying, dusting, or other methods for the control of insects and diseases. Almost 3 out of 5 acres of cotton harvested were treated for the control of insects and diseases.

Approximately 6 out of every 10 acres of land from which vegetables were harvested in 1964, were sprayed, dusted, or treated by other methods for the control of insects and diseases. Of the 4 million acres in bearing and nonbearing fruit orchards, groves, vineyards, coffee, and planted nut trees, 3 million acres were sprayed, dusted, or treated by other methods for the control of insects and diseases.

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Land treated for the control of weeds or brush—The agriculture questionnaire asked for the acres treated in 1964 by spraying, dusting, or other methods for the purpose of controlling weeds or brush for five groups of crops:

1. Corn
2. Small grains (wheat, oats, barley, rye, rice, etc.)
3. Cotton
4. Other crops
5. Pastureland and rangeland

The inquiry relating to cotton was asked for the 17 most important cotton-growing States. These 17 States had over 99 percent of the cotton acreage harvested in 1964.

Farm operators and census enumerators were instructed to count acres treated only once if the acreage was treated more than once.

In 1964, 64.5 million acres were treated for the control of weeds or brush. Of the 63.5 million acres of corn harvested in 1964, 27.1 million acres were treated for the control of weeds or brush in 1964. The acreage of pastureland does not include all land treated for weed or brush control in 1964 as considerable acreage of rangeland not in census farms, were treated for weed and brush control in 1964.

The 21 million acres of small grains treated for the control of weeds in 1964 were equivalent to 25.2 percent of the acreage of all small grains harvested for grain. Approximately one-third of the cotton acreage in 1964, was treated for weed control and 0.6 percent of the 630 million acres of pastureland in farms was treated for the control of weeds or brush in 1964. The acreage of pastureland does not include all land treated for weed or brush control in 1964 as considerable acreage of rangeland not in census farms, were treated for weed and brush control in 1964.

Livestock treated externally for the control of insects, etc.—The questions regarding the number of cattle and calves, other than milk cows, and the number of hogs, sheep, and goats treated externally by spraying, dusting, or other methods for the purpose of controlling insects or diseases were included in the nationwide census for the first time in 1964.

The number of cattle and calves, other than milk cows, treated externally for the control of insects in 1964 was equivalent to half of the cattle and calves, other than milk cows, on farms. The number of hogs, sheep, and goats treated externally for the control of insects in 1964 was equal to 44 percent of the number of hogs, sheep, and goats on farms.